



# ANTONIN ARTAUD

BY MARTIN ROBINSON

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**'THE COURSE OF ALL RECENT THEATRE IN  
WESTERN EUROPE AND THE AMERICAS  
CAN BE SAID TO DIVIDE INTO TWO  
PERIODS – BEFORE ARTAUD AND AFTER  
ARTAUD'.**

**SUSAN SONTAG**



# SIXTIES COUNTERCULTURE

ARTAUD INFLUENCED: JIM MORRISON, JOHN CAGE, ALLEN GINSBERG (FOR EXAMPLE: THE POEM 'HOWL'), 'HAPPENINGS'

# HOWL

I SAW THE BEST MINDS OF MY GENERATION DESTROYED BY MADNESS

Artaud alone made accusation  
against America  
Before me.

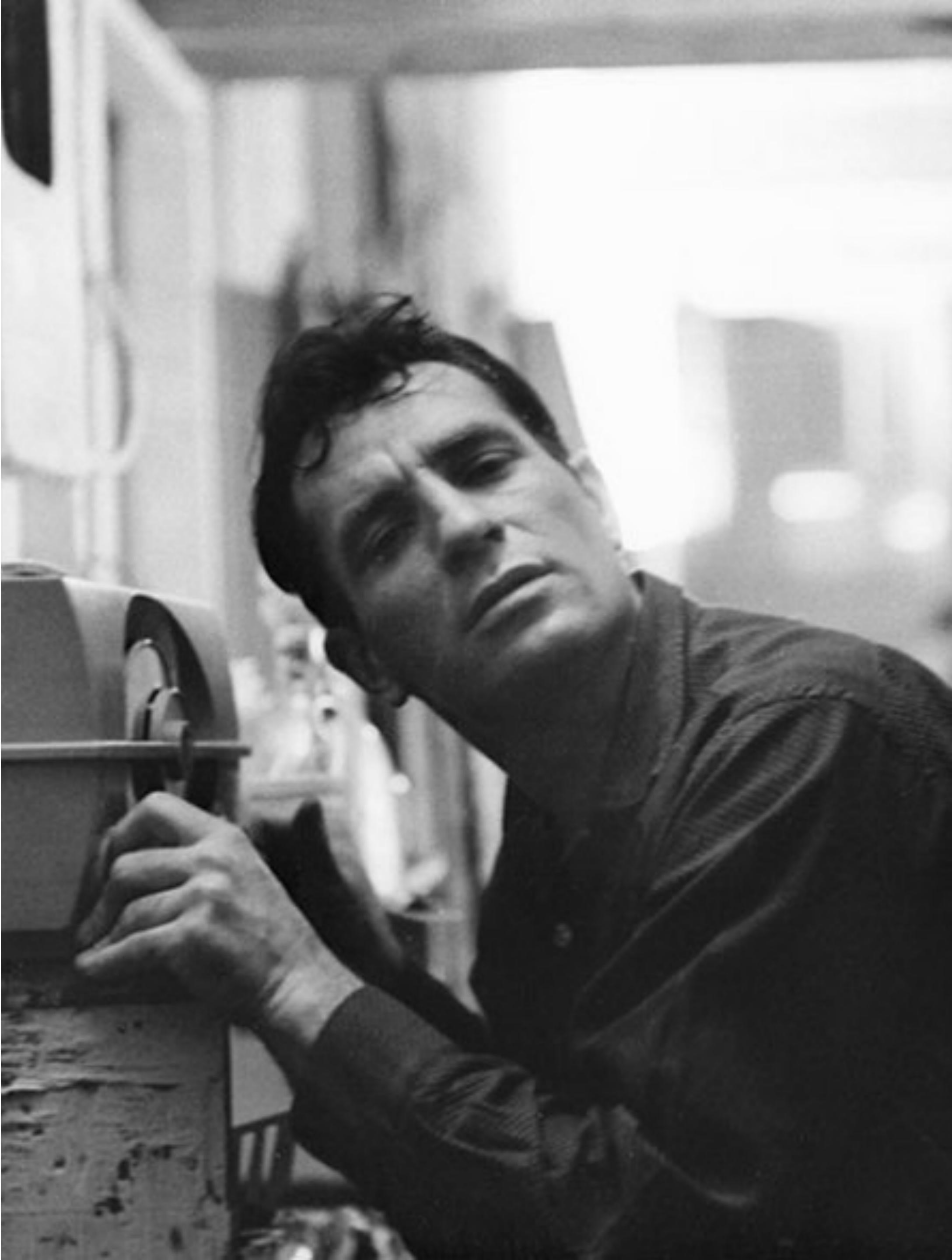
ALLEN GINSBERG, JOURNAL ENTRY FROM 1961



# KEROUAC

## BEAT GENERATION

Artaud was the cookie that was always  
in my hair, a ripe screaming tight  
brother with heinous helling neck-veins  
who liked to riddle my fantasms  
with yaks of mocksqueak joy  
'Why dont you like young Artaud?'  
always I'm asked, because he boasts and boasts,  
brags, brags, ya, ya, ya,  
because he's crazy because he's mad  
and because he never gives us a chance to talk.



# BOWIE

IN 1968 BOWIE HAD WORKED WITH LINDSAY KEMP ON A PRODUCTION OF PIERROT IN TURQUOISE.

Lindsay introduced me to things like Cocteau and the Theatre of the Absurd and Antonin Artaud and the whole idea of restructuring and going against what people generally expect – sometimes for the shock value, sometimes as an educational force. He just gave me the idea that you could experiment with the arts and do things and take dangerous risks that you wouldn't do in real life.



BOWIE (1979):

# SITUATING ARTAUD

**CHARLES MAROWITZ**

Everything Artaud touched turned to ashes: movies, theatre, design, collaboration and virtually all the artefacts that bear his name. In spite of all that, the power of his thought was irresistible and his vision inspired - and continues to inspire - artists of every persuasion throughout the world... He... dismantled Stanislavsky... Artaud seriously undermined the dogma on which Brecht's epic theatre was based.

# BIOGRAPHY

## TROUBLED GENIUS?

**Early years:** At the age of four, Artaud had a severe attack of meningitis. Artaud was nervous and irritable throughout adolescence. He also suffered from neuralgia, stammering, and severe bouts of depression.

**In January 1948, Artaud was diagnosed with intestinal cancer. He died on March 4, 1948, alone, seated at the foot of his bed, holding a shoe. It was suspected that he died from a lethal dose of the drug chloral, although whether or not he was aware of its lethality is unknown.**

BUT WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN THESE EVENTS?



