

The background of the cover is a detailed illustration. It features three stylized, pale faces with large, dark, wide-open eyes, arranged vertically. The faces have dark, wavy hair. They are set against a background of dark, angular, architectural-like shapes. There are also some decorative, repeating patterns on the left side. In the bottom right corner, there is a small logo that looks like a stylized bird or a person with arms outstretched, with the word 'ZMP' written below it.

# RICHARD FOREMAN

Plays with Films

RICHARD FOREMAN

PLAYS WITH FILMS

*Selected Other Works by*  
Richard Foreman

*The Manifestos & Essays*

*Bad Boy Nietzsche! & Other Plays*

*Paradise Hotel & Other Plays*

*My Head Was a Sledgehammer: Six Plays*

*No-Body: A Novel in Parts*

*Unbalancing Acts: Foundations for a Theater*

*Love & Science: Selected Music-Theatre Texts*

RICHARD FOREMAN

PLAYS WITH FILMS

Edited by Rainer J. Hanshe



*Plays with Films*

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Hunka

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# INTRODUCTION

A Face that's Always the Same Face:  
Richard Foreman ↻ the Projected Image

George Hunka



The three texts collected in this volume, *Zomboid!* (Film/Performance Project №1), *Wake Up Mr. Sleepy! Your Unconscious Mind is Dead!*, and *Deep Trance Behavior in Potatoland* (A Richard Foreman Theater Machine), constitute a body of formal experimentation with which Richard Foreman's Ontological-Hysteric Theater concluded its residence at the St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery in New York. Largely eschewing the projected image in most of his past plays, Foreman integrated the projected digital image into these unique works, described by their creator as "film/performance projects" or "theater machines" instead of plays. So far as this integration constituted a response to new theater technologies then at hand, it also constituted Foreman's attempt to come to terms with the image-world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and the challenges to traditional consciousness and subjectivity that it presented.

Foreman had worked with projected images in the past — in the theater with *Film is Evil, Radio is Good* (1987), and in the film medium itself with his feature *Strong Medicine* (1979) — but had resisted the temptation to work with it again until digital technology added a further dimension to the projected image. The imperfections introduced into the filmic image by the mechanics of film itself — the scratches and dirt that collect on the celluloid print of the projected image over time, for example, a frequent subject of the American avant-garde filmmakers among whom Foreman had begun his theatrical career in the 1960s — were now eliminated from the experience of visual spectatorship. The two-dimensionality of the projected digital video image, pristine and clear, undamaged through countless repetitions through the mechanical device of the projector, elicited a number of other aesthetic questions. It is impossible, for example, to tell whether these



images are recorded or live, whether or not the personae of the projected image were operating in the same real time as the experience of the spectator, however far away they might be in geographical distance (on other continents entirely, in the case of these three works); the ability of these images to call attention to themselves constituted a challenge not only to the aura of the reproduced artwork that Benjamin had investigated but also to the aura of the reproduced body as presented to the distant spectator, and by extension our own bodies in this arena of projected images.

The nameless live performer/characters who mediated the experience of these projections for the spectator of these works presented an often comic meditation on our own desire to become a part of this projected world — to become two-dimensional ourselves. They also demonstrated the extent to which we give up perceptual freedom as we chain ourselves to the unswerving rigidity of the digitally recorded image: both director and performers respond to the recorded image as to a click-track, an unerring and unforgiving metronome of recorded experience which does not care whether we are there or not. Whether this image-world constitutes a means of a new perceptual, social, and political autonomy or a new, unforgiving barrier to this autonomy, remains an issue that is central to the reception of all three of these works.



“There must be something wrong with a face that’s always the same face.”

*Zomboid!* (Film/Performance Project № 1) tries to come to terms with the projected moving image, especially as it affects stage-bound meditations on perception, and Foreman seems to have hit on a new physiological solution. The window downstage right, the window from Maria del Bosco’s atelier, is back, a hole in the wall that allows the world’s light to stream in as

the world's light streams into the eye. Now, though, this seen world is reflected back to the audience and into the interior of *Zomboid!*'s world itself: a world of upper-middle-class interiors and individuals, a world, seen from the chaotic arena of the interior, which might indeed be upside-down: video projection as a digital retina. It's this world which the individuals of the play need to contend with and interpret now, and as that "#1" in the subtitle of *Zomboid!* indicates, this interpretation requires yet another new start.

There's nothing obscure about the objects scattered on the stage at the beginning of the show: large eyeballs & lettered blocks introduce the thematic concerns of *Zomboid!* The two other objects with which the characters need to contend during the show are the blindfold and the donkey, a "beast of burden." Fortunately, the Girl in the Beret, who is making the effort to find a purchase for herself in this world, is assisted by three other women and a tall man, who demonstrate for her the ways in which both the blindfold and the donkey can be manipulated to her own interpretive ends. The blindfold is an indication of sexual and perceptive vulnerability, but in this vulnerability is potential interpretive power: the possibility of seeing the world anew; after all, under a blindfold the eyes don't cease to function, and she indeed sees something; what each of us sees when blindfolded will be different for each of us, a play of color, an imagining of the world we can't see and over which, therefore, we have full interpretive range.

Most of the comedy of *Zomboid!* appears in the guise of the poor stuffed donkeys, which provide multiple prods to interpretation. As a metaphor for our own human bodies, the donkey is certainly a burdensome if inescapable part of our perceptions: poorly conceived vehicles for "racing" (both the human race and the rat race), but also, in one of the coarser jokes of the production, a vehicle for sex, for our personifications of Eros. Whether we saddle up our donkeys or the donkeys saddle up us is a central question in *Zomboid!* The teachers of the Girl in the Beret counsel recognition, integration, and play, which may be the wisest choice.

In *Zomboid!*, Foreman strikes out on a new humanistic road following the pessimism of his previous play, the elegiac *The Gods Are Pounding My Head!* As if he had reached the end of a road with that production, he and his theater needed to begin again, and though only a few of his former design & aesthetic approaches were abandoned, the addition of video introduced a new exterior world into this perceiver's world: it suggests a new attempt to come to terms with the social world outside the theater, a newly-recognized antagonism, and a suggestion that liberation from externally-constructed realities is still possible if only we, as perceivers, learn to begin again as well.

The play ends on a note of a new beginning. Perceptually illiterate at the start, the Girl in the Beret learns through the process not to see the world through Foreman's eyes, but through her own as she, a contemporary version of Vermeer's *A Girl Reading a Letter by an Open Window*, sits at the hole to the world, looking out, examining with confidence her own communication to herself in the light of the world, as earlier she had learned to write, to make her own symbols, with confidence and considerable beauty. (The reference to Vermeer is no mistake: the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Dutch painter's bright, unique lead-tin yellow is also used in several of the costumes worn by actors in the video.) It's an unusually peaceful, emotionally moving moment: an image of serene empowerment.

"If happiness enfolded human beings, then human beings would find it difficult to improve themselves."

"The invention of the airplane, a mortal blow to the unconscious," a deep voice says at the beginning of *Wake Up Mr. Sleepy! Your Unconscious Mind Is Dead!* As the technology of flight (and technology in general) robbed the 20<sup>th</sup> century of a dream of flight by making it physically possible, a dream fulfilled but unsatisfying in its fulfillment, the century has

had to recover the dream of flight, and perhaps dreaming itself, amidst a technology of images that threatened to render dreaming and the unconscious itself superfluous.

In *Mr. Sleepy*, an aviator attempts to manipulate those remaining on the ground in a landscape newly shorn of the ability to dream, and he fails more often than he succeeds. The girls, somehow, manage to regain this ability first (perhaps it's the sensual fertility of women, of which we're reminded by the babies and their worn stuffed animals on stage, and often in their own hands), but it's not gender that's important: it's the ability to see anew, to waken what technology (or, rather, our submission to technology, since technology has no conscious will of its own) has put to sleep; to tear the newspapers (filled with useless information gathered from around the globe) wrapped around our heads to see what lies beyond them. To regain a childlike wonder, we need to become as children again.

