



2016 specification  
first exams in 2016 (2017 for AS)

# Artaud: A Complete Guide

For AS and A Level Eduqas Drama

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# Contents

Product Support from ZigZag Education .....	ii
Terms and Conditions of Use .....	iii
Teacher's Introduction.....	1
Assessment Coverage .....	2
Summary of the Resource .....	3
Overview of Activities .....	4
Section 1 – Who was Artaud?.....	5
Section 2 – Key Drama Terminology .....	6
Section 3 – The Artaud Timeline.....	7
Section 4 – What is the 'Theatre of Cruelty'? .....	9
Section 5 – Summary of <i>The Theatre and Its Double</i> .....	12
Section 6 – To Thine Own Self be Cruel.....	14
Section 7 – Artaud, Audience and Auditorium .....	15
Section 8 – Extremes .....	16
Section 9 – Artaud's Use of the Actor .....	17
Section 10 – Rituals .....	18
Section 11 – Artaud and the Balinese Dancers .....	19
Section 12 – Communication to an Audience .....	20
Section 13 – Ineffectuality of the Spoken Word .....	21
Section 14 – Artaud's Use of Language .....	22
Section 15 – The Surrealist Tradition .....	24
Section 16 – Artaud: Sound, Lighting and Film .....	26
Section 17 – Happenings.....	27
Section 18 – Putting It All Together .....	27
Section 19 – Performance Focus: <i>Jet de Sang</i> .....	28
Section 20 – Artaud's Influence and His Legacy.....	31
Section 21 – Links to the Eduqas Specification .....	32
Section 22 – Artaud Essay Questions for Exam Practice.....	34
General Practice Questions.....	34
Exam-style Questions.....	34
Teacher's Notes and Answers .....	35

# Teacher's Introduction

Antonin Artaud was a French actor, theatre director, dramatist, poet and essayist. He was born on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 1896 and died on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 1948. His works and writings have influenced many theatre practitioners including the playwright Peter Schaffer and his play *Equus*. Artaud is most known for the development of his theory of 'The Theatre of Cruelty'.

For students and teachers, the study of the theories of Antonin Artaud can provide an exciting exploration of the structure of theatre and how theatre can be pushed to its extremes. The extremes of Artaud's theories provide students with inspiration for their own practical work and provide techniques that can be used to explore texts. While written primarily to support the work of students and teachers working with the Eduqas AS and A Level Drama and Theatre Studies specifications, the activities and information within the pack can be applied to general practitioner study. In the AS specifications, the work of Artaud can be applied to Component 1: Performance Workshop and in the A Level specification Component 1: Theatre Workshop and Component 2: Text in Action.

## What is included in the resource?

This resource contains many different activities that will help guide teachers and learners through a study of the techniques of Antonin Artaud. The first section in this resource will explore who Artaud was and the historical and social context that Artaud lived and worked in. The second section will explore the techniques of Artaud and will examine how the techniques can be realised through discussions, research, and practical activities. The final section will explore how the work of Artaud can be applied to the Eduqas AS and A Level syllabus.

## How to use this resource

The analysis in this resource is not meant as a definitive guide to the work of Antonin Artaud but a set of resources that can be given as student-led worksheets or some workshop ideas for teacher-led activities. Each activity is labelled as either a discussion, research, practical activity, video-based activity, or script work. The teacher notes sections provide some guidance as to expected responses to the comprehension activities. The teacher notes will also provide starting points for discussion and will provide pointers for teachers to include in the discussion to help steer it if needed.

Many of the practical activities will have no accompanying teacher notes as there are no right or wrong responses for the students to have. However, some of the practical activities will have an outline as to the purpose of the task and some given success criteria that will help teachers ensure the aims of the task are realised by the students.

*January 2022*

# Assessment Coverage

## Assessment Objectives for AS and A Level Drama and Theatre

The assessment objectives are the same for all AS and A Level Drama qualifications

### AS Drama and Theatre Studies

Component	Assessment Objectives			
	A01	A02	A03	A04
Component 1: Performance Workshop	20	30	0	10
Component 2: Text in Context	0	0	30	10
<b>Total for AS</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20</b>

#### Students Must:

<b>A01</b>	Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning as part of the theatre-making process, making connections between dramatic theory and practice
<b>A02</b>	Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance
<b>A03</b>	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre are developed and performed
<b>A04</b>	Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others

### A Level Drama and Theatre Studies

Component	Assessment Objectives			
	A01	A02	A03	A04
Component 1: Theatre Workshop	10	10	0	10
Component 2: Text in Action	10	20	0	10
Component 3: Text in Performance	0	0	30	10
<b>Total for GCE A Level</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20</b>

#### Students Must:

<b>A01</b>	Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning as part of the theatre-making process, making connections between dramatic theory and practice
<b>A02</b>	Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance
<b>A03</b>	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre are developed and performed
<b>A04</b>	Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others

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## Summary of the Resource

This resource will explore some of the key principles of the theories and methods of the practitioner Antonin Artaud.

Here is a summary of the key areas:

- Theatre of Cruelty
- The summary of *The Theatre and Its Double*
- Artaud's notion of cruelty
- Artaud and the audience and auditorium
- Artaud's view of making everything larger than life
- Artaud and the actor and their training
- Rhythm and rituals in Artaud's work
- Artaud's view of the Balinese dance and the impact this had on his theories
- Artaud's view of the use and style of language in theatre
- Artaud's influence on the surrealists
- Artaud's influence on the use of sound, lights and film in theatre
- A final brief look at Artaud's own production of *Jet of Blood* (also known as *Le Sang*)

### Further Study

Further study could be made of Alfred Jarry and his role in the development of Dadaism.

An interesting viewing and ultimate discussion on Artaud's theories in performance is the DVD version of *Marat/Sade*. This can be purchased on DVD.

Make use of YouTube as there are many videos of people's performance which can be shown to your students.

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## Overview of Activities

Page	Task type	Description
5	Research	Students to research Artaud and present their findings
6	Discussion	Class discussion on four key terms that Artaud uses
7	Research	Artaud timeline with no gaps (optional discussion)
8	Research	Artaud timeline with gaps
14	Practical	Fast-paced warm-up
14	Practical	Pairs storytelling task
14	Practical	Whole group – Quick Freeze
14	Practical	Large group task – Physical Theatre
14	Discussion	Discussion on practical activities and on being creative
16	Practical	Solo work – Rituals to Rhythms
16	Practical	Pair work – Synchronised Movement
16	Practical	Pair work – Slow-motion Fight Sequence
16	Practical	Whole group – Extreme Reactions
16	Discussion	Discussion on exaggeration and slow-motion
18	Practical	Pair work – Clapping Rhythm
18	Practical	Whole class – Follow My Leader Rhythm
18	Practical	Create your own ritual
17	Discussion	Rituals
19	Video	Watch video of Balinese dancers
20	Written	Individual reflection task
21	Practical	Storytelling (no words)
21	Practical	Developing performance
21	Discussion	Using words
23	Research	Work of Dario Fo
25	Practical	Whole group – Greetings
25	Discussion	Whole-class discussion on the themes explored
25	Practical	Small groups – Symbols
27	Practical	Small groups – Happenings
27	Practical	Small groups – Putting It Together
30	Script work	Whole class read script of <i>Jet of Blood</i>
31	Video	Watch a video of <i>Jet of Blood</i>
35	Exam Practice	Artaud Essay Questions

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## Section 1 – Who was Artaud

To start your journey with Artaud you need to put Artaud into context with his time.

Using your research skills, find out as much information as you can in answer to the questions below.

1. When and where was Antonin Artaud born?	
2. What family did he have?	
3. What was his education like?	
4. List his main career highlights.	
5. What influenced Artaud's work?	
6. What were his main pieces of writing?	
7. Are there any theatre companies who have used the techniques of Artaud?	

### Evidence

Using your research, you can present this as either a poster or a Powerpoint presentation.

You can work individually or in small groups.

### Hint

- Don't use Wikipedia, it's not a reliable source.
- See what you can find from books or Google Scholar.
- Reference your sources.