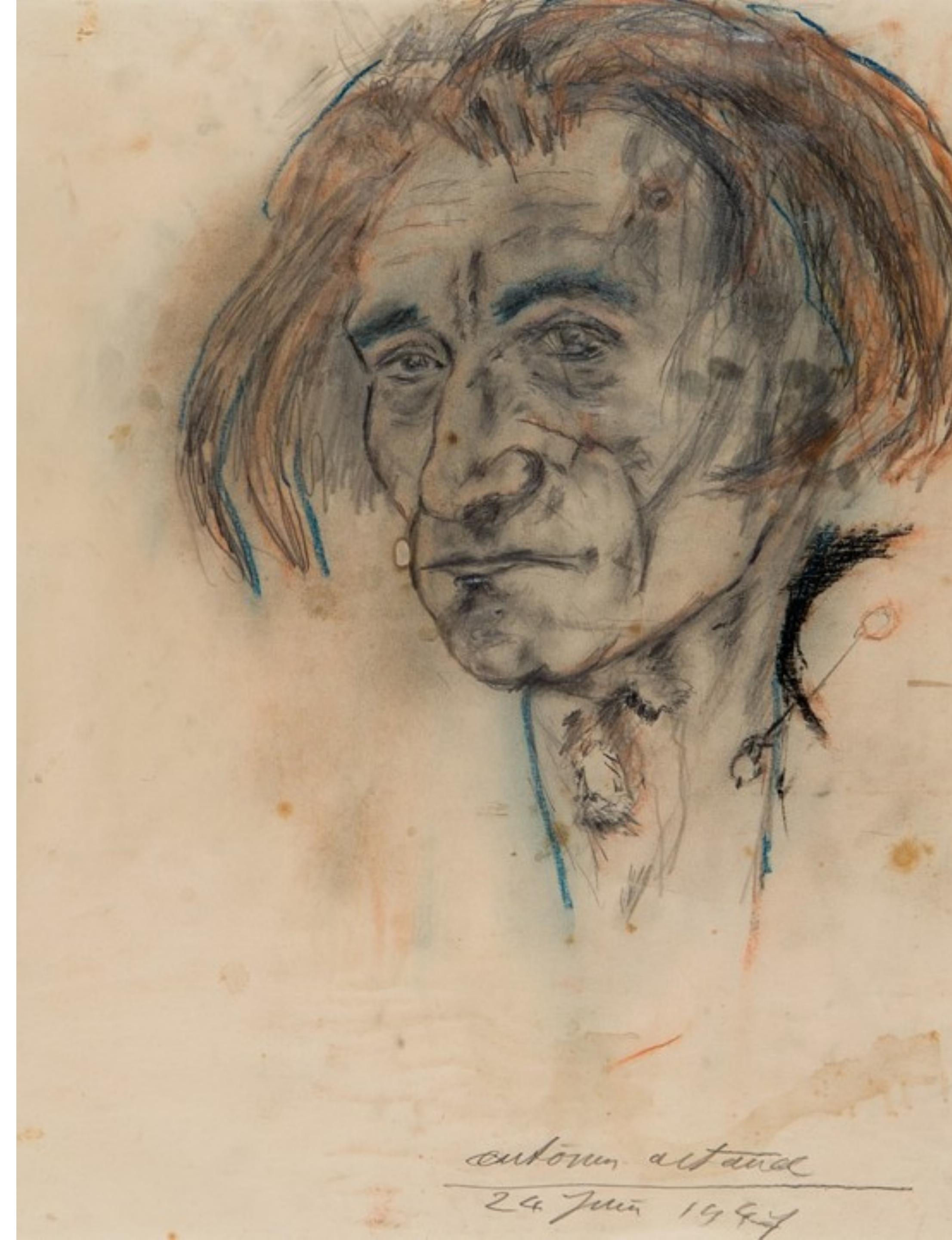
# DRUGS

## LAUDANUM

**He was addicted to various kinds of opiates for most of his life:**

**A doctor attempted to help him with the