Or we risk missing the point. Foreman's plays are completely devoid of subtext; they're all surface. "Ok, ok, are there any young children in the audience tonight?" a deep voice asks 23 seconds into the play. "If there were young children here tonight I would now be explaining to them specifically. Everything here is just for you." These are such shallow thoughts that even young children can understand them without trying; the play contains its explanation within itself. The unhappy adults of the play, the languid actors and actresses of the video presentation, grouse and complain about their situation: "Maybe it could happen in my lifetime, tick tock, tick tock; it's broken and it can't be fixed," they repeat to themselves, having given up. The unhappy children left on the ground are fearful and anxious, and much of the first half of the play is spent in seeming flight (pun intended) from the airplane that hovers above. Finally, a girl in a pantsuit begins to climb a wall and finds that, without technology, through a movement and placement of the body, a new perspective on the world can be recaptured.

Midway through the play, the adults on screen are impelled toward hope as an escape from their unhappiness: “Maybe it could happen in my lifetime,” an on-screen character says. The deep voice provides, with hindsight, the antecedent to this “it” with an instruction to the children onstage and in the audience: “When the unconscious is dead the fighter airplanes say we are alone on earth, we are blind, we are deaf, with no tactile sensation. (If it is broken, if it is broken.) When the unconscious is dead please use the human mind to dig up from the depths that mental baffle machine, uncovering the sleepy giant whose name must never be spoken. (Never spoken.)” — a reach for a Judaic G-d. But the sleepy giant of our unconscious begins to be personated in our selves. On screen and on stage, the human body’s sensuousness begins to be explored: a woman’s bare leg is slowly caressed, the woman’s face, turned toward the audience, begins to register a subtle pleasure. The world can even learn from the dream: a woman rubs her belly, slowly and thoughtfully, on screen; a girl before us imitates her action, a soothing, calming gesture that wakens the body and the unconscious alike.

Foreman’s brand of political and cultural didacticism is crystal clear in *Mr. Sleepy*. “Remember, things bite back. Risk it,” a voice implores. “If there were young children here tonight, I would now be explaining to them specifically that once upon a time a lonely man cried out.” The voice finds, in a memory of childhood, a means of negotiating technology to find human connection again:

“Guess what it really happened to me when I was a kid. I was a young person dreaming and I climbed out of a pit in this dream, a pit dug into the earth, and as I climbed out of the pit, and looked over the edge of the pit, there over my head was an airplane flying low, and in that airplane were people, people looking at me, people jammed into the cockpit looking at me, and from their eyes, from their eyes into my body.”

This could be an intense glare of belonging, of love. (And hence a woman's voice [the voice of Foreman's partner, Kate Manheim, who returns in recorded presence after some years of absence from Foreman's plays]: "... no distinction is made between ideas that are good for you, and ideas that are bad for you.")

One needs to be a young child again, a boy or a girl, to make a new beginning beyond the cultural moralisms dictated by ideas of "good for you" and "bad for you." An Eden is recaptured; as one of the screen legends has it at the very end of the play, these are "THINGS HIDDEN SINCE ... THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD" — that is, our beginning, the world into which we are thrust at birth. Theodor Adorno, at the end of his life, posited all of his own work as an attempt to recapture his childhood, and through it, the primal source of our origin. This means recognizing the world, and all the things in it, as having emerged from that same origin: technology, the human-built screen to blind us to it. Ironically, all we need do to recapture the unconscious is to see the conscious world true. If all this seems too much to handle, Foreman holds our hand in a program note:

"RELAX! Do not work overly hard trying to understand. Know instead it's about the elusive Unconscious Mind. Surfacing and re-surfacing (as in music). Just stay alert and notice everything that arises and asks to be 'noticed.'"

As usual in Foreman's plays, there are beautiful sequences, the most beautiful here being the rejection of the suicidal impulse when it all becomes a little too much; just as the girls prepare to slit their wrists with a pair of long knives, they make the decision, instead, to live, even with the pain that this rediscovered unconscious brings them; they drape their white delicate blindfolds over the knife-points that threatened their very lives.

The piano, like the two diminutive grand pianos that dominate the stage in *Deep Trance Behavior in Potatoland* (A Richard

Foreman Theater Machine), is among musical instruments one of the most complicated and mysterious — mysterious because most mechanical. Anyone familiar with the actions the machine must make through the disciplined, trained hand of the performer to produce a sound, knows that the piano’s “action” (the proper name for that mechanism) is made up, like the human hand with its bone, muscles, nerves, flesh and blood, of dozens of parts, wood, felt and steel; what’s more, unlike those of the flute or the violin, the mechanism is usually invisible to both performer and audience. The mechanism, like the mechanism of consciousness, can be explained in its physical and physiological existence. But what of the sounds it makes, the dying away of the note once attacked, or the dying away of the perception once recognized? What’s left after it dies? We’re not in the realm of science now, but of art and philosophy.

In the first sequence of the play, a Girl in a Golden Dress walks to center stage, faces the audience, and elaborately swallows a pill — the trancelike state follows (though, according to the controlling consciousness of the play, sounding as usual through a tape, this is an odd pill: “Imagine a pill named O-X taken every day for a period of a year. And just once each day in the twenty-four hours of its effectiveness, it links the perceived data of a specific ordinary moment to universal truth.”). The live performers seem to be urged to join the two-dimensional, flat characters on the screen behind them. As production intern Anna Friedlaender wrote on the production blog for the show:

“Sarah [Dahlen jumps] at the screen, as if she was trying to enter the screenal reality (the reverse effect from the Lumiere Brothers’ train). ... [The] scene is very violent (loud thuds and flashes as well as shrieks accompany each of Sarah’s attempts to jump into the screen); this violence ... evokes a feeling of struggle and urgency for Sarah to enter the screens. Secondly, Sarah seems to be checking in with the audience members on whether or not she should continue trying; between every jump she looks back at the audience with a questioning face.”



The tension between the two-dimensional surface of the projected image and the three-dimensional experience of the body is stretched to the breaking point, not irrelevant to Foreman's obsession with what he called "pancake people" in his "Notes on *Zomboid!*," published in the online journal *Hot Review* in 2006. In the subtitle to this play, he introduces the consciousness of travel, of the cameras and cellphones we take with us as we fly from country to country, around the world, in those airplanes that so mystified Proust (who was also memorably mystified by telephones and revolving doors). "You understand me immediately," says a Japanese woman in the video, but we can't really understand her; she's not there, available for questioning. (And she, in her body now, doesn't see us; we're watching a digital shadow, an illusory nothingness.) Like the five performers, we may take her at her word, tranquilized by our own pills — or, we can recognize that her image and sounds, as inviting as they are, aren't even the light captured by the photographic mechanism or the sound captured by an analog recording device, but only ones and zeroes. The digital video mechanism doesn't capture people; it doesn't capture light or sound either, but only numbers (and, therefore, the mysticism attached to numerology).

The mistake is in thinking that this simulacrum is reality itself, but without the mechanism to decode these numbers (like the mechanism we use to perceive the world in its three dimensions), they remain meaningless data. *Deep Trance Behavior* suggests that, as these videos & sounds are memoirs of experience, they're a far more fragile media of memory — they're an illusory world, and our immersion in it invites us to lose our own three-dimensional existence in those ones and zeroes. The lie behind these memoirs, of course, is that they're not permanent. As a record of the past, they grant the illusion of immortality for those who believe they're captured within the two-dimensional screen; and they dull us to what is possible for us, experientially, as three-dimensional, knowing beings in this comic world. We can see characters on the screen, hear them — but we cannot touch them, and they can't feel our touch.

The irrational desire for an impossible immortality, the Spanish philosopher Unamuno believed, defined the human being as a tragic figure. The illusory immortality of the screen blinds us to the very real mortality of our own bodies. In *Deep Trance Behavior* there is, for the first time in my memory of Foreman's work, a representation of death on-stage, and even a melodramatically wailing mourner. More to the point is the tableau that ends the play: as a curtain opens in the video, finally allowing metaphorical entrance to that two-dimensional realm, it's too late for the characters on stage, who are in various states of ... rest? Or something else? Foreman would have it as a state of relaxation — "The actors are simply resting" is the last legend of the play, which we read over the fallen, motionless bodies of the performers onstage. This may be true, but it also calls into consciousness the possibility that they might also be dead, and that we may be prone ourselves to make that mistake were we not reminded of the metaphorical form of the theater itself.

