

Bali Taksu (Transformation)

June 15-30, 2014



Bali Purnait Center for the Arts, Training Hall

Every artist in Bali strives for TAKSU. The Balinese define it as the moment when the artist completely surrenders to the form of his or her craft and God appears. This energy has many names and is present in every culture. The Indians call it Rasa and American Athletes call it The Zone. It is this divine performance energy that will be explored under the supervision of Master Teacher Aole T. Miller and Micha Espinosa in collaboration with the Master Teachers of Bali. The Bali Taksu workshop is a 15-day acting workshop focused on activating the ultimate performance energy of the body. Participants will work daily from 7am to 6pm training in Balinese Dance, Kecak voice, Gamelan, Mask work, Michael Chekhov, Clown, Grotowski and Fitzmaurice Voicework. All activities and housing will take place at the Bali Purnati Center for the Arts.

Mask Work

Masks show the important connection between Body and Voice. The Latin word persona means mask. The persona was a sonically projected image through the voice. Training in masks is an essential component to this workshop. Masks unlock the deep knowledge of the physical and emotional body. Activating the energy of Taksu opens and frees the imagination to move past the pedestrian linear experience of average thought rooted in personality or the ego driven self. Lead by Aole T. Miller

Michael Chekhov

Many of the ensemble exercises are influenced by the work of Michael Chekhov who developed his techniques out of Buddhism and the philosophic spiritual practices of the East.

Lead by Aole T. Miller & Micha Espinosa

Grotowski & Fitzmaurice

Jerzy Grotowski and Catherine Fitzmaurice Voicework are combined in this workshop, offering performing artists a safe environment where they can tap into parts of themselves that they haven't yet dared to release because they are afraid that they might be foolish, boring, stereotypical, ugly, embarrassing, offensive, or even worse, absolutely brilliant. It's about releasing the parts of the artist that is continually held back when performing.

The release breath work of Fitzmaurice Voicework is influenced by the work of Alexander Lowen's Bioenergetic Tremors, yoga stretches, and shiatzu. It is in the combination of these physical release postures where actors are introduced to the energy of breath. They will begin to experience the power of a free torso while discovering the different passageways of breath throughout the body.

Participants will be guided through a moment-to-moment flow of consciousness where actors surrender to their images and inner voices. By channeling and fully engaging with their inner landscape, by giving it a body and a voice, actors begin to tap into powerful impulses that they have not yet harnessed in their acting.

Lead by Aole T. Miller & Micha Espinosa

Clown

Delve deeper into your physical awareness while rediscovering your uninhibited and innate playfulness. Understand the actor's imagination and the 'energy' it creates and experience the simple pleasure and ferocious generosity of performance. Clowning is about finding a unique character within that delights in the laughter, chaos and lunacy of being human. Clowning will ignite your spirit whilst at the same time emphasize the importance of a generous stage presence and a rich humanity. We will pursue the clown together in all of its messy and hilarious beauty. Your relationship to all other forms of drama will be enriched by the openness and reckless abandon that the clown requires. Receive your clown name.

Lead by Aole T. Miller

Kecak Voice & Gamelan

Kecak is probably the last form of vocal chorus with a close resemblance to the ancient Greek chorus. It is a 5-part vocal chant that invokes the deep cellular vibrations of the primordial traditions of Balinese ritual. Participants will train in Kecak and deepen their connection to tempo/rhythm while finding the vocal spaces of trance.

Gamelan training will accompany the tempo/rhythm training of the body. The gamelan is tuned to the bodies chakra system. The tones and vibration will continue to support the physical open of the performers energy body. Having to

keep the time and precision of gamelan music will continue to balance out the Thinking, Feeling and Will body of the participant.
Lead by Ida Bagus Anom & I Wayan Sumada

Balinese Dance

Like the mask work, the Balinese dance training is fundamental in the pursuit of TAKSU. Its metaphysical gestures provide a strong container for the cosmic energy released in the full commitment of this dance's form.
Lead by Ida Bagus Alit



View from the top of Agung

Gunung Agung

The workshop begins at the foot of Gunung Agung—a 10,000ft mountain that will challenge you, break you and embrace you, all at the same time. Gunung Agung is a volcanic mountain, which last erupted in 1963. It is known to be the holiest mountain on the island, and is the home to the thousand-year-old Mother Temple Besakih, the largest and holiest temple in Bali.

Your first task as an ensemble will be to climb this mountain. The journey will take approximately 16 hours (8 hours to the top and 8 hours to return). It will be extremely challenging physically and mentally. You will need to prepare. It is highly recommended that you exercise rigorously and regularly at least one month prior to coming.

The journey is arduous and the reward is beyond explanation. You will experience of the breaking down of the ego and the empowerment of your will. This is an absolutely imperative element in the journey towards Taksu.

A note to women: Due to the divine nature of Agung, women who are menstruating are not allowed to go on this journey. However, there are medical options that you can explore that will adjust your menstrual cycle safely for this trip. Please consult your doctor for the safest option.

Bali Purnati Centre for the Arts

The Purnati Centre for the Arts is the international hub for prominent artists from around the world to work and is the same facility where Robert Wilson developed and rehearsed his famous production of “i La Galigo,” and where the Kronos Quartet performed in May 2009. It is a securely guarded full service arts complex, with two training halls, an amphitheater, and a swimming pool, hidden away in the village of Batuan on the banks of a sacred river where the Balinese retrieve their holy water. All fresh organic meals are prepared daily by the center’s executive chief. The rooms are two to three single bed dwellings that are prepared daily by the staff. There will be an extra charge of S\$1,000 (Singapore Dollars) for single rooms. <http://www.balipurnati.com>

Recommended Book List:

A New Earth, Eckhart Tolle

The Dark Side of the Light Chasers, Debbie Ford

Training of the American Actor, Ed. Arthur Bartow

For The Theatre and Its Double, by Antonin Artaud

The Power of Myth, Joseph Campbell with Bill Moyers

Required:

Mahabharata, Translation by William Buck

Because the Balinese understand life through the Mahabharata, in fact, the entire island is based on it; each student is **required** to read this ancient poem.



