

Public Abstract

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Title:Tempting The Miracle: Sacred Theatre, or Exploring Suzuki/Viewpoints and Composition In Directing John Pielmeiers *Agnes Of God* - An Auto/Ethnographic Memoir

In December of 2008, I directed *Agnes of God* as part of the academic year season of the University of Missouri Columbia Department of Theatre. I took this opportunity to seize the moment and, through intense actor training and an auteur directorial approach, develop a performative manifesto that sought no less than the revitalization of the live theatrical event within the cultural economy. The production asked, and attempted to answer the following: What is the sacred?; What is its relationship to theatre and performance?, Can it be conjured in theatrical time and space?, If so, how?, and finally: What is the experience that sacred theatre can deliver to performers and spectators alike? For my collaborators and me, this involved a full-scale theatreing of the sacred, an extra-ordinary event tempted (through tenacity, diligence, and a belief in the miraculous) via the Suzuki Method of Actor Training (developed by Tadashi Suzuki) and Viewpoints training and Composition method of performance-making (both developed by Anne Bogart). This dissertation, conceived as a piece of performative auto/ethnographic writing, explores the accidents and unpredictabilities that made the production process so wonder-full and, in endeavoring to evoke what it names, so tempts the active, subjective and vulnerable participation of readers.