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## Section 2 – Key Drama Termin

Do your own research into these key drama terms and then discuss them in your

Physical theatre

Total

Visual theatre

Har

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## Section 3 – The Artaud Timeline

	<b>1896:</b> Artaud is born
<b>1900:</b> Artaud, aged four, suffers from meningitis	
<b>1916:</b> Joined the French army; sleepwalking. Was admitted to a mental institution.	
<b>1920:</b> Released from the mental health institution. He moved to Paris to become a writer and realised his passion for experimental theatre.	
<b>1927:</b> Artaud trained as an actor with Jacques Dullin and Georges Pitoëff. Wrote several essays. As an actor, had a role in <i>Jean-Paul Marat</i> .	
<b>1928:</b> Developed a passion for cinema; wrote a plan for the first surrealist film, <i>The Seashell and the Clergyman</i> . Artaud appeared in his first film, <i>Passion of Joan of Arc</i> .	
<b>1931:</b> At an exposition he saw a Balinese dance. This period was the source of many of his ideas for theatre.	
<b>1935:</b> Artaud's production of <i>The Cenci</i> premiered. The play was a complete flop. The performance used the first electronic instrument, called an Ondes Martenot.	
<b>1936:</b> Artaud went to study anthropology in the Americas.	
<b>1938:</b> <i>The Theatre and Its Double</i> was published. This book featured Artaud's two essays called 'The Theatre of Cruelty' and 'The Theatre of Equilibrium'.	
<b>1946:</b> Spent time in various mental institutions. He was released from these institutions in 1946 and lived in a clinic in Ivry-sur-Seine.	
<b>1947:</b> Recorded <i>Pour en finir avec le jugement de dieu</i> , to be broadcast on the radio. It was not broadcast until 30 years later.	
<b>1948:</b> Artaud dies	

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## The Artaud timeline

	<b>1896:</b> Artaud is born
<b>1900:</b> Artaud, aged four, suffers from meningitis	
	<b>1916:</b>
<b>1920:</b> Released from the mental health institution, he moved to Paris to become a writer. Possessed a passion for experimental theatre.	
<b>?</b>	<b>1927:</b> Artaud trained as an actor with Jacques Copeau, Robert Dullin and Georges Pitoëff. Wrote theatrical essays. As an actor, had a role in Jean-Paul Marat.
<b>?</b>	<b>1928:</b>
	<b>1931:</b>
<b>?</b>	<b>1935:</b>
	<b>1936:</b>
<b>1938:</b> <i>The Theatre and Its Double</i> was published. This book featured Artaud's two essays: 'The Theatre of Cruelty' and 'The Theatre of the Future'.	
<b>?</b>	<b>1946:</b> Spent time in various mental health institutions. Released from these institutions in 1946 and lived in a clinic in Ivry-sur-Seine.
<b>?</b>	<b>1947:</b>
	<b>1948:</b> Artaud dies

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## Section 4 – What is the ‘Theatre of Cruelty’

### Defining Artaud’s ‘Theatre’ and ‘Cruelty’

Theatre of Cruelty is often misunderstood as just relating to violence, and those who use the narrow definition of cruelty. It would be useful when trying to get a definition to explore the two words ‘theatre’ and ‘cruelty’ separately. Artaud wrote about his ideas and outlines both ‘theatre’ and ‘cruelty’ as being split from their everyday meanings. Theatre is more than a performance with an audience just observing the performance. The theatre is an experience; the action within the performance engages the audience and can also be an experience. Artaud thought that good theatre would be a happening that would engage the audience and arouse their capacity for change.

When examining the phrase ‘theatre of cruelty’ we need to look much deeper than the word just refers to cruelty in an emotional or physical sense. According to scholars, cruelty is not just about physical violence. Artaud would have seen the cruelty of life being the constant version of reality that we live through. Artaud wanted to represent the mundane events that we all go through which have a profound and unnecessary impact on our lives.

The Theatre of Cruelty explores situations that characters are in that put them in a state of crisis. Those events where we think that everything is conspired against us.

### The Break from the Western Tradition

Early twentieth-century Paris became known as a melting pot for new inventions in art. At this time in Paris was heavily influenced by people who funded the theatres, many of whom had great influence. These people preferred to watch farces by writers such as Georges Feydeau, who weren’t as experimental as those in other areas of the visual arts had become. The rise of the realist movement, but this made very little impact on French theatre. At this time he began to see that his ideas of what theatre is were different from what the realist movement within theatre had placed the audience on the outside of the performance. This style of theatre was the opposite of Artaud’s views. Artaud wanted the audience to be presented on stage. Artaud wanted to move away from the style of theatre that focused on the excesses that society experience and that the audiences were

### Information and Extension Research

#### Who was Georges Feydeau?

Georges Feydeau (8 December 1862 – 5 June 1921) was a French playwright, known for his farces. He wrote over 60 plays and is said to have been the starting point for Artaud’s Theatre of Cruelty.

#### Extension Research

Using your research skills, research the work of Georges Feydeau, and research the work of other playwrights who wrote farces.

#### Questions to consider

- Have any other playwrights written plays using farce?
- What is the difference in style between British farce and French farce?

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## Artaud and Approaches to Theatre of Cruelty

The Theatre of Cruelty is a name given that covers much of Artaud's work. This is a move away from the traditional Western theatre. Artaud wanted, through this style, to connect with the senses of the audience and connect with their subconscious thoughts and emotions. Artaud was unable to see any play performed in this style of theatre, but he has influenced modern theatre, such as Jean Genet, Jerzy Grotowski and the acclaimed director Peter Brook. You can find out about these people in Section 19 of the resource.

### Defining Artaud's 'Theatre' and 'Cruelty'

In many writings during his lifetime Artaud tried to define 'theatre' and 'cruelty' away from the meaning that people use in everyday life. Artaud wanted to distance his performance on a raised stage with an audience just by observing the action. He felt that the theatrical experience 'wakes us up. Nervous, hectic,' and that the audience expects 'action'.<sup>1</sup> Artaud wanted a theatrical experience that inspires an audience and is one that cannot be forgotten.

Likewise, cruelty is not just about violence and abusing someone emotionally or physically. Cruelty needs to be examined in a deeper way. It explores the tension we experience in life, the tension that we cannot be bothered to remove from our life, e.g. the hustle and bustle of modern life. In his Theatre of Cruelty, Artaud wanted a vehicle to express everything that he saw in the world: corruption in public office, over-indulgence in passion and the battle that people have to survive.

### Break with Western Theatre

Artaud felt that the theatre of his time that he experienced only looked at social issues and not at the individual.

To Artaud the theatre had become very limited in terms of its portrayal of the suffering of particular social groups. In his writing we can see that he wanted to explore the relationship between individuals towards each other the way they did. His idea behind theatre was that it should be a vehicle to express everything that he saw in the world. He believed that the theatre could help dispel all negative feelings people had and make them feel better.

### Ineffectuality of the Spoken Word

Artaud wanted to shock his audience, but he realised that language was not the best way to do this. He wanted to have no meaning and even to the point of using the phonics of words. In his writings he wanted his performances to reveal real emotions and experiences that everyday life often hides.

### Impossible Theatre

Theatre of Cruelty has been referred to as an impossible style of theatre, mainly because it was never given but also because of the lack of firm details Artaud gave to his concept. This led to others replicating it but many of these artists stated a link to Artaud's work.

In Artaud's theatre his performances were designed to be surreal and they included elements that showed Artaud's theory of life being cruel. Artaud wanted the audience to be shocked so that the performance could access the subconscious brain.

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<sup>1</sup> Gorelick, Nathan (2011). 'Life in Excess: Insurrection and Expenditure in Antonin Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty'.

## To Sum Up:

- Artaud created the idea of a Theatre of Cruelty.
- His work has influenced many other theatre practitioners.
- Artaud believed that theatre relied too heavily on the written word and reacted against this type of theatre.
- The Balinese theatre influenced Artaud; he believed that theatre should be based on dance, gesture, music and ritual.
- He thought that sound should be used more effectively. That screams and shouts at volume to produce an all-encompassing sensory experience.
- Huge masks and puppets would add to the spectacle. A total sensory experience.
- Artaud believed that actors needed to undergo intensive physical training to create an energetic physical theatre.
- Training would also focus on breath control; breathing patterns and chants by the actors.
- The action may take place anywhere; there is no need for a set stage.
- There is no division between audience and the actors created by lighting, scenery or costumes.
- Theatrical effects, if used, should be integral to the performance and enhanced by the use of technology used to mask it.
- The auditory and sensory experience and use of any technology should overcome the term 'Theatre of Cruelty' not to describe a theatre full of torture but to describe an audience to be unsettled and powerfully affected by the intensity of the performance.
- He saw theatre as a total experience that would be pivotal to the arts.
- This theatrical style is not about the audience sitting on comfortable seats, in a comfortable environment.

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## Section 5 – Summary of *The Theatre*

Artaud wrote down many of his ideas about theatre and how he thought theatre should be. He published a collection of essays and manifestos which Artaud himself decided to call *The Theatre and Its Double*.

Artaud found within the theatre a range of what he calls the doubles, and they are:

- Production and Metaphysics
- Theatre and the Plague
- Theatre of Cruelty, First and Second Manifestos

### Production and Metaphysics

Metaphysics is something very difficult to define when taken out of context. The term is a way of expressing something that has no rational explanation, such as the philosophical question of our existence. Artaud wanted to explore metaphysics as his world was not rational. Artaud viewed the world in an irrational way.

