

Simon Brook, Ermanno Olmi & Luigi Musini present



The Tightrope



a theatrical adventure with **Peter Brook**

a film by **Simon Brook**

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(Sur un Fil...)

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France - Italy / 86 minutes / English - French

Synopsis

"How does one make theatre real? It is so easy to fall into tragedy or comedy. What is important above all is to be on this strict razor's edge of the tightrope..."

Peter Brook is one of the world's most respected and revolutionary directors of contemporary theatre. One of his exercises to enable extraordinary performances - called The Tightrope - has evolved over decades of experimentation and application into a process of transformation that makes theatre real and new for actor and audience alike.

Now, for the first time in forty years, he's agreed to raise the curtain and reveal how the Tightrope works its dramatic alchemy on his actors.

Over two intensive weeks, his son Simon Brook filmed a group of actors and musicians as they explored what it means to create theatre.

Filmed in total immersion, with five hidden cameras - absolutely exceptional and unique circumstances for a documentary - **THE TIGHTROPE** plunges us into the intimate aspects of Peter Brook's work, as well as that of his troupe, without disturbing the truth of the moment, and brings forth in a surprisingly visible manner the magic inherent to the creative process.

The Tightrope is key to Peter Brook's philosophy and life, and nobody who shares it remains unchanged. This unique and deeply personal film takes us beyond the intimacy of a workshop, into a philosophical experience, on a tightrope...



Director's Statement

When my father Peter Brook finally agreed to let me film what goes on during the rehearsal period with his actors, the first questions I asked myself were: "How can I capture this intangible creative process? And how can I show that indefinable magical moment when theatre becomes alive and real?"

My intentions were clear:

To make a film that could take us in total immersion through a process that lasts several weeks in under ninety minutes, without compromising the integrity of the performance, and concentrating only on the process, not on an end result. And especially, to go about it in a way that would be neither boring nor predictable, going beyond the static and dull tradition of "filmed theatre."

The starting point was to create a workshop environment in which the actors and musicians taking part would all feel safe. Safe to try things. Safe to take risks. Safe to fail...

The next was to devise a hidden multi-camera setup that would not only allow the actors and Peter Brook to forget that they were being filmed, but also allow us to be in the immediacy of the moment, ultimately bringing the viewer into the heart of the process and sharing the theatrical experience.

Simon Brook



Simon Brook was born in London and was educated in Paris and London. He started working as a runner at Pinewood at the age of twelve on various film productions

After training for a year as an actor at the London Drama Center, he moved to Paris where he worked as Company Manager for the European tours of Pina Bausch, the Dave Brubeck Quartet and the Murray Louis Dance Company. He then spent a few years in New York and Los Angeles where he pursued a career in the film industry, working on Jim Jarmusch's film **DOWN BY LAW**, music videos with Academy Award winning director Zbigniew Rybczynski and on Philip Kaufman's **UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING**.

He established Black Cat Productions in New York, producing TV drama, music videos and shorts. In 1988, he was associate producer on the movie **RELIGION, INC** starring Sandra Bullock.

Since his return to France, he has been directing documentaries and drama, including the J.G. Ballard story **MINUS ONE**, and **ALICE** by Saki, released theatrically on 90 screens with Volker Schlöndorff's **THE OGRE**.

His many documentaries include 20 short films about children in Caucasus, a documentary on the Amazon river for France 2, a documentary about the Karo tribe of Ethiopia for Canal+ and the documentary feature **BROOK BY BROOK**, coproduced by the Dardenne brothers. He also made a film on Alexandria at the time of Cleopatra for Discovery and a musical documentary in the Amazon, **JUNGLE MAGIC**, for the BBC and ARTE. In 2006, he directed **THE TRUE LEGEND OF THE EIFFEL TOWER** a 95 minute docudrama for Canal+ and France 3 (with record ratings and the highest audience appreciation, beating **THE MARCH OF THE PENGUINS**).

