



Vsevolod Meyerhold
1874-1940

An introduction to the extraordinary life and achievement of the Russian theatre director Vsevolod Meyerhold. Written out of history during Stalin's tyrannical regime, Meyerhold has emerged in recent decades as a major figure in 20th Century theatre. His work as an actor and radical director of plays both old and new, his bold experiments with acting technique and stage craft, his relationship with Stanislavsky and collaborations with Mayakovsky and others are considered against the volatile backdrop of his country's turbulent 20th Century.

Dramatic tableaux...
...in bas relief

The melodious style of delivery and movements in slow motion were designed to preserve the implicitness of expression...
Meyerhold

All dressed as one, with completely identical gestures, with slow restrained movements and following one another precisely, they moved the whole time in profile in order to maintain the repose of a bas-relief; they passed before you like a wonderful design on the grey stone of an ancient cathedral. . . Here was a crowd, a mass in which no individual led a separate life or constituted a separate character which might disrupt the essential idea and impression of the mass. Here was a unity that by its unity, by the rhythm of all its movements, poses and gestures, produced a far deeper impression than a naturalistic crowd split up into separate elements.
Y. Znosko-Borovsky

SAMPLE SLIDES

Description of Maria Babanova in the role of Stella

Her performance is based on rhythms, precise and economical like a construction. Not the rhythms of speech, of words and pauses. No, the rhythms of steps, surfaces and space. Few words to speak of. The part is built on movement, and the words are thrown at the audience with unusual power, like a ball hitting a target. No modulation, no crescendo or piano. No psychology . . .

Her feet are trained not for the gentle rake of the ordinary stage, but for the dizzying cascades of steps, ramps, bridges and slopes.

Maria Babanova

The Magnanimous Cuckold
Critical views

Many of those who saw *The Magnanimous Cuckold* and many of the young actors (including myself) who worked with Meyerhold regard it as the most complete and the most significant of all his productions during the entire period of his theatre's existence - because of the way it revealed the fundamental purity of his style of acting, and the way it displayed most eloquently his system of biomechanics.
Igor Ilinsky

100 Slides & Video 2x75 Minute sessions