Artaud used metaphysics to help develop his Theatre of Cruelty and there are three things that contribute to his developing notion of the theatre of cruelty, and they are:

- Balinese Dancers
- *Lot and His Daughter*, a painting by Lucas van Leydan
- The Marx Brothers

### Balinese Dancers in 1931

In 1931 Artaud saw a performance of Balinese dancing in Paris and this performance was a major inspiration for his own type of theatre. This performance became a major influence on his theatre of cruelty. Artaud looked at several styles of theatre and some of them, such as Japanese Noh theatre, had some influence on his writings. However, it was the Balinese dance theatre that influenced him the most.

Artaud focused in on the movements and gestures from the Balinese dance theatre that were expressive and Artaud could see the emotions behind the movements. After returning to Paris, this was an opportunity for Artaud to see something that was a complete contrast to the abstract style he wanted for theatre. During the summer of 1931 he wrote several manifestos. One of these was 'Theatre Balinais à l'Exposition Coloniale', which appeared in the *Nouvelle Revue Française*. Artaud started to write his first manifesto of *The Theatre and Its Double* and this saw the beginning of the period of writing. For more detailed coverage on this, see section number 10.

### Key Term

#### Japanese Noh Theatre:

Is a classical form of Japanese theatre that has existed since the fourteenth century. It is performed on traditional stages and has a supernatural element to transform the audience. Noh theatre uses elaborate masks, traditional costumes and has a long and arduous training process. Many families have many generations of Noh performers. The performance is a combination of music, dance and drama. The gestures and the masks represent the roles the actors are playing.

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## Lot and His Daughter

In the Bible we are told the story of Lot and his daughters and how God destroyed the town of Sodom. In the story we learn how Lot seduced his daughters.

In the story Lot's family were allowed to be spared the fate of their fellow residents of Sodom as long as they left and never looked back. Lot and his daughters managed this but his wife did look back and was turned into a pillar of salt. Lot had to carry on with his daughters. The two daughters had left their husbands behind and they realised that no man would be coming to them in order to be able to carry on the family, so they decided to get pregnant by their father.

The subject matter of the painting was popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The painting by Van Leyden is said to be part of the 'Sodom' group of paintings. If we look closely at the painting we can see the main focus in the foreground, which is Lot and his two daughters, but the image on the right of the destruction of Sodom provides a second focus.



## The Marx Brothers

Artaud saw laughter as a great liberator and an emotion as powerful as any created. He thought how it was possible through film to communicate to an audience the juxtaposition of the absurd and the real. He thought that his theatre would be able to replicate this juxtaposition on stage and to laughter.

Artaud described many of the films of the Marx Brothers as being close to the surreal. He mentioned the films *Animal Crackers* and *Monkey Business*. In these two films, the Marx Brothers played the role of the clown and so, by having events that are opposite to what is physical and natural, the action becomes metaphysical.

## Theatre and the Plague

The second double that Artaud saw in the theatre was the plague. Not an actual plague as an allegory for the theatre. In this double, which was recorded in a number of pictures of the physical effects of the plague to represent the theatre.

The idea came from a dormant image of a person lying ill in bed while the effects of the plague were pushing the body to the extremes. Artaud related this to theatre and the gesture to the extremes. Artaud was also thinking about the breakdown of society during a plague pushed to its extremes. Artaud wanted to see the 'breakdown' of the bourgeoisie and the rich of Paris had on theatre and the representation of their values.

## Theatre of Cruelty

Cruelty is Artaud's third double. We will explore the Theatre of Cruelty in the next section. Here we are looking at what Artaud meant by 'cruelty'. He wanted directors and theatre companies to see how a director can exert on the actor and the spectator.

As with Artaud's thoughts on the theatre and the plague, here he is wanting to push the audience to their end point of acceptability.

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## Section 6 – To Thine Own Self

At an initial glance, the term 'Theatre of Cruelty' is misinterpreted as relating to the element is being cruel to oneself as an actor. This can include pushing yourself to the limit as far as possible. Below are four exercises that will explore the notion of being cruel to oneself. In these, keep in mind that you need to push yourself to your breaking point.

### Practical Activity 1

#### Warm-up:

This can either be a fast-paced game or an extreme movement sequence as set out below.

Individually, find a space in the room. Listen to your leader, as they are going to call out between one and four. As you hear the number called out, you need to perform the action below. The descriptions are intentionally vague as you are expected to use your imagination. The aim of the exercise is to be cruel to oneself.

- 1 – An open shape
- 2 – A closed shape
- 3 – A real shape
- 4 – A twisted shape

### Practical Activity 2

In pairs, you are to remain linked at the elbow for the whole of this activity. With your partner, you are going to tell a story. You must also act out the story at the same time as being linked. Only one member of the pair is only allowed to tell one word of the story, e.g. One... day... I... of...

You will be given a story title and there may be a surprise.

### Practical Activity 3

#### Quick Freeze:

As a whole group, find a space in the room. Your leader will count down 3–2–1 and you have to freeze as, then on a sound cue you are to bring the freeze to life and move.

### Practical Activity 4

In a large group, you are to create a short sequence which uses physical theatre to be created by the members in the group.

### Discussion

1. How did these activities explore 'Cruelty'?
2. As performers, do we ever put a barrier in the way of our performance?
3. Artaud said that actors must be cruel to themselves. What do you think he meant?
4. Can cruelty be seen in today's world?

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## Section 7 – Artaud, Audience and

### Overview of Theories on Audience and Auditorium

Artaud wanted the audience to be at the centre of the productions and not just on the sides and the audience space to be one space with no separation.

Within the space created for his performances, Artaud wanted to remove the stage. This he hoped that his performance could be received directly by the audience, and themes, characters, etc. could be direct from actor to audience. He wanted the audience to be part of the performance.

### The Use of Stagecraft

In his writings Artaud gave an idea of how heavily stagecraft being used. He wanted to have the lighting bright. As mentioned above, Artaud wanted to have one space and ideally he wanted the audience in the centre of the room with the action all around them. Artaud planned to have no partition and no scenery. This was similar to the ideas of Gordon Craig who had a vision of theatre using large puppets and masks. Artaud wanted a spectacle, he wanted a full body experience for the audience. Artaud wanted to experience the performance as a whole.

### Diagram of Artaud's View on Theatre

With the audience in the centre of the space and the actors around the audience this would help the lighting to fall on both the actors and the audience. This spacing would allow the audience, often referred to as spectators, to feel part of the performance rather than sitting on the outside. In Artaud's plan, he wanted the audience seated on chairs in the centre with the actors on walkways around the audience, as can be seen in the diagram below.



To conclude this section we have covered Artaud's views on the use of the actor and audience space, in his writing Artaud describes how he wanted to use giant puppets 'animal movements'; 'movements portraying monsters' and 'gestures and movements with a ritualistic quality'.<sup>2</sup> Artaud wanted the actors and the audience in the same space therefore being the audience into the 'happening' Artaud wanted to break theatre as seen in Paris at that time and this new idea of using the audience and and unheard of within theatre of this time. The space the performance was to take that all areas of the space could be used. Artaud wanted the audience sat in the centre (as seen on the diagram above), with actors on walkways around the space.

### Come on in! Top Tip

**Information** If you are studying for the A Level Component 2: Text in Action, then as you work through this section make sure you note down any ideas for the interpretation of the text. This may give you ideas for the interpretation of the text for questions 2 and 3 of this unit as Eduqas will be expecting to see in your answers how you used 'dramatic conventions or design techniques were used to relate to Artaud's theories.

**Assessment coverage:** partial coverage of AO1.1a and b; AO2; AO3, AO4.

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<sup>2</sup> All quotes from Rose, Mark V. *The Actor and His Double*, Chicago: Actor Training and Research

## Section 8 – Extremes

In Artaud's theories on the theatre, he wanted everything to be larger than life. He used bright lighting, large puppets. As part of the actors' rehearsals they will create oversized movements that will be heard over the top of everything else happening on stage. As with the previous section, everything to the extremes, so this section continues with this notion. However, unlike the previous section where extremes were the focus of the work, this section deals with keeping the extremes

### Practical Activities

- 1. Solo Work**  
You are to recreate an everyday 'ritual' that fits a strict count of 1 – 2 – 3, three movements that fit to the three movements of a bear.
- 2. Pair Work**  
In pairs, create a stylised movement sequence of an everyday activity, e.g. brushing teeth.
- 3. Developmental work**  
In the same pairs as the last activity, create a slow-motion fight (which must end with a fall to the ground, still in slow motion).
- 4. Extreme Reactions**  
Two people will present their slow-motion fight sequence to the whole class. The rest of the class are to stand facing each other. As the slow-motion is performed the lines of the class provide the sound effects. These sound effects need to be exaggerated.

### Discussion

- How would you feel as an audience member if everything in a performance was done in slow motion?
- When would be the most appropriate time in a performance to use the technique of slow motion? What would be the aim of using it?