In 2008, he directed the documentary **GENERATION 68**, a humorous, off-beat look at the 1968 uprisings, commented upon 40 years later by Dennis Hopper, Milos Forman, Mary Quant, Vaclav Havel, Jean-Claude Carrière, Ed Ruscha...

More recently he produced and directed **ANNIE NIGHTINGALE: BIRD ON THE WIRELESS**, a one hour prime time musical documentary with Paul McCartney and Mick Jones (of the Clash) for the BBC and he has just finished a 90 minute documentary **INDIAN SUMMER** a medical road movie about Ayurvedic medicine (to be broadcast in the fall of 2012) as well as currently writing a feature-length fiction film for Mika Kaurismäki, to be produced by CHIC Films (**A PROPHET**).

With

Yoshi Oida

JAPANESE ACTOR

Started working with Peter Brook in 1968 and has been one of his longest and closest collaborators, appearing in most of the productions. His work with other directors includes Peter Greenaway's film **The Pillow book**. Yoshi is also a widely respected opera director as well as the author of several books.



Marcello Magni

ITALIAN ACTOR

Cofounder of the British theater company, Complicité, in London. For Peter Brook, he plays one of the parts in Samuel Beckett's **Fragments**.



Hayley Carmichael

ENGLISH ACTRESS

Cofounder of Told by An Idiot, creates and plays roles in this company's productions. In 1999, won the *TMA Best Actress Award* and the *Time Out Best Actress Award* for her performances in **I Weep at My Piano**, **Mr. Puntilla**, and **The Dispute**. For Peter Brook, she plays in **Fragments** by Samuel Beckett.



Jos Houben

BELGIAN ACTOR

Cofounder of the British theater company, Complicité, in Samuel Beckett's **Fragments**.

Abdou Ouologuem

MALIAN ACTOR

Eleven and Twelve, adapted from Amadou Hampâté Bâ, and **A Magic Flute**, adapted from Mozart.



Shantala Shivalingappa

INDIAN ACTRESS AND DANCER

Worked with the world's greatest choreographers, such as Maurice Béjart (**1789... et nous**), Bartabas (**Chimère**) and Pina Bausch (**O Dido and Nefès**). Also Miranda in **The Tempest** and Ophelia in **Hamlet** for Peter Brook.



Lydia Wilson

ENGLISH ACTRESS

Blasted by Sarah Kane, **The Heretic** by Richard Bean and **The Acid Test** by Anya Reiss; **Tis Pity She's a Whore** by John Ford.



Emily Wilson

AMERICAN ACTRESS

The Trojan Women directed by Aurélien Recoing; created the Compagnie du Théâtre de la Paupière and directed **Ça m'inquiète**, **Die Verlassene Dido**; **Ma Vie en Couleurs**.

Micha Lescot

FRENCH ACTOR

Awarded a *Moliere* prize for theatrical Revelation in 2005 for his role in **Musée Haut, Musée Bas** by Jean-Michel Ribes; **Ionesco's The Chairs** (*Best actor prize Syndicat de la critique 2011*) and **Lucide** by Rafael Spreglbud.



Cesar Sarachu

SPANISH ACTOR

The Street of Crocodiles – Complicité group; joined the le Stadsteater (Sweden) in the Unga Klara group for Henning Mankell's *Temps d'obscurité* and **La Chose plus importante** by Nikolaj Jevreinov. With Peter Brook, he played in **Eleven and Twelve** and **Fragments** by Samuel Beckett.



Khalifa Natour

PALESTINIAN ACTOR

Eran Kolirin's **The band's visit; Le Fils de L'autre** by Lorraine Lévy. For Peter Brook, he participated in **Eleven and Twelve** in 2009, adapted from Amadou Hampâté Bâ.

Musicians

Toshi Tsuchitori

JAPANESE COMPOSER & MUSICIAN

Worked with Peter Brook for more than 30 years, he has composed music for many of his productions, including the Mahabharata.



Franck Krawczyk

FRENCH COMPOSER & MUSICIAN

Created and interpreted a musical accompaniment for Shakespeare's *Sonnets* **Love is my Sin** and **A Magic Flute**, freely adapted from Mozart's opera.



