

## APATHEATRE, APOTHEATRE

Auditoriums come with a set of expectations about information distribution, hierarchy and authority, and entertaining content. By working with the space in a minimal manner to exemplify and defy these expectations, *Apatheatre*, *Apotheatre* will present an immersive installation mocking and distorting traditional manners of theatre.

Jerzy Grotowski, Polish director and playwright, focused on developing experimental forms of theatre that focused on reducing the practice to its essential parts. He developed the concepts of “poor theatre” and “poor acting,” and was interested in the relationship between the audience members and the actors. His actors were put through a series of intensive workshops in order to prepare them for their roles; he described being an actor as the most selfless task a human can take on. It requires you to unlearn and disidentify from any past representations of yourself, and to instead use your body as a vessel to communicate identities or realities other than your own. He insisted that actors are not fulfilling their roles or learning new things (*adding* to their formal selves) but are rather completing the task by negation by removing any and all blocks that could prevent them from becoming their assigned roles.

This relationship between performer and audience member is one that I wish to explore. I’m intrigued by the patterns of authority within the theatre situation; while the person onstage has captured the audience’s attention and holds power in this manner, the audience member’s predetermined expectations of the actor and performance setting will control the way that the piece is truly experienced. Actors onstage are subject to a level of exposure to which the audience members are immune, hidden in a sea of viewers. This gives the viewers power to analyze and assume things about the performer without any danger of the same thing happening to them.

Are performers who do nothing performers? What is performing? Is simply the act of being onstage a “performance?”

The audio/visual experience of the piece will focus on the non-actors. Audio will play giving the listeners “facts” about the performers, whose faces the audience cannot see. The assumption of truthfulness and exposure by a performance artist is another I hope to address- very little that the audio says will have any grounding in truth.

Apotheosis is the idea of a climax, an ascension to a godlike state of perfection and upmost quality. In art, the term is used to describe the elevation of an artwork’s subject to a divine level. Apathy is a lack of concern, enthusiasm, or emotion.