

Eugenio Barba

Eugenio Barba was born in 1936 in Italy and grew up in the village of Gallipoli. His family's socio-economic situation changed drastically when his father, a military officer, was a victim of World War II.

Upon completing high school at the Naples military college (1954) he abandoned the idea of embarking on a military career following in his father's footsteps. Instead, in 1954, he emigrated to Norway to work as a welder and a sailor. At the same time, he took a degree in French, Norwegian Literature and History of Religions at Oslo University.

In 1961 he went to Poland to learn directing at the State Theatre School in Warsaw, but left one year later to join Jerzy Grotowski, who at that time was the director of the Theatre of 13 Rows in Opole. Barba stayed with Grotowski for three years. In 1963 he traveled to India where he studied Kathakali, a theatre form which was unknown in the West at that time. Barba wrote an essay on Kathakali which was immediately published in Italy, France, the USA and Denmark. His first book about Grotowski, *In Search of a Lost Theatre*, appeared in 1965 in Italy and Hungary.

When Barba returned to Oslo in 1964, he wanted to become a professional theatre director but, being a foreigner, he was unable to find work. He gathered together a few young people who had not been accepted by the State Theatre School, and created Odin Teatret in October 1964. As the first theatre group in Europe, they worked out the new practice of training as a total apprenticeship. They rehearsed in an air-raid shelter their first production, *Ornitofilene*, by the Norwegian author Jens Bjørneboe, which was shown in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark. They were subsequently invited by the Danish municipality of Holstebro, a small town in north-west Jutland, to create a theatre laboratory there. To start with, they were offered an old farm and a small sum of money. Since then Barba and his collaborators have made Holstebro the base for their multiple activities.

Since 1964 Eugenio Barba has directed 76 productions with Odin Teatret and with the intercultural Theatrum Mundi Ensemble, some of which have required up to two years of preparation. Among the best known are *Feraï* (1969), *My Father's House* (1972), *Brecht's Ashes* (1980), *The Gospel according to Oxyrhincus* (1985), *Talabot* (1988), *Kaosmos* (1993), *Mythos* (1998), *Andersen's Dream* (2004), *Ur-Hamlet* (2006), *Don Giovanni all'Inferno* (2006), *The Marriage of Medea* (2008), *The Chronic Life* (2012) and *The Tree* (2016).

Since 1974, Eugenio Barba and Odin Teatret have devised their own way of being present in diverse social contexts through the practice of the "barter", an exchange of cultural expressions with a community or an institution, structured as a common performance.

In 1979 Eugenio Barba founded ISTA, International School of Theatre Anthropology thus opening a new field of studies: Theatre Anthropology.

In December 2020, Eugenio Barba established with Julia Varley the Barba Varley Foundation, with the purpose of supporting fields of action animated by people who are disadvantaged by gender, ethnicity, geography, age, way of thinking and acting inside and outside theatre.

Barba is on the advisory boards of scholarly journals such as "The Drama Review", "Performance Research", "New Theatre Quarterly", "Teatro e Storia" and "Urdimento". Among his most recent publications, translated into many languages, are *The Paper Canoe* (Routledge), *Theatre: Solitude, Craft, Revolt* (Black Mountain Press), *Land of Ashes and Diamonds. My Apprenticeship in Poland, followed by 26 letters from Jerzy Grotowski to Eugenio Barba* (Black Mountain Press), *Arar el cielo* (Casa de las Americas, Havana), *La conquista de la diferencia* (Yuyachkani/San Marcos Editorial, Lima), *On Dramaturgy and Directing. Burning the House* (Routledge), *The Moon Rises from the Ganges: My journey through Asian acting techniques*, (Icarus/Routledge), *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology* in collaboration with Nicola Savarese (Routledge) and *The Five Continents of Theatre*, in collaboration with Nicola Savarese (Brill).

Eugenio Barba has been awarded honorary doctorates from the Universities of Århus, Ayacucho, Bologna, Havana, Warsaw, Plymouth, Hong Kong, Buenos Aires, Tallinn, Cluj-Napoca, Edinburgh, Shanghai, Brno and Peloponnese as well as the "Reconnaissance de Mérite Scientifique" from the University of Montreal and the Sonning Prize from the University of Copenhagen. He is also the recipient of the Danish Academy Award, the Mexican Theatre Critics' prize, the Pirandello International Prize and The Thalia Prize from The International Association of Theatre Critics (IATC).