In watching these works play, we are invited to become aware of our own machinery of consciousness — to recognize the two-dimensionality of the screened world, whether it's Japanese or English, as an invitation to escape our own three-dimensional, fleshed, very mortal bodies; and to recognize the tricks that these numbers play on our senses. And in this is a form of hope (Foreman is a comic, not a tragic, dramatist — and there's enormous comedy in *Deep Trance Behavior*, not to mention the showman-like flourishes for which he's known; Foreman's always had a lot of Belasco in him). The irony of mortality can be a comic irony as well as a tragic one. It's for us to decide, and recognize, as the play's own musing consciousness says:

"Do not dismiss, please, the possibility that very soon, one evening in this series of evenings, it may happen that a single individual, present at this very performance may, he or she, lock into the evening's formal fluctuations."

# ZOMBOLD!

(Film / Performance Project №1)

## PRODUCTION HISTORY

*Zomboid!* (Film/Performance Project № 1). Produced by the Ontological-Hysteric Theater at the Ontological at St. Mark's Theater, New York City. January 12 – April 9, 2006. Written, directed, & designed by Richard Foreman. Video Engineering by Vivian Wenli Lin.

## NYC LIVE CAST

Katherine Brook  
Temple Crocker  
Ben Horner  
Caitlin McDonough-Thayer  
Stephanie Silver

## MELBOURNE FILM CAST

Görkem Acaroğlu	Joe Mitchell
Margaret Cameron	Merfyn Owens
Tayla Chalef	Rochelle Whyte
Martyn Coutts	Tom Papathanassiou
Olivia Crang	Kelly Somes
Tara Daniel	Sam Strong
Sue Ingleton	Willoh Weiland
Kibby McKinnon	Lucy Wilson

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

Notes on my next project, *ZOMBOID!*

Amongst the many possible strategies of “spectator oriented” art — two seem to me to stand out. In one style — the spectator is carried on a rollercoaster through various pre-determined emotional focal points. In the second, more meditative style, events are slowed up and relatively detached from each other so the spectator can project his or her own depths, resonating with the presented “material.”

### *ZOMBOID!* (Film/Performance Project №1)

partakes of these two strategies simultaneously, with live action visceral involvement in counterpoint to on-screen projections of a more meditative nature — the actual aesthetic “event” arising in the elusive psychic space “BETWEEN” these two contrasting styles.

*ZOMBOID!* is the first manifestation of the International Bridge Project. A completely new venture for me — in The International Bridge Project, along with collaborator Sophie Haviland, I not only film material around the world to serve as continual “bas-relief” backdrop to my performances — but I also explore an unusual aesthetic procedure.

It is not unique that *ZOMBOID!* utilizes continual projected background for a performance event.

## WHAT IS UNIQUE

is that that background is a self-contained full-length digital film, with the live performance orchestrated in front of that film, using the self-contained film as a theatrical score against which the performance is adjusted and articulated.

The performance of *ZOMBOID!* presents people responding to, echoing, and being “infected” by projected on-screen manifestations, in much the same way that in “real” life we are all psychically invaded by the many levels of material that

flash in and out of the consciousness that seeds that great psychic ocean inside of which we drift.

The film itself is meditative, non-narrative, beautiful and somewhat off-kilter — yet containing no “extraordinary events.”

## NO EXTRAORDINARY EVENTS ?

Again and again these days I see films and plays being promoted to audiences on the basis of the many “interesting” real-life subjects presented in those works.

It seems we live in a world where everyone is interested above all else in “interesting subjects.” But shockingly — I maintain, that the desire for subjects of “interesting subject matter” is, in fact, an avoidance of the REAL subject of real art, which is — What?

The real subject is presence itself, the scintillating “presence,” of any and all selected items — but presented in such a way that one’s primary experience (the aesthetic experience) is to realize that the SUBJECT ITSELF doesn’t matter — but is always in fact the TRIVIAL aspect of the art event.

That trivial aspect (the “subject”) is what we focus on when we choose NOT to be deeply engaged with what art is deeply about — the full, multi-dimensional “presence” of whatever subject is being obliterated by the power of “present-ness.” However, by the usual gluing of our attention onto the ostensible “subject matter” — we try to protect ourselves from the deep ego-shattering experience of art.

Oh, you say — but Shakespeare had stories and subjects! Yes — but we’ve had it, and had it, and had it *ad infinitum* — and now we are into something else — new, adventurous, rewarding and full of delight in unexpected ways. But, you say — Shakespeare (for instance) had stories PLUS a poetry that fragmented simple coherence with a wide range of associative mental links. But I maintain that now the time is ripe for other strategies in the midst of this floundering and spiritually confused world.

## IN FACT

much to my surprise, I began this work believing I was entering a new realm of art-making — and that with *ZOMBOID!* I was entering a realm of pure aesthetics — but as I started putting down my thoughts — describing to myself and to others what I believe I am doing in this work — I realized a certain ANGER rising in me, and I realized I was thinking more in political terms than I had expected. (The politics of art-making, certainly).

## I REALIZED THAT I BELIEVE, THAT NOW IS THE TIME FOR A CELEBRATION OF ELITIST ART!

Let's dare proclaim that in the face of a society increasingly crying for a media-driven, market-oriented, popular art, reaching out to everyone at once — while “deep thoughts” are officially allowed in such art, they must only come in a form that is easily communicable to all.

## BUT I MAINTAIN

that to feed the individual human spirit, the true art of these times must be a kind of demanding gymnasium where sensibilities get rigorous exercise — so that those sensibilities then become more refined, able to pick up on and appreciate the patterned intricacies of a world which is usually, in art, simplified into recognizable social and psychological clichés or knock-out effects. Such normal strategies lie about the world because they talk about what we already know (which is always wrong) in languages with which we are already familiar (and therefore put our more delicate mental mechanisms to sleep) — all this, instead of waking us up with the uncharted energies that throb behind the facade of the shared world of communicable convention.



## SO IN TODAY'S ARENA, I MAINTAIN THAT ONLY ELITIST ART

presents the true facts of “always-in-process” human beings who, while pretending to themselves and others that they are coherent “wholes” — are really but a tissue of micro-tendencies and impulses, most of which are effectively ignored by the defense mechanism of consciousness that allows the individual to feel secure in his or her “picture of the world.”

## BUT ELITIST ART

offers the spectator a chance, through the development of subtle discriminations, to enter the true PARADOX of lucid, aesthetic sensibility.

## ELITIST ART

“trumps” the popular art of media culture, offering the alternative to the bottom-line world that leaves so many of us parched, spiritually depleted, half-human precisely because we are asked —

## TO DENY OUR ELITIST TENDENCIES!

## NOW — ANYBODY IS WELCOME TO ENJOY ELITIST ART.

It tends to speak of powerful hidden things and energies, in language (the full range of theatrical language) that is isomorphic with those hidden things and energies, rather than in the language of daily life — because a language made isomorphic with such intuited processes seems most connected to ultimate, deep-lying things.

## AND TO POINT TOWARD THOSE ULTIMATE THINGS

in the case of this performance — *ZOMBOID!*, the motif utilized is

## THE BLINDFOLD.

How does this work? The aesthetic goal in *ZOMBOID!* is to build an entire world from small image/idea clusters that bounce off other image/idea clusters — much like the way the real world is generated from millions of small, local interactions between event quanta from different realms.

The performance of *ZOMBOID!* is then an attempted model of the depth of the world at work.

The world, it would seem, starts out not with a story or a theme, but with the random (statistically guided, perhaps) pouring forth of multitudinous radiations — twitching and throbbing in concert.

So now, here in front of an audience — we invoke & mirror this world process, generating the energy of eternal delight.

Required of us all, however, in order to be sensitive and alert to what is invisibly taking place in the depths of the world's creativity, is to free ourselves from both perceptual habit and inherited mental habit. (Keatsean “negative capability.”)

One must, in effect, blindfold oneself, blocking normal faculties so that other inner resources are forced into play.

The theme of the blindfold becomes, then, the theme of “in-sight.”

