

BAMcinémathèque presents *Peter Brook: Behind the Camera*, Oct 10-20

The nine-film, ten day retrospective opens with Brook in attendance at *The Mahabharata*

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Aug 18, 2016/Brooklyn, NY— Following BAM's US premiere engagement of *Battlefield*, BAMcinémathèque presents *Peter Brook: Behind the Camera*, from Monday, Oct 10 through Thursday, Oct 20. The nine-film retrospective highlights Brook's work for the screen, shedding light on films that bring renewed life to an array of great literary works.

The series opens with Peter Brook in person to introduce *The Mahabharata* (1989—Oct 10), an epic film adaptation of his stage masterpiece. The 325-minute film is based on the longest known epic poem, originally in Sanskrit, and depicts the events and characters of the Kurukshetra War. Stephen Holden of *The New York Times* wrote, "*The Mahabharata* is an allegory with strong utopian overtones of colliding world cultures and political philosophies in which civilization rises, falls and is reborn." The screenplay was co-written by Brook, Jean-Claude Carrière and Marie-Hélène Estienne.

Peter Brook: Behind the Camera will include the first US theatrical run of the digitally restored *Tell Me Lies* (1968—Oct 14–20). The film is adapted from Denis Cannan's play *US* and stars members of the Royal Shakespeare Company. With a story grounded in the sordid politics of the Vietnam War, it was mired in controversy but applauded at the Venice Film Festival where it received a special mention from the Jury and was awarded the Luis Buñuel prize. Brook made his filmmaking debut with *The Beggar's Opera* (1953—Oct 11), starring screen legend Laurence Olivier in his only film musical. Based on the Marguerite Duras novel, Brook's *Moderato cantabile* (1960—Oct 12) screened at the 1960 Cannes Film Festival, where it won the great Jeanne Moreau the Best Actress award. In yet another showcase for outstanding acting, the BAFTA-nominated *Swann in Love* (1984—Oct 17) stars Jeremy Irons in a screenplay adapted from the Proust novel by Brook, with Estienne, Carrière, and its director Volker Schlöndorff. The series also includes a new digital restoration of *Meetings with Remarkable Men* (1979—Oct 13), based on the book of the same name by Greek-Armenian mystic, G. I. Gurdjieff; and *Marat/Sade* (1967—Oct 16), adapted from Brook's theater production of the play by Peter Weiss.

Perhaps the most notable of Brook's literary adaptations is *Lord of the Flies* (1963—Oct 15). Using a cast of school boys, Brook successfully portrays William Golding's vision of civilization breaking down in the absence of adult supervision. Brook took on the Bard with *King Lear* (1971—Oct 18), which the British Film Institute called "arguably Brook's finest accomplishment within the British cinema."

Peter Brook was born in London in 1925 and has achieved distinction throughout his career in the disciplines of theater, opera, film, and writing. Brook has become identified with a pared-down, minimalist style in which the audience is returned to a raw and unmediated encounter with the power of the performing art. He has directed more than 70 productions in London, Paris, and New York. Brook's work with the Royal Shakespeare Company includes *Love's Labour's Lost* (1946), *Measure for Measure* (1950), *Titus Andronicus* (1955), *King Lear* (1962), *Marat/Sade* (1964), *US* (1966), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1970), and *Antony and Cleopatra* (1978). In 1971, he co-founded the International Centre for Theatre Research (C.I.R.T) in Paris with Micheline Rozan and in 1974 he established its permanent base at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord. There he directed *Timon of Athens*, *The Iks*, *Ubu aux Bouffes*, *Conference of the Birds*,

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L'Os, The Cherry Orchard, The Mahabharata, Woza Albert!, The Tempest, The Man Who, Qui est là, Happy Days, Je Suis un Phénomène Le Costume, The Tragedy of Hamlet, Far Away, Le Mort de Krishna, Ta Main dans la Mienne, The Grand Inquisitor, Tierno Bokar, Sizwe Banzi, Fragments, Warum Warum, Love is my Sin, 11 and 12, The Suit, Valley of Astonishment, and the opera Une Flute Enchantée. Brook directed the operas *La Bohème, Boris Godunov, The Olympians, Salomé, and Le Nozze de Figaro* at Covent Garden; *Faust and Eugene Onegin* at The Metropolitan Opera; *La Tragédie de Carmen* and *Impressions of Pelleas* at the Bouffes du Nord; and *Don Giovanni* at the Aix-en-Provence Festival. Brook won four Tony Awards, for direction of *The Visit* (1959), *Irma La Douce* (1961), *Marat/Sade* (1966), and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1971).

Brook's history with BAM began with his highly influential production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1971 Spring Season) and continued with the historic *The Mahabharata* (1987 Next Wave), *The Cherry Orchard* (1988 Spring Season), *The Man Who* (1995 Spring Season), and *The Tragedy of Hamlet* (2001 Spring Season). Brook helped restage *The Island* (2003 Spring Season) and was most recently at BAM directing Can Themba's play about adultery in the apartheid era, *The Suit* (2013 Winter/Spring), about which *The New York Times* wrote: "The sadness will linger, but so will an elating sense of this show's enfolding magic."