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## Section 9 – Artaud's Use of the

Artaud considered the actor to be like an athlete and he believed that breathing was the way for an actor to create emotions in their performance. For an actor, the use of breath can be the stimulus for many things such as emotion or physical movement. In his writing, Artaud was clear that movement was to be used in an abstract way and that this would then form the basis of theatre. Artaud was interested in the different uses of breath and the different outcomes this would have on a performance. Inspired by his viewing of the Balinese dancers and the spiritual influence on their performance, Artaud wanted to explore the use of breath and its place in the spiritual world.

Artaud wanted the training he gave his actors to be a regime, and in his writing ideal training for actors being similar to that for athletes. Artaud explored many of formulating his ideas about the training of his actors. These religions included Hinduism to their character and he examined the breath control required to perform these characters.

### The Primal Scream

In Artaud's writing he refers to the primal scream and the effect on an actor. Artaud's actors knew how to scream safely while also getting the most emotional effect. This was to make the audience feel uncomfortable. In his performance work, Artaud depicted this between 1946 and 1948 during radio recordings, particularly in *To Have Done with the Day*. He used this radio performance as a model for his ideas for Theatre of Cruelty. Between 1946 and 1948 he explored his idea of 'the Scream' but it was viewed by critics as a failure. 'Artaud's scream is an unrepeatable gesture, moving beyond any engagement with an audience.'<sup>3</sup>

During his work as an actor, Artaud became all too aware of how unadventurous and Artaud wanted to free his actors from this monotony. Using the scream as a tool seemed shocking to both actor and audience, but this was part of what Artaud wanted to achieve.

#### How to create the primal scream:

When we talk about the primal scream, we are not talking a horror film scream.

1. Start by sighing heavily.
2. Repeat this again but add more forced air. You may have got a slight rasp.
3. Now take this rasp and accentuate that sound.
4. Now take this sound and add an 'ah' sound. This should not necessarily be a scream sound as though you are in a horror film but should be a sound that feels as if it comes from the depth of your chest.

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<sup>3</sup> Deleuze Studies. May2016, Vol. 10 Issue 2, p140-161. 22p.

## Section 10 – Rituals

Everyday life has a rhythm and theatre can represent the rhythm of life. Through a connection with a performance. Artaud wanted the connection that audience and actor to bypass the brain. Artaud wanted to bring in elements of ancient theatre forms, which encompassed religion and the rituals of both theatre and religion, music and

### Practical Activities

1. **PAIRS** – In pairs, you are to work out a clapping rhythm. Once the rhythm is established, you are to perform it to yourselves A and B. Make sure you know the rhythm well.

Everyone closes their eyes. Spread them out around the room and everyone must find their partner by repeating the clapping rhythm created.

2. **WHOLE CLASS** – The class stands in a circle. One person starts a rhythm using body percussion. Once it has been performed once it is then copied by everyone. This copycat technique has been established, one rhythm is chosen of starting and ending the repeated rhythm without verbal communication.

### Performance Activity

Split the class in half. You are to create your own ritual.

You are to include all the Artaudian ideas explored so far:

- Rhythm
- Exaggerated movement
- Slow motion
- You must take everything to its extremes
- Use the information in Section 7 and think about how you could use the actor about how Artaud wanted the audience to be spectators involved with the performers.

### Discussion

- In our lives what rituals do we have? What rituals do we take part in every day?
- What rituals do we have in the theatre?
- Think about your ritual activity. How successful was it?
- How did you engage the audience in your ritual? How could you have fully engaged them?
- What does breaking the actor/audience boundary do to a performance?

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## Section 11 – Artaud and the Balinese

In 1931, Artaud watched a performance of Balinese dance and this had a major influence on his work.

Watch the following video:

 <http://zzed.uk/8217-balinese>

This video shows a performance of traditional Balinese dance.

Watch the video through once and try to absorb the performance. Watch the video a second time and in the box below write down your ideas, based on the work covered so far, as to why you think this performance influenced Artaud.

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## Section 12 – Communication to an audience

As you have just explored, in 1931, Artaud witnessed a performance by Balinese dancers. This performance helped him to develop his style of theatre. Artaud liked the spiritual nature of the rituals that went with this performance style. From this performance Artaud wrote a piece of writing about his ideas about theatre and that was *The Theatre and Its Double*. We suggest you get hold of a copy and read it, if you get the chance.

### Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty

Through his experiences and by writing *The Theatre and Its Double* Artaud could refine his vision for the Theatre of Cruelty. Below is a summary of the main elements of his theory.

- Theatre of Cruelty was a collection of symbols, sounds and movement.
- The content of performances should mean something to everybody.
- All movements were meticulously rehearsed but still gave the feeling that the audience were taking part in a spontaneous reaction having been taken by the theatre. Gestures and actions were used to lead to this reaction.
- The performances were communicated directly to an audience, where the plot did not have to have a rational meaning.
- The director was to lead the creation of the performance and a playwright was not needed.
- Performances are created with spiritual meaning.

### Individual Reflection Task

Using the following points, think about how you would incorporate them into a performance in the twenty-first century. Think about how the structure of the performance would change. Consider how you would engage an audience if:

- The amount of written or spoken text is limited.
- There is no text within a performance.
- Artaud referred to spoken dialogue as 'written poetry'
- Emphasis on improvisation, not scripts

You should present your thoughts as a mood board that you can share with the rest of the class.

Make sure you consider the following:

- Your own thoughts on the use of language in performance. Is it always necessary?
- How can you ensure the meaning or plot is still communicated to an audience if there is no text?
- Do we use text or language properly in the theatre, or even in films? For example, is a World War I film historically accurate?

### Assessment Top Tip



As part of the A Level specification it is expected you will carry out 'creation and reimagining' of a text. This section is a great opportunity to develop your ideas.

Why not apply your views to a text? Choose an extract from your chosen source.

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## Section 13 – Ineffectuality of the Speech

Artaud had the notion of 'universal language'. He wanted all words to be taken out of drama. He considered words to be limiting as they defined the subject matter of the play. He wanted to break away from the theatre of the day as he thought the content of performance was too limiting. The popular theatrical style was realism, which went against everything Artaud stood for.

### Practical Activity

- Ask one member of the group to tell a story of something exciting that has happened to them.
- While listening to the story the rest of the group are to look at how the story is told, looking for verbal and non-verbal forms of communication.
- Having listened to the story, ask one member of the group to tell the story without using words.
- What impact did this activity have on the story being told?

### Developing Performance

In pairs, create a simple scene where the husband comes in late from work and the wife is angry.

The scene must be shown in each of the following ways:

- ✓ Using the dialogue created in rehearsal
- ✓ Using muted drama – how much can you understand?
- ✓ Using the commedia dell'arte convention of Grotto. Watch this video for more information: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gTs9xWJcgg>
- ✓ Once you have watched each version, the audience are to decide what they understood from the scene based on the actions and gestures being shown

### Discussion

What was the difference between using words and not using words?

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## Section 14 – Artaud's Use of Language

Through his plays Artaud wanted to create a new way of communicating with his audience. One of his most famous plays is *Sang* (1925), a play which was the high point of Artaud's early career (1924–1931). Artaud gave to language within performance. The work is a montage of short, high-contrast images. An experiment in the manipulation of language in *Jet of Blood* was considered by critics as a failure because it disrupts the effect of the presentation. Artaud himself must have recognised the limitations of using language because he did not utilise it again. Artaud thought that we must not consider language as sacred, and that we need to break away from theatre's reliance on the spoken word. Communication that is a new language with gesture and thought. In the theatre, the visual is as pronounced as well as the visuals that accompany the speech, such as the gesture and the sound that makes to give us meaning. Also thrown into the theatrical mix is the use of music to help an audience to understand the characters and the situations.

### Language and the Body of the Actor

Artaud's ideas about a 'bodily language' were difficult for him to express but his writings, essays and manifestos in *The Theatre and Its Double*. Artaud suggested that communication should be a form of dialogue which he called 'written poetry' and that actors should use a new body language that does not contain words, but signs. These signs of language were revealed through a series of experiments. This bodily language was born out of Artaud's inspiration from the Balinese dance.

### Language and the Surrealists

In much of the work of the surrealists, their interest in language was based on the unconscious and the dreams. Artaud borrowed this premise and he used it within his poetry, which came from his time in an asylum. Through his poetry he developed a use of repetition.

Here is an example of his poetry:

*Klaver Striva*  
*Cavour tavina*  
*Scarva Kavina*  
*Akar Triva*

This style of poetry can be traced back to poets of Dada, which predated the surrealists.

### Extra Information

#### What was the Dada movement?

Dada was a movement that was anti-art as people thought that the values art had contributed to the start of the First World War. It soon became a type of art that was created by a group of people who were trying to undermine the established art world of Europe and America in 1916. Many of the Dada artists were often young and had managed to move to cities such as New York, Zurich and Barcelona.

### Extra Information

#### What are the key features of Dada?

The main philosophy of the Dada movement was negative. Its main purpose was to challenge traditional ideas in new ways. There were several new art forms created during the Dada movement. Dada artists started to create several cabaret-style performances for which they often started controversy and riots.