Among the artists who have made a mark on the history of theatre in the second half of the twentieth century, Eugenio Barba is the only one who has worked in an innovative way in all fields of theatre culture: the artistic creation; the theoretical reflection; the transmission of the professional techniques and knowledge; the work on historic memory; the scientific research; the use of theatre in a social context, as a trans-cultural tool to activate relations between social and different ethnic groups.

EUGENIO BARBA
curriculum vitae & selected bibliography
2021

PERSONAL

Born: 29 October 1936, Brindisi, Italy
Nationality: Danish.

EDUCATION

Oslo University (1954 - 1960), M.A., Literature and History of Religion
Studies in theatre direction at the Theatre School in Warsaw and at Jerzy Grotowski's Theatre Laboratory in Opole, Poland (1960 - 1964)

FOUNDER/DIRECTOR

ODIN TEATRET/ Nordic Theatre Laboratory (1964 to present)
ISTA – International School of Theatre Anthropology (1979 to present)
THE UNIVERSITY OF EURASIAN THEATRE (in collaboration with Bologna University, 1990 to present)

MAIN PRODUCTIONS DIRECTED WITH ODIN TEATRET:

Ornitofilene	(1965 - 1966)
Kaspariana	(1967 - 1968)
Ferai	(1969 - 1970)
My Father's House	(1972 - 1974)
The Book of Dances	(1974 - 1980)
Come! And the Day will be Ours	(1976 - 1980)
Anabasis	(1977 - 1984)
The Million	(1978 - 1984)
Brecht's Ashes	(1982 - 1984)
Marriage with God	(1984 - 1990)
The Oedipus Story	(1984 - 1990)
The Gospel According to Oxyrhincus	(1985 - 1987)
Judith	(1987 to present)
Talabot	(1988 - 1991)
Memoria	(1990 to present)
The Castle of Holstebro	(1990 to present)
Itsi-Bitsi	(1991 to present)
Kaosmos	(1993 - 1996)
Ode to Progress	(1997 to present)
In the Skeleton of the Whale	(1997 to present)
Doña Musica's Butterflies	(1997 to present)
Mythos	(1998 - 2006)
Salt	(2002 to present)
Great Cities under the Moon	(2003 to present)
Andersen's Dream	(2004 - 2011)
Don Giovanni all'Inferno	(2006 to present)
The Chronic Life	(2011 to present)
Ave Maria	(2012 to present)
The Tree	(2016 to present)
A Character that Cannot Die	(2019 to present)
The Deaf Man's House	(2019 to present)

PRODUCTIONS DIRECTED WITH THE INTERCULTURAL THEATRUM MUNDI ENSEMBLE:

Parade	1981	Orô de Otelo	1994
Women Who Fight and Love	1985	Water-Ghosts	1994
The Castle	1987	Scenes from the Midnight Sun	1995
Crossing	1990	The Island of Labyrinths	1996
Shakuntala	1993	Four Poems for Sanjukta	1998
The Jungle Book	1993	Ego Faust	2000

Anthology	2005	The Marriage of Medea	2008
Ur-Hamlet	2006, 2009		

SESSIONS OF ISTA - INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF THEATRE ANTHROPOLOGY

Bonn, Germany 1980; Volterra/Pontedera, Italy 1981; Blois/Malakoff, France 1985; Holstebro, Denmark 1986; Salento, Italy 1987; Bologna, Italy 1990; Brecon/Cardiff, Wales 1992; Londrina, Brazil 1994; Umeaa, Sweden 1995; Copenhagen, Denmark 1996; Montemor-o-Novo/Lisbon, Portugal 1998; Bielefeld, Germany 2000; La Rinconada/Seville, Spain 2004; Krzyzowa/Wroclaw, Poland 2005. Albino, Italy 2016