In addition to directing theater and film, Brook wrote screenplays and a memoir, *Threads of Time*, in 1998. He authored *The Empty Space* (1968), translated into over 15 languages; *The Shifting Point, There Are No Secrets, The Open Door, Evoking (and Forgetting Shakespeare), With Grotowski*, and his most recent book *The Quality of Mercy*, about Shakespeare. Brook founded the Oxford University Film Society in London, where he received his Master of Arts degree.

For press information about *Peter Brook: Behind the Camera* contact Maureen Masters at mmasters@BAM.org or 718.724.8023. For press information about *Battlefield* contact Sandy Sawotka at ssawotka@BAM.org or 718.636.4190.

Peter Brook: Behind the Camera Schedule

Mon, Oct 10

The Mahabharata (1989)
7pm

Tue, Oct 11

The Beggar's Opera (1953)
5, 7:15, 9:30pm

Wed, Oct 12

Moderato Cantabile (aka Seven Days...Seven Nights) (1960)
7:15, 9:15pm

Thu, Oct 13

Meetings with Remarkable Men (1979)
4:30, 7, 9:30pm

Fri, Oct 14

Tell Me Lies (A Film About London) (1968)
2, 4:30, 7, 9:30pm

Sat, Oct 15

Lord of the Flies (1963)
2, 7pm
Tell Me Lies (A Film About London) (1968)
4:30, 9:30pm

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Sun, Oct 16

Marat/Sade (1967)

4, 9pm

Tell Me Lies (A Film About London) (1968)

6:30pm

Mon, Oct 17

Swan in Love (Volker Schlöndorff, 1984)

7pm

Tell Me Lies (A Film About London) (1968)

4:30, 9:30pm

Tue, Oct 18

King Lear (1971)

7pm

Tell Me Lies (A Film About London) (1968)

4:30, 9:50pm

Wed, Oct 19

Tell Me Lies (A Film About London) (1968)

4:30pm

Thu, Oct 20

Tell Me Lies (A Film About London) (1968)

4:30, 7, 9:30pm

Film Descriptions

***The Beggar's Opera* (1953)**

With Laurence Olivier, Stanley Holloway, Dorothy Tutin.

The seeds of Brook's genius are apparent in his first film, a delightfully eccentric adaptation of John Gay's satirical 18th-century ballad opera (the inspiration for Brecht/Weill's *The Threepenny Opera*) about the romantic and criminal exploits of roguish highwayman Macheath (Olivier). Strikingly shot in Technicolor, it's a bawdy lampoon of British class structure rife with the director's individualistic touches. *35mm.*

Tue, Oct 11 at 5, 7:15, 9:30pm

***King Lear* (1971)**

With Paul Scofield, Irene Worth, Jack MacGowran.

Brook's bleakly beautiful, elemental take on Shakespeare's towering tragedy—about a tyrant's descent into madness after he divides his kingdom among his duplicitous daughters—has an almost primeval power. Set amid barren, wintry landscapes and shot in stark black and white, it's a chilling vision of decay and decline featuring an astonishing ensemble led by Paul Scofield's devastating Lear. *35mm.*

Tue, Oct 18 at 7pm

***Lord of the Flies* (1963)**

With James Aubrey, Tom Chapin, Hugh Edwards.

A relentless prober of human behavior, Brook proved an ideal interpreter of William Golding's classic nature vs. nurture novel. His take on the story—about a band of British schoolboys stranded on a desert island who descend into barbarism—is a dark, searing evocation of societal breakdown, filmed with a disturbingly naturalistic, almost ethnographic eye. *35mm.*

Sat, Oct 15 at 2, 7pm

***The Mahabharata* (1989)**

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With Robert Langdon-Lloyd, Antonin Stahly-Viswanadhan, Bruce Myers.

Brook's dazzlingly ambitious adaptation of his legendary stage version of the Hindu epic—one of the landmarks of modern theater—is a sweeping saga of two families locked in a cosmic battle of good vs. evil that encompasses gods, myth, magic, and the story of all humankind. Performed by a top-tier international cast, Brook's *Mahabharata* is a transcendent, singular work of art. *DVD*.

Mon, Oct 10 at 7pm – Introduced by Peter Brook

***Marat/Sade* (1967)**

With Patrick Magee, Ian Richardson, Glenda Jackson.

In an insane asylum in early 19th-century France, the Marquis de Sade directs the inmates in a most unusual spectacle: a recreation of the assassination of revolutionary writer Jean-Paul Marat told through verse, songs, and a barrage of avant-garde devices. Brook's legendary staging of Peter Weiss' play is an intense, profound, and provocative exploration of human nature that pits Marat's radical idealism against de Sade's libertine nihilism. *35mm*.

Sun, Oct 16 at 4, 9pm

***Meetings with Remarkable Men* (1979)**

With Dragan Maksimovic, Terence Stamp, Mikica Dimitrijevic.