use of the drug Laudanum in 1919.**

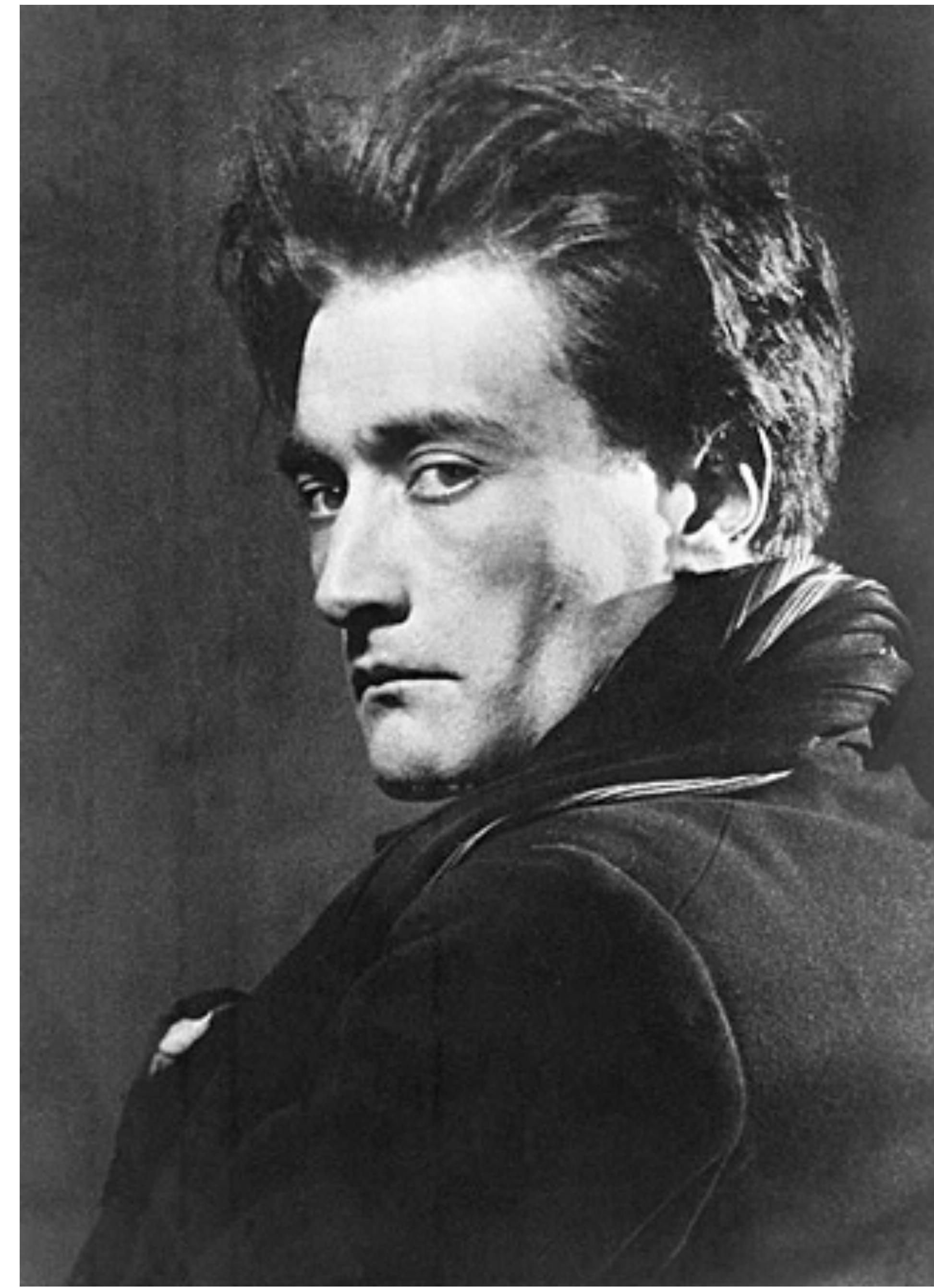
**Artaud said that morphine, heroin and opium made it possible for him to 'find some peace.'**