But an insight that produces not “ideas,” because ideas, no matter how convincing, are never more than the tiniest slice of the full pie of reality and, therefore, always less than the whole truth.

Instead, we would, through aesthetic means, rhythm and composition, event and paradox — “tune” the deep self to the “truth” that all things echo and reflect all other things. We would work toward the perspective that each isolated moment, even those that seem relatively empty, is in fact pulsating with the full energy of the deep source, and so, the motif of *ZOMBOID!* is the facilitating

## BLINDFOLD !

But in *ZOMBOID!*, the embodiment of that motif generates a unique “No Man’s Land” between two aesthetic worlds presented simultaneously on-stage.

## THE STAGE IS SPLIT

between the meditative world of archetypal TABLEAUX, (imaginary “mental” content projected on screen) — and in counterpoint — the concrete world of physical bodies, twisting and lurching in reaction to irrational impulses that “trump” the myths & hierarchies of consciousness that we normally believe organize human life.

## THE UNBRIDGEABLE SPLIT

between these two worlds is the “location” in which *ZOMBOID!* manifests itself. The art event is, then, a new and unnamable “thing” that arises in the space between screen image and live bodies — a space that is intuited rather than seen & identified.

To risk offering an art based on this “split” is to walk the tightrope over the abyss between imagined human mastery and the un-chartable “other” that is never controllable or knowable.

## — BALANCING PRECARIOUSLY

in that energized limbo where the art called “difficult” does its secret and unpredictable work.

## STORIES HIDE THE TRUTH

Richard Foreman's new work is based on projected images, but NOT because he accepts the proposition that this technological form should now take center stage in our current version of reality.

He rejects such an idea. Rather — he places slow, tableau-like projected images at the center of these productions because they are able to ground the “Reality” of the live performance which occurs in front of these images, in the hallucinatory temporal coagulation of time passing — evoked in projected symbolic tableaux that do not so much “advance,” but rather breathe, drift, & palpitate, just like the world around us is quietly doing while our limited mental faculties agitatedly invent adventures and interpretations we project as our daily reality — but which in fact exists under that atmospheric blanket of the “GREATER” reality which is the slow oscillation of the cosmic drift.

So the projected images in Foreman's new work certainly do not point toward a commitment to the new and superficial technological society, but rather to the slow evolution of cosmic forces, massively coagulating into images & symbols behind our backs, that used to be called, dare we say it ... God.

# ZOMBOLD!

(Film / Performance Project №1)

The stage is a large room with one projection screen on the upstage wall and another on the stage-left wall joined at a 60° angle. At the base of each screen about four feet from the ground is a ledge upon which rest numerous objects, including small framed photos, vases, lettered cubes, & small toys. In addition, small panels, each containing a single light bulb, are located at the bottom left corner of each screen — when opened, these generate flares of light across each respective screen and into the stage area. Along the edges of the screen on the upstage wall are two small electric candelabras. Throughout the play, the same film is projected on each screen. The printed words or phrases that appear on the screen throughout the play indicated in the following texts by large capital letters typically remain present for a brief period of time and then vanish.

Several thin wires crisscross the stage horizontally at different heights and distances. There are also two four-foot high plexiglass walls running from downstage right to downstage center and from downstage left to downstage center, with a small open partition between them. There is a two-inch black-and-white vertically striped runner that stretches across the top of the plexiglass. A small ledge atop the plexiglass wall is lined with toy army soldiers, evenly distributed, each facing the audience. At various intervals along the plexiglass are flat rectangular light bulbs turned toward the audience; at different times throughout the performance, they flash on & off.

Other objects are scattered around the stage including books, a small settee, several black chairs with red cushions, rattles, scepters, sledgehammers, ritualistic wands, vases, urns. Upstage right there is a large black clocktower-like object. It rests on a platform with wheels, has slabs of fake rock around its circular base, and is topped with a green pyramid.

Each of its four sides has a round red dial without numbers or clock arms. The clocktower object is wheeled in and out at various moments throughout the performance and each empty clockface is sometimes illuminated by a revolving light bulb at its center. Three giant eyeballs with Hebrew letters circling the iris are placed about the stage; they are often carried aloft by the actors, or rolled along the stage floor.

The floor is flat black, like a chalkboard, and has white lines running across it as well as a thick red stripe crossing it diagonally that connects to a red stripe that runs along the stage-left wall; one more red stripe runs along the up-stage wall to the side of the screen. There are also numerous stretches of short black pipe that vertically line part of the stage, like short hurdles. Parts of the walls are covered with illegible words in chalk. At stage right, there are three four-foot-high black partitions with curved tops; above them is a large open window. At center stage, a soft life-size baby donkey is lying on its side on the ground. There is black electrical tape wound around the center of its stomach and at three different intervals on each leg.

### Typesetting Key

00:00 (time stamp)

**SCREEN** — Screen tableaux

**SCREEN LEGENDS**

Live stage action

Voiceover

*Sound*  *Music cue*

raised-hyphen: word pronounced with elongated syllables



0:00 **FACES** — spring morning: close-up of woman with short hair standing outside. She stares into the camera. From time to time, she blinks and winces.

Sound cue: *plastic drum*.

1:34 **FACES** — spring morning: left-wipe to close-up of dour-faced woman with long hair standing outside. She stares into the camera.

Ben, a man dressed in black with a white ski cap, walks to center stage. He stares at the upstage screen, then crosses under the wires, walks in a circular motion, exits stage left.

2:06 **FACES** — spring morning: left-wipe to close-up of an old, bald, bearded man's face. He is standing outside against a wall with crumbling paint. He stares into the camera.

Stephanie enters from stage right carrying a stuffed donkey on her back. She walks to center stage and sits on top of another stuffed donkey.

While crouched behind a black partition, Caitlin and Temple point their fingers toward the donkey and whisper in unison in falsetto: "Look at Ste-pha-nie. Ste-pha-nie's car-ry-ing a don-key. Thirty-seven times. [Sound cue: *plastic drum*.] Ste-pha-nie's carrying a don-key. Ste-pha-nie's car-ry-ing the same damn don-key."

2:40 **FACES** — spring morning: left-wipe to close-up of a young man with a mustache standing against the wall with crumbling paint. He stares into the camera.

Katherine, Caitlin, and Temple enter from stage right and stand in front of the plexiglass wall with their arms crossed facing the upstage screen.

Deep Voice: Sup-pose. Sup-pose.

Music cue: *discordant piano* & *violin*.

Stephanie removes the donkey from her back then turns and faces the upstage screen. Ben walks off stage while Katherine, Caitlin, and Temple walk to center stage and kneel before the donkey. They ceremoniously place their hands around a scepter, which they hold over the donkey, then flip through little red books, which they sometimes hold up to their faces to cover their eyes.

Deep Voice: Well.

3:08

## POSTULATE ?

**FACES** — spring morning: left-wipe to close-up of young woman with short hair standing outside. She stares into the camera. From time to time, she blinks.

Katherine, Caitlin, Temple, and Stephanie stare at the upstage screen.

3:43     **FACES** — spring morning: left-wipe to close-up of woman with shoulder-length dark hair standing outside. She stares into the camera.

Deep Voice: Don-key.

Light flare washes out the screen.

Sound cue: *chime*.

Deep Voice: Don-key.

3:58 **FACES** — spring morning: left-wipe to close-up of the same woman. She looks down, then back up.

Katherine, Caitlin, Temple, and Stephanie return to reading through their red books, then turn and stare at the audience.

Voice: a professor lecturing on Beethoven in German.

4:25 **FACES** — spring morning: left-wipe to close-up of woman with greenish-yellow beret and red lipstick. She stares into the camera.

Female Voice: Chan-te a-vec moi.

## SUPPOSE ?

Sound cue: *donkey hee-haw* (3x).

Deep Voice: Don-key.

All of the actresses lift their hands to cover their faces.

Voice: a professor lecturing on Beethoven in German.

4:55 **FACES** — spring morning: left-wipe to man with short hair standing outside. He stares into the camera.

5:02 **FACES** — spring morning: left-wipe to the same man.  
Screen flare.

Sound cue: *shattering glass, bell*.