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## Section 15 – The Surrealist Tradition

Surrealism is a movement that started in the 1920s and is known for its artworks by artists were irrational but had clear details. The movement used everyday objects to aim was to solve the earlier opposing forms of dream and reality into a perfect reality. The component of surprise, with surprising juxtapositions; however, many of the works were as logical, with the works being an object. Leader André Breton was clear in his manifesto that it was a radical movement. Surrealism was developed from the Dada movement during the 1920s, the surrealist movement spread around the globe, and influenced the visual arts.

### What are the Key Characteristics of Surrealism?

- The movements explored dreams and the unconscious.
- Images of perverse sexuality, immorality, death, and violence.
- To push the boundaries of socially acceptable behaviour.
- The notion of chance and surprise.
- The influence of visionary nineteenth-century poets, such as Charles Baudelaire.
- Focus on the mythical and the irrational.
- Artists expressed their base desires, such as hunger and sexuality.
- The birth of biomorphism and naturalist surrealism.

### Biomorphism

Biomorphism is a design that focuses on natural patterns or naturally occurring shapes. It would take this to its extreme and would take naturally occurring shapes and put them into a surreal context.

### Naturalistic Surrealism

Naturalistic surrealism described realistic scenes transformed into dreams, such as a landscape that is a dream.

### What Are the Best Examples of Surrealism?

- Max Ernst, 1924. (Museum of Modern Art, New York).
- Joan Miró, *Carnival of Harlequin*, 1924–1925. (Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo)
- René Magritte, *The Treachery of Images (Ceci n'est pas une pipe)*, 1929. (London)
- Jean (Hans) Arp, *Head with Three Annoying Objects*, 1930. (Estate of the artist)
- Salvador Dalí, 1931. (Museum of Modern Art, New York)

### Best Known Surrealist Artists:

- Jean Arp (1886–1966)
- Hans Bellmer (1907–1975)
- Louise Bourgeois (1911–2010)
- Leonora Carrington (b. 1917)
- Joseph Cornell (1903–1972)
- Salvadore Dalí (1904–1989)
- Paul Delvaux (1897–1994)
- Max Ernst (1891–1976)
- Leonora Fitzpatrick (1911–1995)
- Alberto Giacometti (1901–1966)
- Frida Kahlo (1907–1954)
- Wilfredo Lam (1902–1982)
- René Magritte (1898–1967)
- Henri Moore (1898–1980)
- André Masson (1896–1987)
- Roberto Matta (1911–2002)
- Joan Miró (1893–1983)
- Meret Oppenheim (1913–1985)
- Isamu Noguchi (1896–1972)
- Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)
- Man Ray (1890–1976)
- Kay Sage (1898–1966)
- Yves Tanguy (1900–1955)
- Dorothea Tanning (1912–2012)

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## Surrealism and Symbolism

### Practical Activity 1

1. The whole group walks around the room. When you cross paths with someone make polite sounds, but no words.
2. When given a signal, you are to increase the intensity of your sounds to show you are greeting.
3. This time you are to replace the sound with the word 'hello'. You can keep on with the last task.

### Discussion

The practical activity is designed to help us develop a new way of communicating as well as to help us understand any of what you already know about Artaud's theories? How do you think the audience will react?

- What is the difference between the communications with no words and the communications with words? How is the understanding of the situation different?
- What is the impact of the visuals of the gestures? Does it enhance the words?
- What images have you seen that make you react emotionally?

### Practical Activity 2

1. In small groups, you are to create some symbols. You are only allowed to use your hands and faces for a range of emotions that are going to be read out to you.
2. You are now going to develop this further to show one of the following:
  - Captivity
  - Parental love
  - Deceit by a friend
3. As you watch the symbols, think about what makes a symbol different from a gesture.

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## Section 16 – Artaud: Sound, Lighting

With reference back to the previous section on Artaud, audience and auditorium wanted to use the theatre. This section will continue to explore other areas of st

### Sound

In Artaud's vision of the theatre he placed a big emphasis on the use of sound. In *The Cenci*, he realised the impact that sound can have on an audience. He would use corners and play sounds at full volume. This was to help ensure that the audience were spectators. For example, in *The Cenci* Artaud had the sound of church bells ringing at full volume as the audience entered the space. He also had the same of the *Cenci* when and then suddenly stopped.

Artaud wanted to use live sound as well as pre-recorded sound. He used music as an overall design element in his productions. Artaud wanted live instruments to be used would be used. He wanted the vibrations to be felt by the audience and he wanted the audience to be in the performance. He also wanted his captive audience to be they would find unbearable.

### Lighting

By the time Artaud was evolving his lighting ideas, lighting technology had started to develop. He could flood the stage with light or pick something out in a spotlight, he was constantly looking at ways to push the technology to its limit. He wanted to explore the use of oscillating lighting effects. Obviously, we have now developed and many professional theatres use moving head lanterns.

Artaud saw lighting as a force and almost part of the action of the performance. He wanted to use lighting to distort an audience view and we can do this today with the use of lasers and strobes.

### Artaud and Film

Artaud started his career as a film actor, yet in his writings he was very dismissive of the theatre. Film can provide a clear juxtaposition between the live actor and the

Artaud referred to the use of film as being the 'optic shock'. He wanted film to be. Despite his background and his attempt at film, his scenario for the film *The Seas* was not a success and this could have led to his dismissal of the medium of film. Two contemporaries Salvador Dali and Luis Bunel, *Un Chien Andalou* (1929) and *L'Age* were more than Artaud's film. *Un Chien Andalou* starts off with a woman's eye being sliced by a

### To sum up:

- The actor and the audience share one space.
- Sound provides a sensory experience.
- Lighting that we would normally associate today with rock concerts was used.
- Film can be used to shock through use of juxtaposition of imagery.

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## Section 17 – Happening

As we have mentioned before, Artaud did not want his audience to be observers with the performance. From this, people developed the idea of a **happening**, where the performance is the performance.

**Happenings** were popular in the 1950s and 1960s. The happenings ranged from simple to more complex happenings where the audience are walked around to different locations.

### Practical Activity

1. In small groups you are to create a happening of your own. This can either be done in the classroom or taken somewhere else. Find a current news story as a stimulus.
2. You must create a performance that can involve the audience. Your performance must include movement as explored in Section 14 *Surrealism and Symbolism*.
3. Once you have created your performance, using pieces of paper ask the audience to write one character in the performance. Read these messages out to the audience with music underneath (remember Artaud's theories on the use of music!). Find a way to deliver these messages to an audience.

## Section 18 – Putting It All Together

### Practical Activity

- Split the class into smaller groups. Each group is to come up with a theme for the rehearsal process you must consider not only the content of the performance but also bringing your audience into the space. The idea is to make the audience feel involved with the performance from the start.
- You must create and present an Artaudian performance. You will need to bring in what you have learnt while studying Artaud.

Don't forget to bring together the following areas of study:

- Physical Theatre
- Total Theatre
- Visual Theatre
- Theatre of Cruelty
- Larger than life
- Rhythm and ritual
- The ineffectuality of language
- Symbolism

### Assessment Top Tip

#### Eduqas A Level: Component 1 (Devising)

The devising element of the Eduqas specification specifically asks you to use 'the methods of an influential theatre practitioner'. As you are completing this task, think about what you have done on Artaud and, as you go through the rehearsal process, record how you are using the methods of Artaud. This can be recorded in a written diary, a video diary or even a blog. You could even take a picture of your rehearsal and annotate the picture to highlight the methodologies used. Eduqas

#### Assessment Coverage:

Partial coverage of AO1: Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning as part of a process, making connections between dramatic theory and practice.

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## Section 19 – Performance Focus:

*Jet of Blood (Jet de Sang)* is a play written by Artaud. The piece was completed o

Through the play Artaud wanted to show the audience a chronological story. This slowed down. The play explored many themes which Artaud saw as prevalent in violence, and also showed the contrast within these themes. *Jet of Blood* (which play) was designed to play on the senses of the audience with its sights and sound face their fears.

The play included some of the following themes:

- Cruelty
- How the world shown in the play was created and destroyed
- A satire of current attitudes towards certain subjects
- The reversal within a character's lifetime of innocence and love, and lust and
- Juxtaposition of the ideal with perceived honourable standards and their imm
- Blasph
- Nature
- 'Le mal du ciel' or 'heaven-sickness'. The belief that Christians have that wh can be made well by God as there is no sickness in heaven.

The images in *Jet de Sang* are repeated to show the destruction of the world bei performance world being created is ordered and then through natural disasters lives are thrown into chaos and these characters are to represent the people wh

The full original title of *Jet of Blood* was *Jet de Sang ou la Boule de Verre*. It is tho as a parody of a play called *La Boule de Verre* by Salacrou. In both plays the main

- A Young Man
- A Young Girl
- A Knight
- A Nurse

In both plays the young couple share their love for each other and then disappea and the Nurse are the Young Girl's parents. Both plays explore the dependence of fidelity and the idealism of the young.