Brook's account of the early life of Russian mystic G. I. Gurdjieff, his travels through Central Asia, and encounters with various teachers (including Terence Stamp as a Russian prince) is a trance-like, ineffably spiritual experience. Strikingly shot on location in Afghanistan, it features a rare glimpse of the legendary "movements": the sacred dances Gurdjieff developed in his quest for enlightenment. New digital restoration. *DCP*.

Thu, Oct 13 at 4:30, 7, 9:30pm

***Moderato Cantabile* (1960)**

With Jeanne Moreau, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Pascale de Boysson.

After witnessing a murder, a rich housewife (Moreau, winner of the Best Actress award at Cannes) is drawn into an illicit affair with a stranger (Belmondo) who fuels her morbid fascination with the crime. Like *Hiroshima mon amour*, also adapted by Marguerite Duras from her own novel, Brook's second film is a haunting, hypnotic romance shot in cool, modernist black and white. *35mm*.

Wed, Oct 12 at 7:15, 9:15pm

***Swann in Love* (1984)**

Dir. Volker Schlöndorff. With Jeremy Irons, Ornella Muti, Alain Delon.

Co-scripted by Brook and Jean-Claude Carrière, this big screen Proust adaptation (drawn from the first volume of *Remembrance of Things Past*) is a sexy, sumptuous, and lively affair. Jeremy Irons is the upper crust Charles Swann, caught in an obsessive liaison with a courtesan (Muti) in fin de siècle Paris. Alain Delon is memorable as Swann's gay confidante, Charlus, while Sven Nykvist provides the exquisite cinematography. *35mm*.

Mon, Oct 17 at 7pm

***Tell Me Lies* (1968)**

With Mark Jones, Glenda Jackson, Peggy Ashcroft.

Pulled from the Cannes Film Festival for its incendiary content, barely released, and thought to be lost until its recent rediscovery, Brook's long unseen assault on Vietnam-era complacency is a still resonant political wake up call. Based on the controversial anti-war play *US*, *Tell Me Lies* is a Molotov cocktail of newsreel footage, Brechtian musical numbers, and agitprop skits (including a recreation of the last 48 hours in the life of self-immolator Norman Morrison) performed by leading members of the Royal Shakespeare Company and featuring Black Power activist Stokely Carmichael. It leaves audiences with a powerful question: what is our personal responsibility to end oppression? *DCP*.

Fri, Oct 14 at 2, 4:30, 7, 9:30pm & Sat, Oct 15 at 4:30, 9:30pm & Sun, Oct 16 at 6:30pm & Mon, Oct 17 at 4:30, 9:30pm & Tue, Oct 18 at 4:30, 9:50pm & Wed, Oct 19 at 4:30pm & Thu, Oct 20 at 4:30, 7, 9:30pm

Additional Events:

Roundtable with Peter Brook and Marie H el ene Estienne

For emerging directors. Free, by application only. For information, visit BAM.org/masterclass
Oct 7 at 2pm
BAM Attic Studio

Participatory Reading of *The Mahabharata*

Sep 30 at 12pm
BAM Fisher Lower Lobby (321 Ashland Pl)
Free

The Mahabharata: Reimagining the Majestic Theater

An exhibition presented by the BAM Hamm Archives
Sep–Dec, BAM Harvey Theater (Campbell Lobby)

Credits

Bloomberg Philanthropies is the Season Sponsor.

A C.I.C.T.-Th eatre des Bouffes du Nord production

Co-produced by The Grotowski Institute, the PARCO Co. Ltd/Tokyo, Les Th eatres de la Ville de Luxembourg, the Young Vic Theatre/London, the Singapore Repertory Theatre, Le Th eatre de Li ege, C.I.R.T., the Attiki Cultural Society/Athens, and the Cercle des partenaires des Bouffes du Nord.

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General Information

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, BAM Rose Cinemas, and BAMcafé are located in the Peter Jay Sharp building at 30 Lafayette Avenue (between St Felix Street and Ashland Place) in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn. BAM Harvey Theater is located two blocks from the main building at 651 Fulton Street (between Ashland and Rockwell Places). Both locations house Greenlight Bookstore at BAM kiosks. BAM Fisher, located at 321 Ashland Place, is the newest addition to the BAM campus and houses the Judith and Alan Fishman Space and Rita K. Hillman Studio. BAM Rose Cinemas is Brooklyn's only movie house dedicated to first-run independent and foreign film and repertory programming. BAMcafé, operated by Great Performances, offers a dinner menu prior to BAM Howard Gilman Opera House evening performances. BAMcafé also features an eclectic mix of live music for BAMcafé Live on Friday and Saturday nights with a bar menu available starting at 6pm.

Subway: 2, 3, 4, 5, Q, B to Atlantic Avenue – Barclays Center (2, 3, 4, 5 to Nevins St for Harvey

Theater); D, N, R to Pacific Street; G to Fulton Street; C to Lafayette Avenue

Train: Long Island Railroad to Atlantic Terminal – Barclays Center

Bus: B25, B26, B41, B45, B52, B63, B67 all stop within three blocks of BAM

Car: Limited commercial parking lots are located near BAM. Visit BAM.org for information.

For ticket information, call BAM Ticket Services at 718.636.4100, or visit BAM.org.

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