Marie-Hélène Estienne

ARTISTIC COLLABORATION

Joined Peter Brook's International Center for Theatre Research (CIRT) in 1977. **Woza Albert!**, **L'Homme qui** and **Qui est là**, co-writer with Peter Brook **I am a phenomenon**.



Peter Brook



"I've never believed in a single truth. Neither my own, nor those of others. I believe that all schools of thought, all theories can be useful at a given time and a certain place. But I believe one can only live through passionately and absolutely identifying ourselves with one point of view. However, with the passing time, as we change, as the world changes, objectives vary and points of view shift. If I consider the essays I have written, the ideas fleshed out in numerous places, one thing strikes me: a certain continuity. For a point of view to have any usefulness, one has to devote oneself entirely to it; it must be defended to the death. Yet, at the same time, a little voice inside me whispers: "hold on tightly, let go lightly."

Excerpt from the book "The Shifting Point" by Peter Brook - Penguin Classics

Born in London in 1925, Peter Brook studied at Oxford and launched himself into stage directing for the first time at age 17. During the course of his career, he has distinguished himself in a multiplicity of genres: theater, opera, cinema and writing. For the theater, he has staged numerous texts by Shakespeare for the Royal Shakespeare Company. In 1971 in Paris, he founded, with Micheline Rozan, the International Center for Theatre Research (CIRT) and took over the direction of the Bouffes du Nord in 1974, where he stayed until 2010. His productions are notable for their iconoclastic aspects and their international scope. He also directs operas and has written several books. Among his most recent works are: **A Magic Flute**, a free adaptation of Mozart's opera for which he received the *Moliere* Award in 2011. Also on world tour in 2012 and 2013, a revival of **The Suit**.

This autumn will also see the release of his 1968 anti-war film **Tell Me Lies**, in a new version stunningly restored by the Technicolor Foundation and the Fondation Groupama Gan. The film will be distributed theatrically starting October 10th 2012 in France followed by a worldwide release in 2013.

Main Crew

Director	Simon Brook
Authors	Peter Brook & Simon Brook
Director of Photography	Alexis Kavyrchine TOUS AU LARZAC by Christian Rouaud <i>César 2012 for best documentary</i> PAULINE ET FRANÇOIS by Renaud Fély, 2010 L'ENFANCE DU MAL by Olivier Coussemacq, 2010
Camera operators	Laurent Coltelloni Philippe Dorelli Raphaël O'Byrne Marine Tadié
Colorist	Lionel Kopp SONS OF NORWAY by Jens Lien, 2012 IMMORTALS by Tarsem Singh, 2011 UN LONG DIMANCHE DE FIANÇAILLES by Jean-Pierre Jeunet THE FALL by Tarsem Singh
Sound	Philippe Avril (<i>Kusturica and the Poisoners</i>) Cécile Coutelier Romain Drogoul
Production Design consultant	Benoît Barouh LA GRAINE ET LE MULET – THE SECRET OF THE GRAIN, I COME WITH THE RAIN CYCLO A LA VERTICAL DE L'ÉTÉ – VERTICAL RAYS OF SUN...
Art Direction	Yann Dury Antoine Champeme
Editing	Josie Miljevic LA PIROGUE by Moussa Toure, 2011, <i>Official selection Un Certain Regard - Cannes 2012</i> BROOK BY BROOK by Simon Brook, 2001 BLEU LE CIEL by Dominique Boccarossa, 2000 Barbara Bossuet
Sound editor	Agnès Ravez
Sound mixer	Thierry Delor LA PIROGUE by Moussa Toure, 2011, <i>Official selection Un Certain Regard - Cannes 2012</i> LES AMANTS RÉGULIERS by Philippe Garrel, <i>Osella for best technical contribution - Mostra de Venise 2005</i>
Production	Brook Productions
Producers	Simon Brook, Ermanno Olmi & Luigi Musini, Jean-Pierre Eklou Attisso
Coproducers	Cinemaundici (Italy) & ARTE France (France)
In association with	International Center for Theatre Research (CIRT)



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