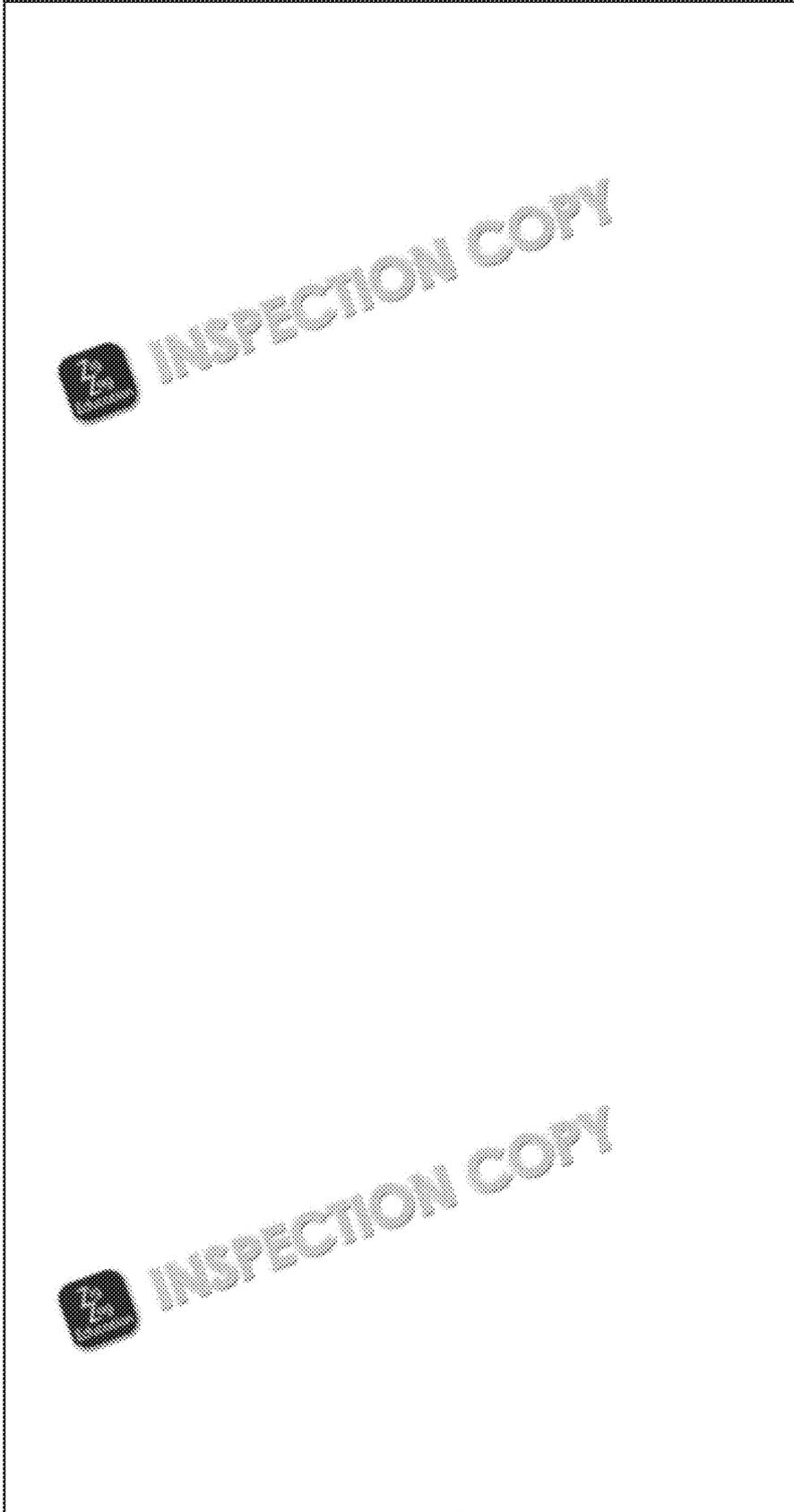
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## Activity 1

The class reads through the script of *Jet of Blood*. Write down your initial thoughts and develop as a whole class a design concept for a production of this script. A copy of



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## Activity 2

Watch the following video of a modern-day interpretation of Artaud's script *Jet of Blood* to see how they have incorporated the theories of Theatre of Cruelty. <http://zzed.uk/8217-jet> As you watch the video compare your design concepts to the performance.

### The Original Production

Although Artaud's play *Jet of Blood* was written in the 1920s, it was not staged until the 1960s due to its reputation for being un-performable as it took 40 years to make it to the stage. It was the character descriptions you can probably tell why. Artaud created the Theatre of Cruelty by getting into the actors' sense and connecting with their emotions through their emotions. As we explored in an earlier section about the ideas of the surrealists, it is not surprising that Artaud was asked to leave the group of surrealists due to the ideas he had.

*Jet de Sang* is not easily described as it is a play that covers love, beauty, incest and other aspects of drama that you would expect such as clearly defined characters and key moments.

*Jet de Sang* is really a framework for a director to work from and create the performance.

### Jet of Blood's Lasting Impact

*Jet of Blood* captures a moment in time when we can see into the mind of Artaud and wonder up as to whether he was a genius or a madman. The level of surrealism contained in the play pushes the boundaries of what we think theatre is. This piece of drama is a way of putting theory into practice and ensuring that he can be seen as a practitioner, and not just a theorist.

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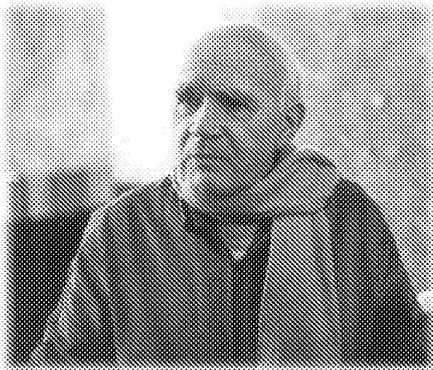


## Section 20 – Artaud's Influence and

### Artaud's Influence

In terms of Artaud being influenced by other practitioners, Artaud was influenced by the work of Alfred Jarry. Even though Artaud was 11 years old when Jarry died, he later went on to run the Alfred Jarry Theatre in Paris. Jarry was known for his play *Ubu Roi* (1896) and for being a symbolist writer. He created the term 'pataphysics'. 'Pataphysics' is a branch of philosophy or science that looks at imaginary spectacles that exist in a world beyond metaphysics (philosophy looking at the essential nature of reality).

In the performance of *Ubu Roi* in 1896 we can see how the work of Jarry influenced Artaud. *Ubu Roi* is a comic play. The significance of the play is the treatment of the cultural rules and how the play goes against these rules. This is the start of the Dada movement, surrealism and eventually the Theatre of Cruelty. Specific ideas about how his play should be performed, even costume ideas for Kasper the cardboard head, for he intended to write a guignol. **Guignol** is the main show which has come to bear his name. It represents the workers in the silk industry.

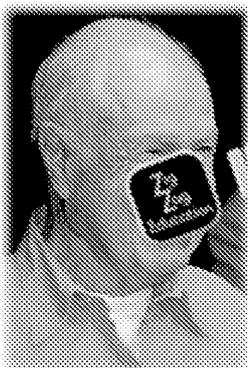


### Artaud's Influence on Other

Jean Genet (19<sup>th</sup> December 1910 – 15<sup>th</sup> April 1992) was a French writer. In his early life he was a petty criminal. His plays include *The Thief's Journal* and *Our Lady of the Flowers*. Other works include *The Maids* and *The Screens*.

Within Genet's plays he uses stylised rituals. The rituals are typically those in society with a twist in some way. The key types of people in society are also present.

Jerzy Marian Grotowski (11<sup>th</sup> August 1933 – 14<sup>th</sup> January 1999) was a theatre director from Poland who had specific theories about the training of actors and how theatre should be presented. His directorial career started in 1959 with the play *The Children of the Sun* by Eugene Ionesco. He founded a small theatre in Poland in 1959. During the 1960s his theatre company started touring and his work became more popular. In 1982 Grotowski left Poland and started work in America. Grotowski's and Artaud's work are similar in terms of their concept of theatre as an almost religious experience.



Peter Brook (born 21<sup>st</sup> March 1924) is an English director. He has even worked with the Royal Shakespeare Company where he directed his first English production of *Marat/Sade* in 1964. In 1968, Brook undertook the Theatre of Cruelty with the Theatre Company, aiming to explore ways in which Artaud's ideas could be put into performances. Some of the first performances as part of this season included the first performance of *Blood*. Through his directing, Brook uses the same characteristics as Artaud. It could be said that Brook was able to make Artaud's theories a reality.

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## Section 21 – Links to the Eduqas S

As mentioned at the start of this resource, for the AS Drama and Theatre Studies can be applied to Component 1, and for A Level to Components 1 and 2.