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS & POSITIONS

Board of Advisers, International Committee, Théâtre des Nations (1975 - 1980)
Board of Advisers, International Association of Performing Arts Semiotics (1981 - 85)
Examining Professor, University of Aarhus (1976 -2000)
Director, UNESCO sponsored International Encounter on Third Theatre, Belgrade 1976
Director, UNESCO sponsored International Encounter on Group Theatre, Bergamo 1977
Director, UNESCO sponsored International Encounter "North-South", Madrid 1979
Adviser, Danish Ministry of Culture, for new legislation in the field of theatre pedagogy and research (1981 - 1982)
UNESCO adviser, Centro de Estudios Teatrales, Museo de Arte Moderno, Bogota 1983
Adviser: Center of Theatre Exchanges, Rio de Janeiro (1987 - 1992)
Member of Comité Scientifique "Laboratoire de Recherche sur les Arts du Spectacle" CNRS, Paris (1998 to present))
Chairman, Centre for Theatre Laboratory Studies (CTLS), University of Aarhus (2004 to present)
Honorary Chairman of the Wuzhen International Theatre Festival (2014)

VISITING PROFESSOR

Universities of New York, Montreal, L'Aquila, UNAM-Mexico, Giessen, Paris 8, Cairo, Warwick, Buenos Aires, Brasilia, Santiago, Montevideo, Shanghai

EDITORSHIPS

Editor: "Teatrets Teori og Teknikk", Odin Teatrets Forlag (1965 - 1975)
Editor: "Towards a Poor Theatre" by Jerzy Grotowski, Odin Teatrets Forlag (1967)
Advisory Editor: "New Theatre Quarterly", Cambridge University Press (1985 to present)
Contributing Editor: "TDR- the Drama Review", MIT Press (1986 to present)
Contributing Editor: "Teatro e Storia" Bulzoni, (1999 to present)
Advisory Board: "Performance Research", Routledge, Centre for Performance Research (1996 to present)
Advisory Board: "Teatrología", Grupo de Estudio de Teatro Argentino, (1997 to present)
Advisory Board: "Urdimento" (2010 to present)
Director: "JTA – Journal of Theatre Anthropology" (2020 to present)

WRITINGS

Books:

Alla ricerca del teatro perduto, Italy (1965), Hungary (1965)
The Floating Islands, Denmark (1978), Greece (1980 / 2018); France (1982); Spain (1983); Mexico (1983)
Modsaetningernes Spil, Denmark (1980)
Il Brecht dell'Odin, Italy (1981)
La corsa dei contrari, Italy (1981 / 2019)
Bemerkungen zum Schweigen der Schrift, Verlag Theaterassoziation, (Germany 1983)
Beyond the Floating Islands, Germany (1985), Italy (1986), USA (1986) Mexico (1986), Argentina (1987), Denmark (1989), Brazil (1991) Greece (2018)
The Dilated Body, Zeami Libri, Italy (1985)
Anatomie de l'acteur, (in collaboration with Nicola Savarese), France (1985), Mexico (1988)
Brechts Aske, Oxyrhincus Evangeliet, (Two plays), Universitetsforlaget, Denmark (1986)
The Secret Art of the Performer, (in collaboration with Nicola Savarese), Mexico (1990), Great Britain/USA (1991), Brazil (1994 / 2012), France (1995), Japan (1995), Italy (1997), Yugoslavia (1996), Czech Republic (2001), Turkey (2002 / 2017). Updated and increased edition: Great Britain/USA (2005), Poland (2005), Greece (2008), France 2008, Mexico (2009), Cuba (2009), Peru (2010), Italy (2011), Russia (2011), Spain (2012), Romania (2012), Taiwan (2012), China (2012), Argentina (2019)

The Paper Canoe, Mexico (1992), Italy (1993), France (1993 / 2004), Argentina (1994), Brazil (1994), Denmark (1994), Great Britain/USA (1994), Holland (1997), Germany (1998), Estonia (1999), Korea (2000), Hungary (2001), Ukraine (2001), Romania (2003), Slovenia (2005), Egypt (2007), Cuba (2007), Poland (2007), Greece (2007), Russia (2008), Brazil (2009), Spain (2013), Finland (2014), Albania (2015), Ecuador (2015), Peru (2017), China (2018)