The actresses all rise — Stephanie moves to stage left and stares at the screen; Katherine and Caitlin move to upstage center and stare at the upstage screen. Temple walks to stage right and climbs on top of one of the black partitions and stares into a large open window. Ben carries an object draped in black cloth to center stage.

Deep Voice (singing with strong emphasis on each syllable): They do it on a don-key. They do it in a hole in the wall. They do it where they find me hi-ding.

5:36 **TABLEAU** — left-wipe to a group of men and women, some of whom are blindfolded, clustered together in a dark room, some sitting, some standing.

Deep Voice: The (Sup-*pose*) best of all. (Sup-*pose*.)

Stephanie wraps a blindfold around her eyes as Katherine wraps a blindfold around Caitlin. Temple comes down from the partition and lies on the ground. Ben turns in a circle with the covered object then walks off stage.

**TABLEAU** — GIRL in blindfold: “Suppose I were to postulate ...”

Sound cue: *clicking noise* (2x).

Deep Voice (drawn out): Please.

Screen flare.

**TABLEAU** — GIRL in blindfold: “... that those things never under control, are under control, backwards. How would you deal with that?”

6:29     **TABLEAU** — left-wipe to washout of screen and then to previous scene.

Stephanie carries one of the stuffed donkeys to stage right and places it on top of Temple. Caitlin rolls one of the Giant Eyeballs next to the donkey then lifts it up and places it on top of the donkey. The iris faces the audience. Stephanie and Katherine come and stand behind Caitlin.

Deep Voice: Rule.

Light flare washes out the screen.

Ben walks to the donkey, removes it from under the Eyeball, then places it against the stage-left wall.

Sound cue: *loud clicking noise (3x)*.

Deep Voice (winding down): Rule. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Bulb flash.

7:45     **TABLEAU** — Blindfolded GIRL (while a man in a suit whispers into her ear): “Suppose I were to postulate ...”

Deep Voice: Please.

**TABLEAU** — Blindfolded GIRL: “... that those things never under control, are under control, backwards. How would you deal with that?”

Stephanie removes the Eyeball from Temple, holds it above her head, then leans backwards with it, freezes, then runs off stage.

Deep Voice: Please.

8:15

## HIDING?

Deep Voice: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Temple gingerly picks up a four-squared lettered wooden block, [**bulb flash**] walks stage left, bends over, turns the block upside down, places it against her face. She hands it to Ben, who is crouched under the stage-left screen, turns toward the audience, then walks upstage, retrieves another four-squared lettered wooden block from the ledge under the screen and hands it to Katherine, who is also crouched under the stage-left screen. Katherine examines the object, turning it about, then places it on the ledge above her.

Sound cue: *clicking noise* (2x).

**Bulb flash.**

Female Voice: Ex-per-i-ence.

**TABLEAU — MAN:** “If you were to postulate ... that those things never under control —”

Deep Voice: Nor-mal.

**TABLEAU — MAN, continuing:** “are under control, backwards. I would have to deal with that.”

Sound cue: *clicking noise* (2x).

ZOMBOD!

Bulb flash.

Temple walks to center stage and kicks a pillow.

Sound cue: *shattering glass*.

A light beams toward Temple from the stage-right wall. She walks toward it, then climbs a small ladder and stares into the window from which the light is projected, then back toward the screen.

9:11     **TABLEAU** – the blindfold is removed from the girl.

Music cue: *gentle melodic tune with vocal in French*.

Deep Voice: Sup-pose.

Female Voice: Chan-te a-vec moi. Chan-te a-vec moi.

Deep Voice: Sup-pose. [Singing, with strong emphasis on each syllable.] They do it on a don-key.

**TABLEAU – WOMAN:** “Suppose I were to postulate ... those things never under control, are under control, backwards. How would you deal with that?”

Deep Voice (singing with strong emphasis on each syllable): They do it in a hole in the wall. They do it where they find me hi-ding.

Sound cue: *computerized swooshing noise (3x)*.

Stephanie opens a panel in the bottom left corner of the upstage screen.



10:05 **TABLEAU — MAN:** “That those things never under control, are under control, backwards. I would have to deal with that.”

Deep Voice (singing with strong emphasis on each syllable): The best of all. BUT best of all, they are go-ing to do it. They are go-ing to do it.

Light flare on upstage screen.

**TABLEAU —** the girl is blindfolded again.

10:38

Female Voice: Chan-te a-vec moi.

Temple opens a panel on the stage right screen. She stares into the two glaring lights, then covers her eyes.

Sound cue: *computerized swooshing noise (3x)*.

Deep Voice: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Bulb flash.

Sound cue: *clicking noise*.

Light flare in screen panels dies out.

Female Voice: Chan-te a-vec moi.

Music cue: *modernist piano excerpt*.

**BEN:** Don't move, don-key.

Deep Voice: Re-min-der.

Temple and Katherine close the screen panels.

ZOMBOD!

Female Voice: Chan-te a-vec moi.

Sound cue: *computerized swooshing noise (3x)*.

Female Voice: Chan-te a-vec moi.

11:35

Deep Voice: Be-hav-ior.

TABLEAU 2 – left-wipe to blindfolded girl and several people in a room staring out windows. Left-wipe to the very same scene. Merv rises ☞ stares out a window.

Female Voice: Ex-per-ience.

Deep Voice: Once on-ly.

All of the actors stand before the screens and stretch their arms toward them.

Light flare on screens. All of the actors wince. Ben and Stephanie point at one another and run around each other in a circle.

Caitlin/Temple: 1, 2, 3.

All of the stage actors sit under the screen ledges then fall to the ground and screech.

Deep Voice: A lifetime is an accurate di-ag-no-sis. [Sound cue: *soft gong*] Ac-cur-ate.

Music cue: *soft violin*.

12:35

REMINDER?

**WAKE UP MR SLEEPY!  
YOUR UNCONSCIOUS MIND  
IS DEAD!**

## PRODUCTION HISTORY

*Wake Up Mr. Sleepy! Your Unconscious Mind is Dead!* Produced by the Ontological-Hysteric Theater at the Ontological at St. Mark's Theater, New York City. January 18 – April 22, 2007. Written, directed, & designed by Richard Foreman.

## NYC LIVE CAST

Joel Israel: Tall Man  
Chris Mirto: Short Man  
Stefanie Neukirch: Girl in Pantsuit  
James Peterson: Aviator  
Stephanie Silver: Girl in Skirt

## VOICES ON TAPE

Kate Manheim: Female Voice  
Richard Foreman: Male Voice

## LISBON FILM CAST

Samuel Alves	Carla Galvão
Carla Bolito	Patrícia Leal
António Calpi	Tiago Manaia
João Correia	Tita Morgado
María Duarte	Adelina Oliveira
Cândido Ferreira	João Pedreiro
Patrícia Galiano	André Teodósio

## ATTENTION PLEASE

This evening's performance is the most accurate copy I am able to make of a strange theatrical event I viewed approximately one year ago when, against my will, I was forcibly seized and transported by a flying saucer to the alien planet Ax-e-tron. What surprised me most, perhaps, was that many of the elements of that alien performance — occurring light years from earth — seemed nevertheless to echo many of the concerns of our current earth-based mind-set. Though I can speculate as to why this might be so, I can at this date, offer no completely satisfactory explanation.

Richard Foreman

**A large room** with one projection screen on the upstage wall & another on the stage-left wall. On the corner of each screen is a letter. Throughout the play, the same film is projected on both screens. The printed words or phrases that appear on the screen throughout the play typically remain present for a brief period of time then vanish. Small panels are located at the bottom corner of each screen that contain electric candles — when the panels are opened, flares of light stream across the screen and into the stage area. Along the center of the bottom of the screen are four electric candles. There is a vertical black strip beneath the screen with white letters. Four black chairs with red cushions line the upstage wall.

The stage floor has one section covered with a large black and brown checkerboard pattern, another section with red, white, and black vertical stripes, and another with squares framing large white letters. The walls are covered with newspaper over which big letters have been loosely spray-painted in black.