### AS Component 1: Performance Workshop

There are five stages in this component, but this resource is most suited to stage internally assessed and has a total of 120 marks available and makes up 60% of the Stages 1–3 are worth 40 marks for each performance and this is broken down in and develop ideas to communicate meaning as part of the theatre making process connections between dramatic theory and practice'. For the performances you 30 marks. The final 20 marks is for stage five and is the evaluation of your performance must demonstrate 'detailed reference to a practitioner or company technique text is reinterpreted for performance

Stages 1-4 have the following areas of focus:

- 1) 'To create, develop and realise two pieces of theatre based on two extracts. Each piece must use the techniques and working methods of either an influential or a recognised theatre company.'
- 2) A group performance / design realisation of two extracts.
- 3) Reflecting on the exploration process and the key extract performances.

Students can study this component either as a performer or as a designer.

- Lighting Design
- Sound Design
- Set Design (including props)
- Costume Design (including hair and make-up)

### Assessment Top Tip



#### AS Level Component 1: Performance Workshop

As you undertake this task, bear in mind that through your work on your chosen text you should have an understanding of the 'connections between dramatic theory and practice'. Take notes on this area of study as it will help you when producing your work.

In Stages 1–4 candidates are to use the work of a theatre practitioner to help them develop a design concept of two key extracts. The work in this guide can help students to develop an understanding of Artaud and apply the techniques to a staging of an extract from a text either as a performer or a designer.

The process of using the theories of Artaud for performance or design are to be explored in this guide.

It would be helpful to keep a record of the process that students go through the project.

Rehearsal objective	By the end of the 'Out damn spot' section for Lady Macbeth
Rehearsal notes	Lady M should move around the audience more and use more of emotion.
Artaud theories applied	We have removed language and used a series of sound effects and movement to reflect the extreme emotion of Lady Macbeth.
Evaluation	This section works as an actor but the audience are not included more into the scene.
Next steps	To experiment with the use of music to get vibrations through the audience.

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## A Level Component 1: Theatre Workshop

There are three main areas of focus for the devising component:

- 1) To create a piece of theatre based on an extract from a text using the techniques of either an influential theatre practitioner or a recognised theatre company.
- 2) A group performance / design realisation of the piece of theatre created based on the extract.
- 3) A reflection on the creative process and performance created.

For this component you are required to create a performance based on an extract from the work of a theatre practitioner to develop your performance. The component is worth 20% of the total marks for the A Level qualification. Your creative log and reflection on your performance is worth 30 marks.

You can use the techniques and theories of Artaud contained in this resource to inform your performance. You may want to consider the following:

- Artaud's relationship with the audience
- How you could apply Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty to your performance
- How you could use language in line with Artaud's theories
- How you could push an actor to the limit

The key areas in this resource that can be applied to the devising process are:

- The Theatre of Cruelty
- Being cruel to oneself and pushing the actor and performance to the extreme
- Rhythm and rituals
- Ineffectuality of the spoken word
- The use of surrealism

## A Level Component 3: Text in Performance, Section B

In section B of the written examination you are expected to discuss how the text is performed for a contemporary audience as actors, designers and directors, and in Section C to explain how the text is performed in the theatre. Learners will be expected to approach the text as theatre practitioners, actors, designers and directors. Component 3 is worth 120 marks and makes up 40% of the marks for the A Level qualification. Section B is worth 40 marks and Section C is worth 40 marks.

In Section B you will be given the choice of one question for each set text that is asked of you as the actor, designer or director would realise this text for a contemporary audience.

In section C you will be given one question and asked how the text can be performed in the theatre.

For both of these sections you could discuss the techniques of Artaud and how this is reflected in the text discussed in each section.

If your question asks about aspects of performance, you can apply the following techniques:

- Artaud's view of the actor and audience space
- Artaud's theories on the use of language.
- Artaud's use of symbolism
- Artaud's break with the Western theatre

If your question asks about aspects of design, you can apply the following techniques:

- Artaud's view on sound effects
- Artaud's view on lighting
- Artaud's use of film in performance
- Artaud's use of large obscure puppets and the use of masks for the actors

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## Section 22 – Artaud Essay Questions for

### General Practice Questions

1. *At the first rehearsal, Artaud rolled around on the stage, assumed a falsetto voice and fought logic, order and the 'well-made' approach. He forbade anyone to tell a 'story' at the expense of its spiritual significance. He sought desperately to be heard and not the words.*

Raymond Rouleau – actor in Artaud's *The Theatre of Cruelty*

(Taken from *Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty*)

Using the above quote, discuss how you as a director would apply rehearsal techniques to a character from your chosen text comparing the techniques of Artaud.

2. Artaud's ideas had a wide influence on many practitioners. With close reference to your chosen text, discuss how you would use the techniques of Artaud to stage your text and highlight differences from other practitioners.

### Exam-style Questions

While the whole play should be given consideration, your answers to the questions should focus on the extract(s) provided by your teacher.

1. Discuss how your creative choices as a lighting designer could enhance your production for a contemporary audience.

Your answer should be based on the **two key extracts** you have been given.

Your answer must include:

- analysis and evaluation of how live productions have influenced your design

2. Using the extract given to you, note on the text where lighting cues happen and develop ideas for lighting for the extract.

Your answer must include:

- analysis and evaluation of how live productions have influenced your design
- the type of stage you will be using

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# Teacher's Notes and Answers

## Section 1 – Who was Artaud?

Here are some notes to guide you as to the content of the presentations.

### 1. When and where was Antonin Artaud born?

Artaud was born in Marseille in 1896 and died in Paris in 1948. He was an actor and critic.

#### What family did he have?

Artaud's mother came from a Greek background. His father was a shopfitter.

#### What was his education like?

He was educated at the Collège du Sacré Coeur in Marseilles, and at 14 found himself kept going for almost 6 years.

#### List his career highlights.

- 1928: wrote the setting for *The Seashell and the Clergyman*. Appeared in it.
- 1935: staged his production of *The Cenci*. The play lasted 17 days.
- 1938: *The Theatre and Its Double* was published.
- 1947: recorded *Pour en finir avec le jugement de dieu* for the radio. It was not broadcast.

### 2. What influenced Artaud's work?

- 1927: trained with directors such as Charles Dullin and Georges Pitoëff and Paul Marat.
- 1931: saw Balinese dancers at the Colonial Exposition.
- 1936: travelled to Mexico, where he studied and lived with the Tarahumara.

### 3. What were his main pieces of writing?

*The Theatre and Its Double* (1938), various essays and *Jet de Sang* (1954)

### 4. Are there any theatre companies who have used the techniques of Artaud?

- The Living Theatre, based in New York
- Act 2 Cam (youth film company) use the teachings of Artaud to influence their work.

The presentations can be set as an individual holiday homework or can be done in pairs. Each member of the group has responsibility for one research question.

## Section 2 – Key Drama Terminology

Below is some more information on the four discussion bubbles on the previous page as a guide to help you steer the discussion.

### Physical Theatre:

Physical theatre is where the body is used to spark the audience's imagination. Elements of the body, e.g. costumes, seating props, etc. are created using the actors rather than using scenery. This allows the audience a greater opportunity to engage with the world of the style of theatre relies on a greater power of suggestion and for the audience to use their imagination. Not all things created using physical theatre are accurate due to using objects. Often they often lend themselves to being more symbolic in style.

### Total Theatre:

Total theatre is a notion that all theatrical elements are equal.

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**Visual Theatre:**

Visual theatre is a performance style that does not rely on large amounts of speech behind a performance will be created instead using other elements, such as music, the plot of the performance or to communicate a character's or characters' emotions.

**Happenings:**

Happenings are often referred to in Artaud's writing and relate to a performance. It is the idea that a performance was to be an experience that worked all the senses (a 'workout' for the senses).

**Section 3 – The Artaud Timeline**

The Artaud timeline can be used as a resource with students to give the main events. This page is a copy of the timeline with gaps; this can be a research activity for students in a round robin.

**How to complete the round robin**

- Set up tables around the room with various information on each table about the work of the surrealist movement, etc.
- Split the class into small groups and set each group at a different table of information.
- Give the group a set time at each table to read the information and to fill in the music in the background could help and then when music ends the group change.
- At the end, after all groups have been to each table, come together as a whole class.

**Section 6 – To Thine Own Self be Cruel**

The aim of this section of the pack is to get students to start pushing themselves to Artaud's notion of being cruel to oneself. Below you will find more information on this.

**Activity 1:**

The aim of this activity is to be fast-paced. Once you have told the students what each displayed it anywhere, remove it. This will push the students even more to their extremes. What the number represents and push their imagination to come up with different movements. Start off slowly and then build the speed, and start off calling the numbers in order and then

**Activity 2:**

This is a fun activity and students will have to think fast. Don't tell them how long to (literally one minute and not our drama teacher one minute) stop the rehearsal process. This will lead to improvisation and so they will have to come up with narration and

**Suggested titles:**

- A journey through a fridge
- A journey through a sick body
- A fantasy planet

**Activity 3:**

The same applies to this activity as the previous one; speed is of the essence. Call freeze then quickly say 5-2-1. Then as soon as they are in the freeze, give a tambourine.