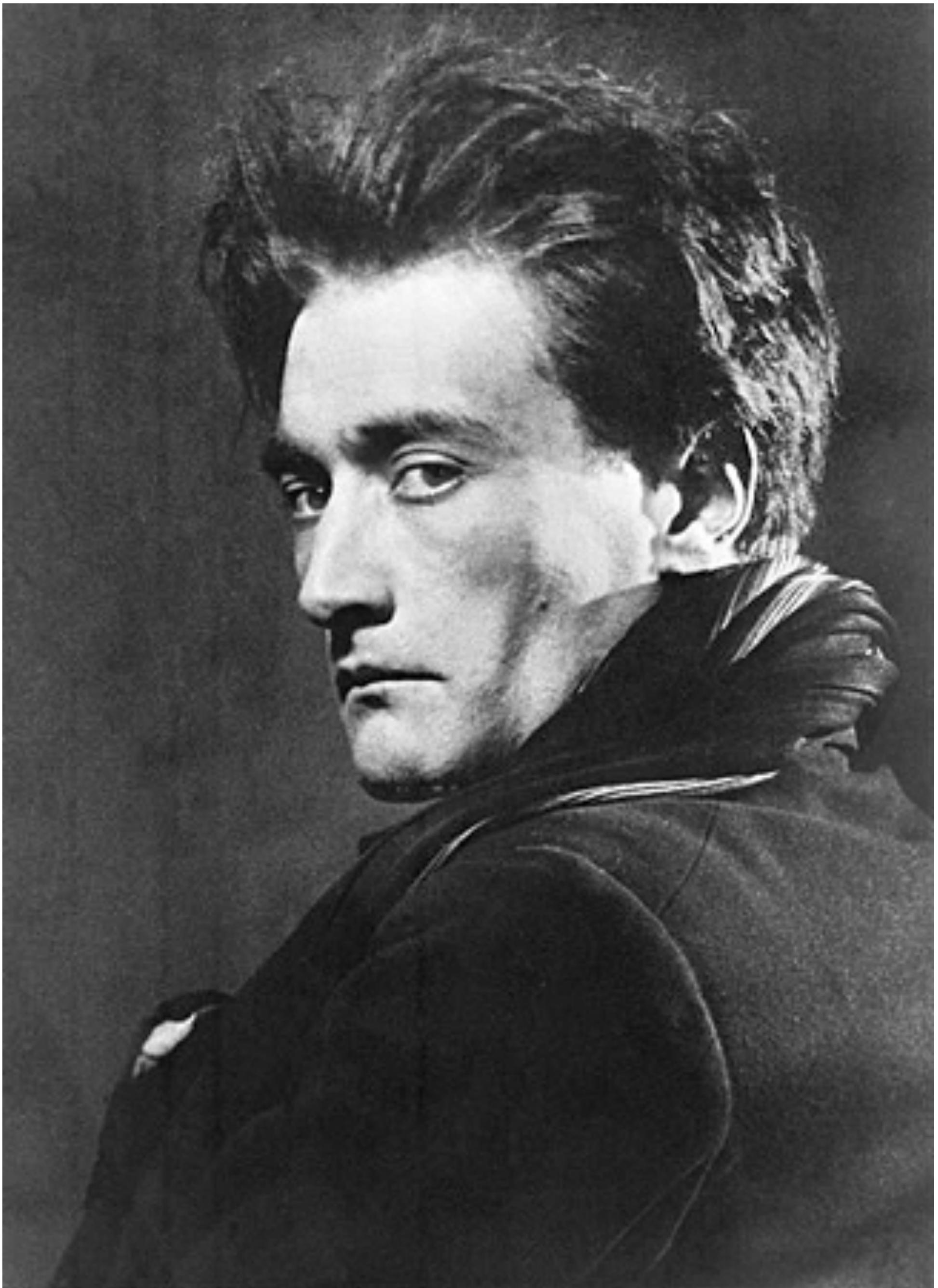