Purnati Center for the Arts, Gardend and Living Quarters



Purnati Center for the Arts, Guest Room

AOLE T. MILLER is the Head of Voice and Speech at Lasalle College of the Arts in Singapore. He is a Certified Associate Teacher of Fitzmaurice Voicework and a UNESCO Designated Teacher. He has been an actor-director-writer-teacher in the United States, Denmark, Singapore, Australia, Malaysia, India, Indonesia since 1992. He is the first African American Ceremonial Mask Dancer of Bali and the first teacher to bring Fitzmaurice Voicework to Denmark, Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia. He coached Michelle Williams for her Academy Award nominated performance in Ang Lee's movie *Brokeback Mountain*. He teaches Mask Work, Fitzmaurice Voicework, Michael Chekhov, Clown, Viewpoints, and Grotowski. He has been on the faculties of The Chautauqua Theatre Company since 2004. He has taught at NYU Tisch School of the Arts, Yale University, The Actors Center, Wayne State (MFA), The New School (MFA), SUNY Purchase College, University of Southern California, The Bill Esper Studio, Rutgers Mason Gross School of the Arts, The National Theatre Institute, Howard University, Western Michigan University, The National University of Singapore, The Queensland Theatre Company, Curtin University (Perth) and the Michael Chekhov Conference 2002. Directing credits: *Romeo & Juliet* (Curtin University, Perth), *Proof* (New Moon Rep, Los Angeles), *I Kreon* (New Moon Rep, New York), *Voices of Juarez* (New York Fringe 2003). He coaches voice for KLPAC (Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Center). He holds a B.F.A. in theatre from NYU Tisch School of the Arts. He is a member of VASTA and SAG. He was the Executive Director of the International Antonin Artaud Fringe Theatre Festival 2008. He was a featured presenter at the International VASTA conference in Mexico City 2010.

MICHA ESPINOSA is an Arizona-based artist, activist, teacher, and vocal coach. She has performed, lectured, and taught voice around the world since 1992. A member of SAG/AFTRA (and a local Arizona board member), Espinosa has performed in film, television, and regional theatre. She is a master teacher of Fitzmaurice Voicework and a trainer for the Fitzmaurice Teacher Certification, as well as a certified yoga instructor. Currently, Espinosa serves as Assistant Professor of Voice and Acting at Arizona State University's School of Film, Dance, and Theatre, and is affiliate faculty with ASU's School of Transborder Studies. Her research and scholarship examines and contextualizes the current climate with the training of actors of non-dominant groups. She is passionate about social justice in actor training, global perspectives, and the cultural voice.

BALINESE TEACHERS & MASK MAKERS:

IDA BAGUS ANOM is known internationally for his handcraft and the strong images of his masks. After his appearance in the *Ring of Fire and Bali: Masterpiece of the Gods* documentaries, he gained his international acclaim. The phantasmagoric, traditional masks of Ida Bagus Anom are in high demand by topeng dancers and pantomimes all over Bali. During the fall of 2001 he received

an invitation from a Japanese television program to exchange work with one of Japans greatest mask makers and dancers. The major question of the Japanese was "how could Anom create Japanese style masks so close to the original style without training under the great masters of Japan or even setting foot on Japanese soil?" This meeting began transforming Anom's work. Now one can see the Japanese influence in Ida Bagus Anom's most contemporary works. As a "modern" mask maker eager to find his own artistic style and craft, Ida Bagus Anom spent most of his life as an outcast in the Balinese mask maker tradition. Now in Bali, his work is known as outstanding artistry. Today he has a major influence on Bali's new generation of woodcarvers. As a traveler and fluent in English, he has taught hundreds of students and visitors in making masks and in Hinduism. His artistic skills range from storytelling, music, and dance. He also teaches the special use of voices in the famous Kecak trance dance.

IDA BAGUS ALIT, born in Latondu near Ubud, is Bali's most celebrated mask maker and mask dancer like his father and ancestors before him. Alit has been dancing since 1973 and carving masks since 1967. He is most know for his contribution to Bali's spiritual community for his wood carvings of the Barong and Durgha masks which are the most important images in the Balinese Hindu culture. He is the Vice president of the Latondu village cultural ministry. Alit is a very important spiritual leader in the village community conducting rituals and cleansing ceremonies His dance troupe is one of the most popular in Bali. Traditional ceremonies must be accompanied by a canon of mask dances, which Alit is most famous. He specializes in the Penasar or clown mask, which connects the community to the traditional stories of the dance and acts as the social voice allowing current village issues to be debated. He is also a noted teacher of Balinese dance and mask carving to overseas students. He is on the faculties of the Bali Conservatory sponsored by Brooklyn based acting school Studio 5 and the Bali Purnati Center for the Arts, Batuan, Bali. After his travels to Japan in 1995, he received an award of excellence from the Japanese ambassador. He has carved masks for the Japanese and East Javanese government.

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Bali: The Art of Transformation

For more information or to schedule an interview contact:
Aole T. Miller +65 9725 4411; Email: dreamshavewings@gmail.com

For more information or to schedule an interview contact:
Micha Espinosa 480-688-8198 Email: micha.espinosa@asu.edu