At center stage is a small elevated boxing ring on top of a table draped with black velvet. There are chairs pushed closely in on both sides of the table. A few feet to stage left of the boxing ring, seated in an oddly extended sled-shaped wheelchair, is the torso of a life-like figure dressed in black with a high gold-studded collar, wearing a black sleep mask, and a black lace veil held in place by a small flat red cap and golden diadem-like brooch. Directed toward center stage, the length of the chair is parallel to the audience but the face of the figure is turned toward the audience throughout the play. Other objects situated about the stage include mannequin heads on columns, funeral vases with flowers, metal hurdles, red upholstered stools, and

splayed-open books, several of which are displayed to face the audience by rods protruding from a striped metal bar that stretches the length of the front of the stage. A red toy airplane hangs near the stage-left screen, at times casting a shadow on it. Suspended above the wall at stage right and angled as if coming in for a landing, is a double-propeller brown airplane, suitable in size to fit an actual pilot, with its cockpit crammed full with a half-dozen plastic baby dolls, two with black wounds in their foreheads. And straddling the plane with legs wide apart and tightly holding rope in each hand that is tied to the middle of each wing, stands a curly-headed boy (or girl) wearing a white scarf and white Capri pants with a brown vest and sweater.

In the center of the boxing ring stands a placard that reads:  
RUNNING TIME: 1 HR 5 MIN.

### Typesetting Key

00:00 (time stamp)

**SCREEN** — Screen tableaux

**SCREEN LEGENDS**

Live stage action

Voiceover

*Sound & Music cue*

raised-hyphen: word pronounced with elongated syllables

WAKE UP MR. SLEEPY! YOUR UNCONSCIOUS MIND IS DEAD!

0:00

Music cue: *ethereal ambient sounds slowly increasing in volume.*

“WAKE UP MR.  
SLEEPY: YOUR  
UNCONSCIOUS  
MIND IS DEAD.”

Deep Voice: 25 seconds. Seconds. 25 seconds.

Sound cue: *computerized distorted overlapping Russian dialogue.*

The Aviator enters and removes the Running Time placard from the boxing ring.

Sound cue: *repeating buzzer (5x).*

Stage goes dark. All actors enter. Girl in Skirt & Girl in Pantsuit walk to the upstage screen, place their hands upon it, then open the panels and stare into the light while the Tall Man & Short Man stare at the audience.

Sound cue: *smashing glass.*

Deep Voice: Ok, ok, are there any young children in the audience tonight? Yes? No?

Sound cue: *meditation bells.*

1:51     **SCREENS** – wipe to Diego’s face. He is kneeling on the floor next to a red leather chair.



Sound cue: *chime, gong.*

?

2:01     **SCREENS —** wipe to Patricia's face. She is lapping up milk from a bowl, then turns and faces the camera.

Deep Voice: Ok, ok, are there any young children in the audience tonight? [Sound cue: *gong*] If there were young children here tonight [sound cue: *game show bells*] I would now be explaining to them specifically — [whisper] ev-ery-thing here is just for you.

All of the actors walk downstage to a waist-high, black vertical pole covered with white stripes. They point toward the small open books displayed at the front of the stage.

2:22     **SCREENS — FACES. WIPE TO:** newspaper being ripped open to reveal a girl's face.

Sound cue: *ringing phone, computer blip.*

**SCREENS — FACES. GIRL:** "Maybe it could happen in my lifetime. Tick tock, tick tock: it's broken and it can't be fixed."

As the ceiling lights flare on brightly, all of the actors swiftly turn toward stage right and point up at the propeller airplane, then spin around to their previous positions.

Deep Voice: I.E.

2:40     **SCREENS — THREE HEADS. WIPE TO:** full view of three women seated at a table with their hands stretched out in front of them. Their heads are wrapped with newspaper

WAKE UP MR. SLEEPY! YOUR UNCONSCIOUS MIND IS DEAD!

and the table is covered with stuffed animals. A man walks behind them and exits.

?

Deep Voice: Hav-ing been giv-en per-mis-sion to re-veal these se-crets. I am o-k with this in-for-ma-tion, so help me God.

???

All of the actors turn about and position themselves around the boxing ring. They cover their faces with their hands. To the sound of a Chinese gong, they each quickly squat and make viewfinders with their hands then gaze through them.

Deep Voice: Click.

All of the actors widen their viewfinder hands.

Sound cue: *whirring noise*.

Short Man collapses to the floor.

3:16     **SCREENS — THREE HEADS:** a person in a white jacket walks behind the women.

Sound cue: *whirring noise*.

Tall Man, Girl in Pantsuit, and Girl in Skirt each collapse to the floor.

Screen lights and electric candles flare on.

Deep Voice: Be a-wake with-out know-ing it. [Whispered]  
Click. If it's bro-ken.

???

3:45     **SCREENS — THREE HEADS.** The girl in the center rips open the newspaper. **GIRL:** “Maybe it could happen in my life-time. Tick tock, tick tock: it’s broken and it can’t be fixed.”

Light flare.

3:59     **SCREENS — THREE HEADS. WIPE TO:** close-up of the girl in the middle ripping open the newspaper.

Music cue: *ethereal chanting*.

**SCREENS — THREE HEADS. GIRL:** “Tick tock, tick tock: it’s broken and it can’t be fixed. Trust me, trust me.”

Sound cue: *birds chirping*.

Girl in Pantsuit and Girl in Skirt point at the propeller airplane.

Deep Voice: The in-ven-tion of the air-plane, [sound cue: *computer blip*] a mortal blow to the unconscious.

Girl in Pantsuit and Girl in Skirt retract their hands.

4:22     **SCREENS — THREE HEADS. WIPE TO:** full view of the three girls. The girl on the left rips open the newspaper. **GIRL:** “Tick tock, tick tock: it’s broken and it can’t be fixed. Trust me, trust me.”

Ceiling lights flare for an instant.

Sound cue: *bells, siren.*

As the stage lights go black, all of the actors rise from the ground then walk to the upstage screen and slap their hands on it.

## NOW / NOT NOW

The actors sit in chairs in front of the screen and rub their hands together. A bright white light radiates outward from behind them.

Deep Voice: In order to con-front, head on, the e-lu-sive re-al thing.

Music cue: *violin/piano.*

Deep Voice: Zip be-tween this, al-ways, double pro-ce-dure.

5:10

Sound cue: *bell.*

All of the actors rise from their chairs, turn and stare at the upstage screen, then slowly return to their chairs.

???

5:20     **SCREENS — THREE HEADS:** a man in black walks behind the women then stands behind the girl on the left.

Sound cue: *computer blip, birds singing.*

Deep Voice: When the world sees it-self, it does-n't.

[flashing on  off]

X

5:34     **SCREENS — THREE HEADS:** a second man in a black suit enters and stands behind the girl in the center.

Deep Voice: Tick, tock.

5:37     **SCREENS — THREE HEADS. GIRL:** “Tick tock, tick tock: it’s broken, and it can’t be fixed. Trust me; trust me.”

All of the actors quickly rise from their chairs and slam their hands on the screen, then remove them. The actors in the center retreat while the remaining two open the panels in the screen and stare into them.

NOW (NOT NOW)

Sound cue: *gong.*

Girl in Pantsuit walks to center stage. With one hand, she points downwards at one of the miniature books; with

the other, she points upwards. She stares into the audience, then slowly walks across the stage, stops, makes a 360° turn, then faces the audience and points upwards.

6:04     **SCREENS — THREE HEADS:** the men exit.

6:06     **SCREENS — THREE HEADS. CLOSE-UP OF:** Fatima ripping open the paper to reveal her face.

Deep Voice: I.E. Men-tal.

6:09     **SCREENS — WIPE TO: THREE HEADS.**

Girl in Pantsuit covers her face with her hands.

Voice: Lamp must be re-plen-ished.

6:12     **SCREENS — WIPE TO: OUTDOOR SCENE.**

Sound cue: *computer blip.*

Sound cue: *one inhalation / one exhalation, whip crack, game show bell.*

6:20     **SCREENS — WIPE TO:** a tableau of men and women seated at a table with white plates and half-full glasses. Behind them stand numerous people holding their hands over their faces. In the back, next to a series of windows, stands a woman in a black dress. In front of them is Maria, a woman with blonde hair wearing a blue-and-yellow jacket. Her left hand rests on her hip; her right hand is adjacent to her shoulder and closed in a fist.

Deep Voice (sung plangently): Oh what did I do? What did I do?

