

To seize the surge of language by its soft, bare skull

Beloved, do not die. Do not dare die! I, the survivor, I wrap you in words so that the future inherits you. I snatch you from the death of forgetfulness. I tell your story, complete your ending—you who once whispered beside me in the dark.

[Antjie Krog, Country of My Skull (London: Vintage, 1999) 39.]











"A distinctive feature of the Commission was its openness to public participation and scrutiny. This enabled it to reach out on a daily basis to large numbers of people inside and outside of South Africa, and to confront them with vivid images on their television screens or on the front pages of their newspapers... The media also helped generate public debate on central aspects of South Africa's past and to raise the level of historical awareness. The issues that emerged as a consequence helped the nation to focus on values central to a healthy democracy: transparency, public participation and criticism." (TRC 1.104)

"What has engaged me as I have followed the Commission, is the way in which individual narratives come to stand for the larger national narrative. The stories of personal grief, loss, triumph and violation now stand as an account of South Africa's recent past. History and autobiography merge. This marks a significant shift, because in the past decades of popular resistance, personal suffering was eclipsed—subordinated to a larger project of mass liberation. Now, however, we hear in individual testimony the very private patterns of language and thought that structure memory and mourning. Ubu and the Truth Commission uses these circumstances as a starting point." (Jane Taylor ii)

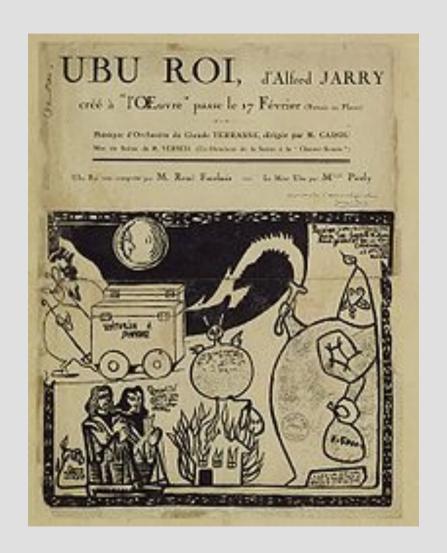
"By providing the environment in which victims could tell their own stories in their own languages, the Commission not only helped to uncover existing facts about past abuses, but also assisted in the creation of a 'narrative truth'. In so doing, it also sought to contribute to the process of reconciliation by ensuring that the truth about the past included the validation of the individual subjective experiences of people who had been previously silenced or voiceless." (TRC 1.112)

"All that a truth commission can achieve is to reduce the number of lies that can be circulated unchallenged in public discourse." (Michael Ignatieff, quoted in TRC 1.111)



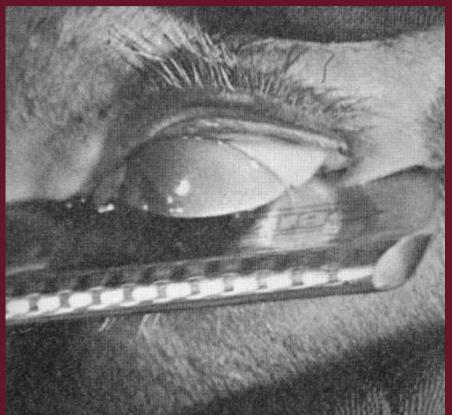
# A 'traditional' production of Ubu http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwsxtqtiple



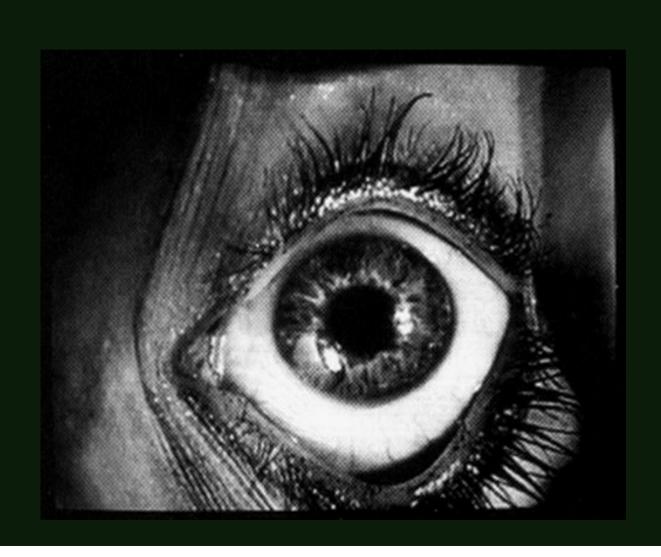








#### Ubu/Un chien andalou http://www.youtube.com/watch? v=L9zhKuV86NA&feature=fvwrel





### Cerberus, the Three-headed Guard Dog at the Entrance to Hell...and the Rivers Styx and Lethe



## Verbatim Theatre

Richard Norton-Taylor, *The Colour of Justice* (1999): Based on transcripts from the Stephen Lawrence trials

Duma Kumalo, The Story I Am About to Tell (1998)

Cardboard Citizens, *A Few Man Fridays* (2012): <a href="http://www.cardboardcitizens.org.uk/p2s59.html#video">http://www.cardboardcitizens.org.uk/p2s59.html#video</a>

"rather than reperforming those testimonies literally, the play [*Ubu*] dramatizes the ruptures and displacements of their telling through the use of puppetry" (Graham 40)

"Badly handled, such stories could easily become a kind of horror pornography. The puppets assist in mediating this horror. They are not actors playing a role. Rather, they are wooden dolls attempting to be real people. As they attempt to move and breathe as we do, they cross the barrier of the here and now and become metaphors for humanity." (xvi–xvii)

Paradoxically, even as it puts a distance between the audience and the victim, this displacement of the testimony brings the audience closer to the victim's experience of trauma. This effect occurs because the spatial representation of the process of remembering and bearing witness—that is, the separation of speaker, speech, and meaning—not only mimics but also draws the audience's attention to the fragmentation of subjectivity experienced by the trauma survivor." (Graham 43)

#### Pa Ubu:

- Lines from Eugene de Kok (aka "Prime Evil") and Dirk
   Coetzee
- Role as protagonist of play
- "The fact that the audience is privy to Ubu's secrets also positions us as coconspirators, accessories to his crimes. It does this by casting Ubu as the protagonist of the play, the subject through whom the audience relates to the action." (Graham 46)

"With this interdependence between a lifeless object and a human being there exists a great irony: when they are seen on stage the pet appears to have a life while the peteer is dead to the audience. In Ubu & e Truth Commission, this irony is explored to at depths by making the human nipulators visible (Coetzee 41)