Theatre: Solitude, Craft, Revolt, Italy (1996), Argentina (1997), Mexico (1998), France (1999), Great Britain (1999), Greece (2001), Poland (2003), Cuba (2003), Korea (2005), Brazil (2010), Romania (2010)

Land of Ashes and Diamonds, Italy (1998 / 2004), Great Britain (1999), Argentina (2000), Germany (2000), France (2000), Poland (2001), Egypt (2001), Cuba (2003), Greece (2004), Brazil (2006), Mexico (2008), Romania (2010), Hungary (2015)

Il prossimo spettacolo, Italy (1999)

Arar el cielo, Cuba (2002)

A mis espectadores, Spain (2004)

Obras Escogidas, Cuba, Vol. I (2003), Vol. II (2007), Vol. III (2010), Vol. IV (2012)

La conquista de la diferencia, Peru (2008), Italy (2012), Cuba (2012)

Burning the House. On directing and dramaturgy, Italy (2009), Great Britain/USA (2010), Cuba (2010), France (2011), Argentina (2010), Spain (2010), Brazil (2010), Poland (2011), Romania (2012), Mexico (2012), Greece (2019),

The Moon Rises from the Ganges: My journey through Asian acting techniques, Icarus/Routledge, Great Britain/USA (2015), Mexico (2017), Argentina (2017) Cuba (2016) Greece (2020)

The Five Continents of Theatre, in collaboration with Nicola Savarese, Italy (2017), Romania (2018), USA/Netherlands (2019)

Genius Loci. Odin Teatret's Home, in collaboration with Julia Varley and Francesco Galli, Denmark (2020)

Articles and essays in several theatre magazines all over the world.

AWARDS

Festival Premio Roma, Italy, (1969)

BITEF Grand Prix, Yugoslavia (1974)

The Danish Academy's Kjeld Abell Award (1980)

The Mexican Theatre Critics Prize for best foreign production (1984)

BITEF Grand Prix, Yugoslavia (1986)

Diego Fabbri Prize, Italy (1986)

Doctor Honoris Causa, University of Aarhus (1988)

Prize "Gallo de la Habana" Casa de las Américas, Cuba (1994)

Reconnaissance de mérite scientifique, University of Montreal (1995)

Honorary citizen of Carpignano, Italy (1996)

Honorary citizen of Pontedera, Italy (1997)

International Prize "Luigi Pirandello", Italy (1997)

Doctor Honoris Causa, University of Bologna (1999)

Doctor Honoris Causa, University of Ayacucho (1999)

BITEF Grand Prix, Yugoslavia (1999)

Sonning Prize, University of Copenhagen (2000)

Knight of the Danish Order of Dannebrog for his contribution to the arts, Copenhagen (2000)

Honorary citizen of Guanare, Venezuela (2000)

Doctor Honoris Causa, Instituto Superior de Artes, Havana (2002)

Doctor Honoris Causa, University of Warsaw (2003)

Doctor Honoris Causa, University of Plymouth (2005)

Doctor Honoris Causa, Academy for Performing Arts, Hong Kong (2006)

Doctor Honoris Causa, Instituto Universitario Nacional de Artes (IUNA), Buenos Aires (2008)

Gold Medal of Gloria Artis, Minister of Culture and National Heritage, Wroclaw, Poland (2009)

Doctor Honoris Causa, Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre (EAMT), Tallinn (2009)

Diploma for outstanding contribution to the promotion of Poland in the World, Warsaw (2009)

Prize of Hope by Åsen Teater (DK) and The Dell'Arte Company (USA) (2011)

Doctor Honoris Causa, University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania (2012)

Prize Atahualpa del Cioppo by FIDAE, Festival Internacional Artes Escenicas, Montevideo (2013)

Thalia Prize, The International Association of Theatre Critics - IATC (2014)

Doctor Honoris Causa, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh (2014)

Doctor Honoris Causa, Shanghai Theatre Academy, Shanghai (2014)

Doctor Honoris Causa, Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts, University of Brno (2017)
Doctor Honoris Causa, University of Peloponnese, Nafplio (2019)