**Suggested things to freeze as:**

- A piece of chewing gum being chewed
- An oxygen machine
- A spoon being
- A balloon being

**Activity 4:**

As with activity 2 don't give very long in terms of rehearsal time as this will help. An example story could start with a shopper entering a store through rotating doors choosing garments to buy. Other starting points might be a fairground, a hospital, a group size of approximately five or six.

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**Discussion:**

The lack of time given meant that as a teacher you were being cruel to the students on the task you had given them and they must also use improvisation more, thus meaning which is not prepared as much as usual. As performers, we may put up mental barriers to present what has been rehearsed so that we can keep our focus in performance. Artists do this by pushing themselves to the extreme physically. Have the students do a discussion on the cruel world, is the world cruel? You could use newspaper articles and have a variety of articles that also look at

**Section 8 – Extremes****Practical activities:**

1. **Solo work** – The ritual created must be of an everyday activity such as brushing teeth. Once a ritual has been created, students must break it down into three movements and present the three movements to your counts.
2. **Pair work** – The aim here is for students to work together to create a sequence of movements from an everyday activity. The movements must match their partner's movements.
3. **Developmental work** – Remind students of the need for a slow-motion movement and how these reactions can be shown through the slow motion.
4. **Extreme reactions** – It is important for the students in the two lines to look at the sequence and look at the possible reactions they could show and how they can

**Discussion:**

- **How would you feel as an audience member if everything in a performance was slow motion?**  
Try to get the students to put themselves in the position of an audience member and think about that constant exaggerated movement would have on an audience. Would they be bored with the characters and emotions? Would this style of performance make you feel uncomfortable if you were watching?
- **When would be the most appropriate time in a performance to use the technique of slow motion? What would be the aim of using it?**  
If students struggle with this question, try to give them examples of moments in drama that could incorporate slow-motion, such as highly emotional scenes.

**Section 10 – Rituals****Notes on practical activities:**

For these activities to work, aim for you as the teacher to have as little input as possible. Try to act as facilitator. This is a great way of getting students to listen to each other and focus on their focusing skills.

**Performance activity:**

This is the first opportunity to put some of Artaud's techniques or theories together. This is the students' first attempt at incorporating Artaud's work in their own practical work. They should continually think about the reaction of the audience.

**Discussion**

Rituals are repeated actions. In ancient theatre, such as ancient Greek, these rituals were used. During the discussion try to get the students to consider the impact that rituals have on actors, e.g. putting on make-up, the announcements at the start of a performance. Try to bring the audience back to the beginning of their theatre experiences and to show them how rituals were used in previous eras, such as in ancient Greek theatre. These historical structures gave rise to theories. This could be a good point to look at how rituals impact our daily lives. Consider how rituals can enhance or detract from a performance if they are included. For example, how rituals can enhance mental health, could rituals be used successfully in a performance with this type of

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## Section 11 – Artaud and the Balinese Dancers

As students watch the video the second time, try to point out some key features, such as head movements.

Below are some key things to look out for and discuss with the students:

1. The eye movements
2. The finger movements
3. Think about the rhythm of the movements, think back to the work on everyday rhythm. Look at the walking the dancers do. It's an everyday movement but...
4. What rituals can be seen? Look at the repeated movements that the dancers...
5. How does the music impact on the performance?
6. How have movements been pushed to their extremes?
7. At 5:57, what is significant about the use of the puppets?
8. How do the movements being shown relate to being cruel to oneself, and to...

### Helpful information:

Balinese dance is a very ancient dance form that is performed as part of religious ceremonies by the people of the island of Bali in Indonesia. Balinese dance is very expressive and uses a lot of movements. The dance performances created tell stories using the medium of dance gestures: gestures of fingers, hands, head and eyes. There are said to be a number of parts of the body that represent something within the Balinese culture.

The stories in these elaborate dance-dramas feature characters such as RANGDA.

As Hinduism is the main religion on the island of Bali, a lot of the dances are connected to the Hindu faith. These include Sanghyang Dedari that is said to be done to invoke spirits and put the dancer in a trance-like state. Not all the dances are linked to religion. Examples of those which are not are the Pendet welcoming dance and the Jaranan for entertainment purposes.

## Section 12 – Communication to an Audience

The list of elements of Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty can be used as discussion points for their own views on the relevance of Artaud's writings and his thoughts.

### Individual reflection task:

This task is designed to help students to relate the writing of Artaud to twenty-first-century theatre.

Students need to consider the structure of the work being presented to an audience. Would a non-linear structure be appropriate or would non-linear be more suitable? – and always get their own responses. Would this change in structure engage an audience?

- **Your own thoughts on the use of language in performance.** Is it always necessary? Try to guide students to a point where they are considering language. This could be where students want to remove language and thus remove meaning, but more also where verbal communication is removed from a performance), but where meaning is still communicated through the use of language.
- **How can we ensure the meaning or plot is still communicated to an audience?** This relates to the point above in terms of how an audience can still understand a character without the use of language. Can movement or facial expression replace language? Possibly guide them towards examining and analysing silent movies to show how things can happen without the use of spoken language.
- **Do we use text or language properly in the theatre or even in films? For example, is swearing in a World War I film historically accurate?** Guide students to think about the use of swearing in films. Is the use of swearing in the film or is it put in to get a higher age rating, thus attracting the adult audience?

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## Section 13 – Ineffectuality of the Spoken Word

With the performance work is it worth noting and therefore trying to guide student work. If students overcomplicate the situation then it will make it harder to communicate performance to an audience once language has been removed. Through your observations towards a simpler plot but also remind them that if specific information is needed they can use words. Artaud didn't ban words completely, but wanted them used in a specific focus to be on the sounds words make rather than their meaning. This was done in a way that words in the opposite way to their meaning, and exaggerating words with emotive language reduced things and detracted from the happenings on stage.

### Discussion:

**What was the difference between using words and not using words?**

Try to get students to consider what people can understand by actions only and what they can understand by a scene or a performance. You could watch a video clip here without sound and then watch with sound and see if they are right. Try posing questions about this should be reflected in the arts. For example, should the arts represent all religions looking at historical texts – should casting be representing our modern day multicultural white cast as well as how it would have been in the period being explored by the text.

## Section 15 – The Surrealist Tradition

### Practical activity 1:

The focus of this activity is to create symbols of the emotions being explored. The focus is on the use of stylistic movement. You should push the students towards almost stereotypical and away from naturalistic representations.

### Discussion:

Try to guide students towards thinking about the symbols of the emotion they create. Ask students if the image or any words used were the more powerful. What do the images or the words?

When discussing the emotional response to images in the theatre and beyond, try to guide students with the question: if they saw a crucifix hanging at the back of a stage in a performance what emotion would it evoke?

This can be done as word association. You could also do this as a piece of free writing.

### How to do free writing:

Ask students to find their own space in the room and find a comfortable position sitting at a desk. They then put pen to paper and either write words or draw pictures of emotions that the words you call out have on them. This type of free writing can be used for discussion.

### Practical Activity 2:

This is an extension of practical activity 1 and is very much a focus on the use of symbols to create symbols of the emotions or situations and not naturalistic representations of them.

During the reflection try to ask what use of theatre technology could add to the performance.

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## Section 17 – Happenings

As we have mentioned before Artaud did not want his audience to be observers but thereby being involved with the performance. From this theory of Artaud's people happening as the audience are involved in the performance.

- As students are working, remind them that simple is best. An example might be a train (and you may want to offer this as the starting point).
- The messages you get are real-life participations.
- How can these participations be used in our drama?

## Section 18 – Putting It All Together

As the students are working, try to get them comparing together the previous work of this activity is to try to bring together all the work on Artaud covered so far.

Remind students about the requirement to consider how the audience are going to how they are going to engage the audience in their small-scale performance. For example, low in the performance space and then the audience are led into the space by actors facing different directions.

Students need to think about the following areas covered within this resource:

- Physical Theatre
- Total Theatre
- Visual Theatre
- Theatre of Cruelty
- Larger than life
- Rhythm and music
- The ineffectual
- Symbolism

## Section 19 – Performance Focus: *Jet de Sang*

### Activity 1:

Remind students of the work done so far in this resource on the audience and actor language and the symbols that he wanted language to make. Through facilitating consider Artaud's theories on lighting and sound.

The script for *Jet of Blood* can be found online by searching using a search engine.

### Activity 2:

Let students watch the video a few times as there is a lot to take in. There are many in this video has a good number of techniques from Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty. As the end of the resource, it is assumed that the students have been taken through or contained within this resource. Try to pick out any of the techniques, such as use of students are watching the video.

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