Sound cue: *electric gurgling noise.*

All of the actors spin around, place their hands on the upstage screen, then remove them and cover their faces with their hands.

## THE UNCON- SCIOUS MIND (NO MIND)

Girl in Pantsuit walks to stage left holding her hands out before her then grips a pole in front of the stage-left screen.

6:30     **SCREENS** — Maria shifts position, placing her right hand on her hip and her left hand adjacent to her shoulder, closed in a fist.

[flashing on  off]

X

Sound cue: *loud banging, electric gurgling noise.*

**SCREENS** — **JOE**: “Tick tock, tick tock. It’s broken and it can’t be fixed.”

Light flare.

7:05     **SCREENS** — **WIPE TO: TABLEAU**. The woman in black standing next to the windows begins slowly moving.

Sound cue: *gong, ding, game show bells, ringing phone.*

DEEP TRANCE BEHAVIOR  
IN POTATOLAND

(A RICHARD FOREMAN  
THEATER MACHINE)



## PRODUCTION HISTORY

*Deep Trance Behavior in Potatoland* (A RICHARD FOREMAN THEATER MACHINE). Produced by the Ontological-Hysteric Theater at the Ontological at St. Mark's Theater, New York City. January 17–April 27, 2008. Written, directed, & designed by Richard Foreman.

## NYC LIVE CAST

Joel Israel: Man in Striped Suit  
Caitlin McDonough-Thayer: Girl in Sailor Hat  
Fulya Peker: Girl with Black Hair  
Caitlin Rucker: Girl with the Golden Dress  
Sarah Dahlen: Girl with the Tiara

## VOICES ON TAPE

Richard Foreman, Kate Manheim, André Malraux

## JAPANESE FILMED CAST & CREW

Makato Murakami	Mayumi Gpnda	Yuki Koga
Yonki Kang	Tamae Ando	Saeko Iwasaki
Takuya Murakawa	Shirotama Hitsujiya	Yuto Kurosaka
Ami Yamazaki	Junko Uchida	Rie Kato
Manabu Saito	Tadasu Takamine	Yasuko Kurono
Yoshimitsu Araki	Yuya Ito	Nobuhiro Aragaki
Reiko Kawashima	Minoru Mukouta	Kanako Miki
Fumie Takahara	Hideyuki Hiraoka	Akiko Takeshita
Shinpei Yamada	Junpu Matsui	Mariko Mori
Fumika Chiba	Yusuke Kimura	Yumi Kobayashi
Dogen Sato	Ayari Itoh	Yoko Yamamoto
Fuyuko Tsuji	Haruna Miki	

## ENGLISH FILMED CAST & CREW

Sinead Wall	Jo Young
Anthony Mamos	Lynzi Jenkins
Dave Parkin	Amy-Louise Brassington
Hannah Nicklin	Jen Thorne
Charlie Copsey	Anna Neil
Ryan Kerrison	Bex Woolston
Steve Middleditch	Beth Copeland
Esther Simpson	Lydia Outhwaite
Ellie Douglas Allan	Joanna Wassall
Neal Swettenham	Simon Parker

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

### SINCE I WAS 9 YEARS OLD –

I have been making theater.

Now, in my 70s, I increasingly find the theater a less and less appropriate arena in which to develop the laboratory-like work that obsesses me, luring me deeper and deeper into the particular truths I feel driven to explore.

What to do?

I still need the concrete, 3-dimensional arena of performance, though now admittedly semi-erased, by the slow hypnotism of tableau-based film. But the result is not just film, but rather — theater dissolving itself in the “acid-bath” of film, hopefully revealing beneath, the skeleton-support of consciousness itself. (Not theater, not film.)

This consciousness has been my 40-year obsession, as I have tried to establish an Ontological-Hysteric laboratory of the mind itself, eating away (always) at its own, (always) defective (always!) operation.

*(The ‘defective’ moment, is the powerhouse!)*

The stage is a large room with two projection screens on the upstage wall. Throughout the play the same film is projected on each screen. At the base of each screen is a ledge with a row of evenly distributed electric candles. Beneath the screen is a black wall with red vertical lines, like prison bars.

The stage-left and stage-right walls are lined from floor to ceiling with Victorian photographs of mediums and ectoplasmic images. Just off-center against the stage-left wall is a large black wood cabinet with glass panels; it contains numerous objects that come into use at different moments throughout the play. There are also photographs of mediums and ectoplasmic images leaning against the wall. The stage-right wall contains similar photographs in addition to two clocks. There is a large window-shaped opening in the center of the wall.

The floor is covered with a large crimson carpet. A wide white-and-black stripe runs diagonally across the carpet, left-of-center. Closer to the upstage screens are two small grand pianos, one larger and higher than the other, both of which are off-kilter, tilting toward the ground at a slight angle. To the right of the second piano is a diagonally shaped platform covered with brown carpet. Red waist-height piping runs around three-quarters of the platform. In the center of the platform is a large white cylindrical object. To the left of the platform is a black-and-gold stand with a small black flag with alchemical symbols. To the left and just in front of the first small grand piano is the same platform and object.

Two black-and-white striped strings run horizontally across the stage, and other objects, such as plastic black and white vases and books, are strewn around the stage.

### Typesetting Key

00:00 (time stamp)

**SCREEN** – Screen tableaux

**SCREEN LEGENDS**

Live stage action

Voiceover

*Sound  Music cue*

raised-hyphen: word pronounced with elongated syllables

0:00

Deep Voice: Absent. Look.

Girl with the Golden Dress enters from stage right, stands before the upstage screen, takes a white pill from a glass bowl on the small grand piano, then turns around to face the audience. While holding up her right arm, she places the pill on her tongue, slowly retracts it, swallows the pill, then clasps her hands together in front of herself and lowers her head as if in a state of contemplation.

0:51     **SCREENS – JAPAN SCENE 1.** A hallway strewn with pieces of furniture and clothing. A Japanese woman walks down the hallway. She is holding a piece of fabric in her hands, which are held behind her back, then turns toward the camera.

Voice: hissing noise with overlapping distorted voices slowly increasing in volume.

Deep Voice: Emp-ty.

Girl with Black Hair, Girl in Sailor Hat, ♪ Girl in Tiara all walk to stage left and stand against the wall. Girl with the Golden Dress follows them but sits against the wall. They remain still until their next action.

1:30     **SCREENS – FADE TO BLACK.**

## GO TO JAPAN !

Deep Voice: Click.

1:42     **SCREENS — FADE BACK IN TO JAPAN SCENE 1.** The Japanese woman continues to slowly walk down the hallway, sometimes stopping and turning toward the camera.

Deep Voice: Beginning. Ab-sent.

Sound cue: *ringing phone*.

Deep Voice: Double. One.

2:33     **SCREENS — X-FADE TO:** close-up of feet running down the hallway.

2:46     **SCREENS — X-FADE BACK TO JAPAN SCENE 1.** The Japanese woman proceeds walking down the hallway, turns toward the camera, then walks up the staircase at the end of the hallway and out of view.

Deep Voice: Stasis.

3:07     **SCREENS — JAPAN SCENE 1.** A Japanese man enters in white shirt, black pants, and black hat, then turns toward the camera. Fade to black.

Deep Voice: Look.

Sound cue: *thunderous boom (9x)*.

[ The following numbers appear on screen in left-to-right order, one by one, each to a thunderous boom. ]

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

# 10

Deep Voice: Damage.

Sound cue: *computer blip, wood block.*

3:29     **SCREENS — WIPE IN TO SHOT OF:** a Japanese woman in a floral blouse and blue skirt sitting outside on a pile of clothes. She quickly rubs her hands together again and again as if trying to clean them.

3:33     **SCREENS — FADE TO BLACK.**

# 11

Bulb flash.

# 12

3:37     **SCREENS — FADE IN TO CLOSE-UP OF:** Japanese boy & girl sitting on chairs and leaning forward.

Male Voice: He that drink-eth of this wa-ter [sound cue: *piano*] nev-er a-gain shall thirst.

# JAPAN

Deep Voice: Nev-er.



3:59     **SCREENS — WIPE BACK TO:** Japanese woman in floral dress rubbing her hands together.