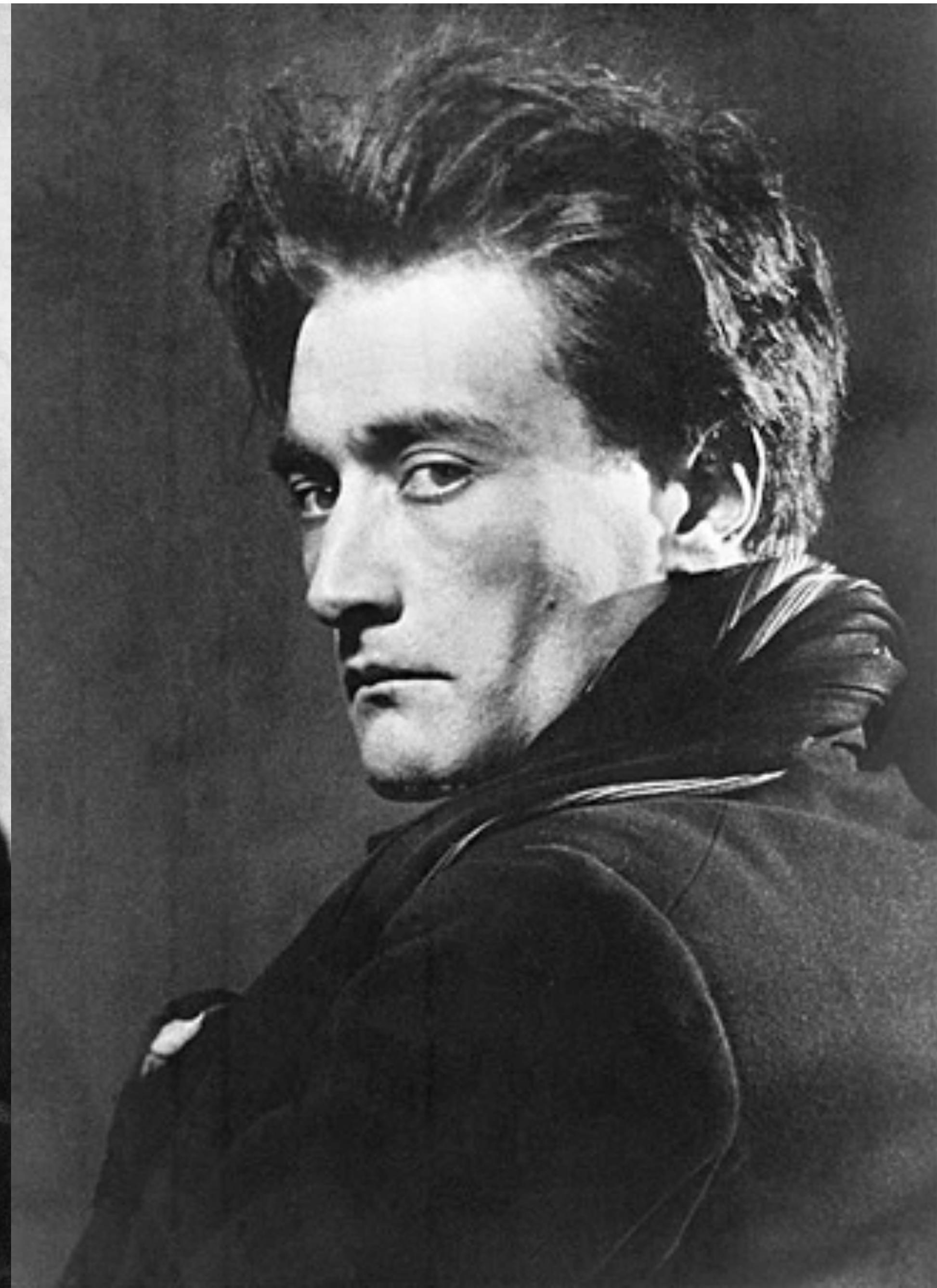