All of the actors remain still.

4:19     **SCREEN — X-FADE TO CLOSE-UP OF:** Japanese woman's face.

Male Voice: Jap-a-nese peo-ple of all (sta-sis) a-ges  
[sound cue: *thunderous wood block clack (3x)*] who under-stand ...

All of the actresses swiftly turn toward the audience, then slowly cover their faces with their hands & remain still.

Male Voice: O-pen this do-or. Per-ma-nent. Da-mage.

4:52     **SCREENS — FADE TO BLACK.**

## MEANWHILE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD

Deep Voice: Real.

Music cue: *modernist piano*.

All the actresses lower their hands and turn toward the upstage screen.

5:06     **SCREENS — WIPE TO CLOSE-UP OF:** a group of English girls on a couch holding playing cards. Behind them stand other girls, their faces covered with newspaper.

Music cue: *piano*.

Male Voice: Young En-glish peo-ple.

All of the actresses shout in unison then turn away from the screens and cover their faces with their hands & remain still.

Deep Voice: Work.

5:21     **SCREENS – WIPE TO CLOSE-UP OF:** blonde English girl.

All of the actresses turn toward the screens & remain still.

Sound cue: *thunderous wood block clack (3x), computer blip*.

5:25     **SCREENS – WIPE TO CLOSE-UP OF:** shorthaired brunette English girl holding up playing cards. Another girl rearranges the cards in her hand. Wipe to the same scene again.

Male Voice: Young En-glish peo-ple who (Look) un-der-stand  
[music cue: *piano*] ... work.

All of the actresses turn away from the screens and cover their faces.

5:40     **SCREENS – WIPE TO CLOSE-UP OF:** English women tearing paper hats from their heads, then ripping them into pieces.

All of the actresses turn toward stage right, still covering their faces.

5:44     **SCREEN – WIPE TO LONG SHOT OF:** English women ripping paper hats.

Male Voice: Work, work ... Al-ways.

Music cue: *solo clarinet*.

5:52     **SCREENS — WIPE TO:** two English girls in red dresses, their arms entwined. A man in a white button-up shirt sits in front of them, his hands covering his face.

Male Voice: This is ... work. Emp-ty.

All of the actresses remove their hands from their faces and walk to the screens, then kneel beneath them. Man in Striped Suit turns in a circle then places his hands on his chest.

6:09     **SCREENS — WIPE TO BLACK.**

Male Voice: Go to New York Ci-ty.

All of the actresses turn away from the screens & toward the audience and shout in unison.

Music cue: *piano*.

HE THAT  
DRINKETH  
OF THIS WATER  
NEVER AGAIN  
SHALL THIRST

Sound cue: *violent wood block clack*.

All of the actresses shout again. Man in Striped Suit turns to face the screens.

Male Voice: Re-al.

6:26 **SCREENS — WIPE BACK TO JAPAN SCENE 2.** A tableau of two Japanese women and a man. One woman is lying on a raised bed and the other is crouched over her like a dog. A Japanese man sits in front of them. A Japanese woman enters ↻ removes a blindfold from the crouching Japanese woman's face.

Girl with Black Hair, Girl with the Golden Dress, and Girl with the Tiara walk to the stage-left wall. Girl in Sailor Hat kneels behind Man in Striped Suit and closes her hands over her chest as if in prayer or contemplation.

Male Voice: Click. Look.

7:01 **SCREENS — WIPE TO CLOSE-UP OF:** Japanese girl whispering in a Japanese man's ear.

Male Voice: Un-fold. A men-tal win-dow ..... (Ab-sent).  
A men-tal win-dow.

7:15 **SCREENS — VERTICAL WIPE TO CLOSE-UP OF:** a room with wooden walls and lighted half-round white windows. Japanese girl in green jacket stretching her arm out in front of her. She is surrounded by a group of people, some of whom hold playing cards, face out. The girl in the green jacket extends her arm then retracts it.

Light flare on screens.

Male Voice: He1-lo.



[Numbers shift clockwise (7x) to the soft *computer blip* sound cue.]

Music cue: *gentle piano refrain.*

Male Voice: Emp-ty.

7:37     **SCREENS — FADE TO:** English girl with right arm extended.  
           She retracts her arm and extends the other.

Male Voice: Pose ..... Pause.

Light flare.

7:50     **SCREENS — WIPE BACK TO JAPAN SCENE 2.**

Male Voice: Pose ... for me.

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Girl in Tiara, Girl in Golden Dress, and Girl with Black  
Hair slowly lower their hands and turn toward the  
screens.

Male Voice: Click.

8:05     **SCREENS – JAPAN SCENE 2.** A young girl enters and blindfolds the crouching woman. A woman in a red dress and beret whispers into the ear of a man sitting next to her.

Male Voice: A-ware of no new (be-gin-ning) the-o-ret-i-cal  
ba-sis.

Music cue: *modernist piano* (3x).

Girl in Sailor Hat walks to stage right.

8:23     **SCREENS – JAPAN SCENE 2.** The young girl enters and removes the blindfold. Japanese WOMAN: “You un-der-stand me im-me-di-ate-ly when I say...”

Stage actresses all shout in unison.

8:40     **SCREENS – JAPAN SCENE 2.** The Japanese man in front is blindfolded.

Male Voice: He that drink-eth of this wa-ter.

Man in Striped Suit sits beneath the stage-left screen.  
Girl with Black Hair stands next to him and poses, raising her hands in the air.

**SCREENS – JAPAN SCENE 2.** Japanese WOMAN: “Knock, knock.”


In unison, Girl with the Tiara, Girl in Golden Dress, and Girl in Sailor Hat emit a high-pitched lilting moan & raise their hands in the air, striking poses.

Male Voice: Dou-ble.

MAN in Striped Suit: *Guarda la mia scarpa, sporca.*

Girl with Black Hair holds her hands in the air and slowly gyrates her hips.

**SCREENS — Japanese WOMAN:** “You un-der-stand me im-me-di-ate-ly when I say...”

9:11 **SCREENS — WIPE TO JAPAN SCENE 3.** A room with wooden walls  lighted half-round white windows. Against the wall is a Japanese woman in a hat holding up playing cards. To her right is the woman in the green jacket, who extends her arm toward the camera. In front of them is a group of three Japanese men sitting on the ground.

Voice: Di gi ri do, digidi doooooo, yip!

**SCREENS — JAPAN SCENE 3.** Japanese WOMAN, continuing: “... mental activity plus nobody home. [ Sound cue: *thunderous boom + computer blip* ] Knock, knock.”

Girl with Black Hair quickly turns toward the screens, then back toward the audience while placing her right finger against her forehead.

## MENTAL ACTIVITY PLUS

Male Voice: A-lert, but no new the-o-ret-i-cal ba-sis. Sta-sis.

Girl with Black Hair lowers her hand very slowly and turns toward the screens and stares at them.

Music cue: *modernist opera*.

9:36 **SCREENS — JAPAN SCENE 3.** Japanese MAN: “I un-der-stand you im-me-di-ate-ly when you say, I too, am al-ways in the same place. Knock, knock.”

Male Voice: Beginning. Damage.

I UNDERSTAND YOU IMMEDIATE-  
LY WHEN YOU SAY.....

9:44

I TOO AM ALWAYS IN THE SAME  
PLACE .....

Girl with Black Hair walks toward the screens and reaches out to touch them, then quickly turns toward the audience, then opens the doors of the cabinet and removes a large playing card. She walks to a cylindrical ceremonial object beneath the upstage screen and holds the card over the object as she stares at the screens.

Man in Striped Suit walks to center stage, stands on a small, carpeted platform, and places his hands on his chest. Girl with the Golden Dress, Girl with the Tiara, and Girl in Sailor Hat line up next to Man in Striped Suit, then place open black books against their foreheads and slowly sway their hips back and forth while staring at Man in Striped Suit.

Music cue: *opera*.

Deep Voice: Emp-ty.

Sound cue: *loud thunderous wood block clack (3x)*.

Male Voice: Nev-er.

Girl in Sailor Hat and Girl with the Tiara place their books against Man in Striped Suit's chest then place his hands over the books. They retreat to the stage-left wall. He drops the books and turns toward the screens.





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