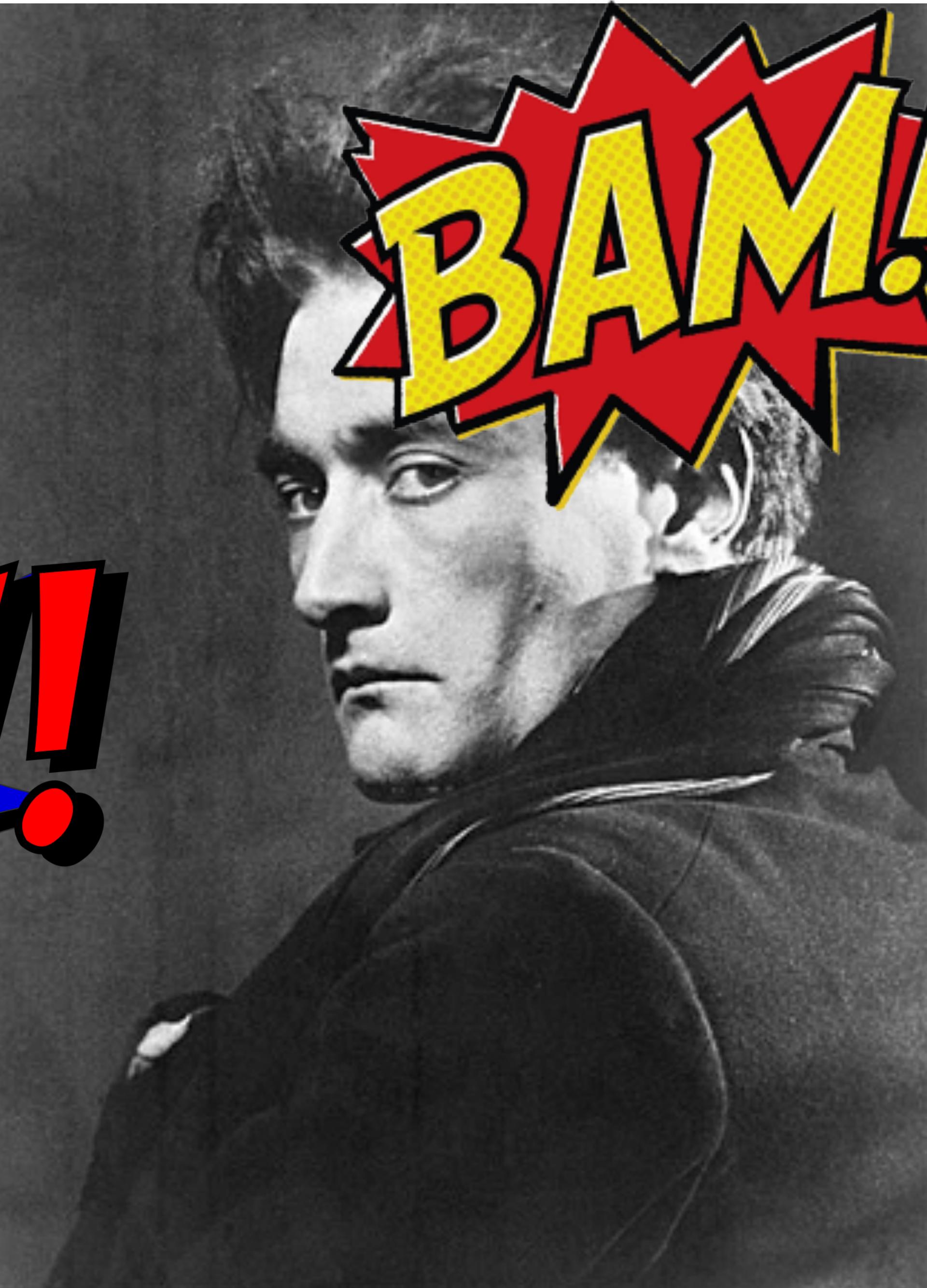


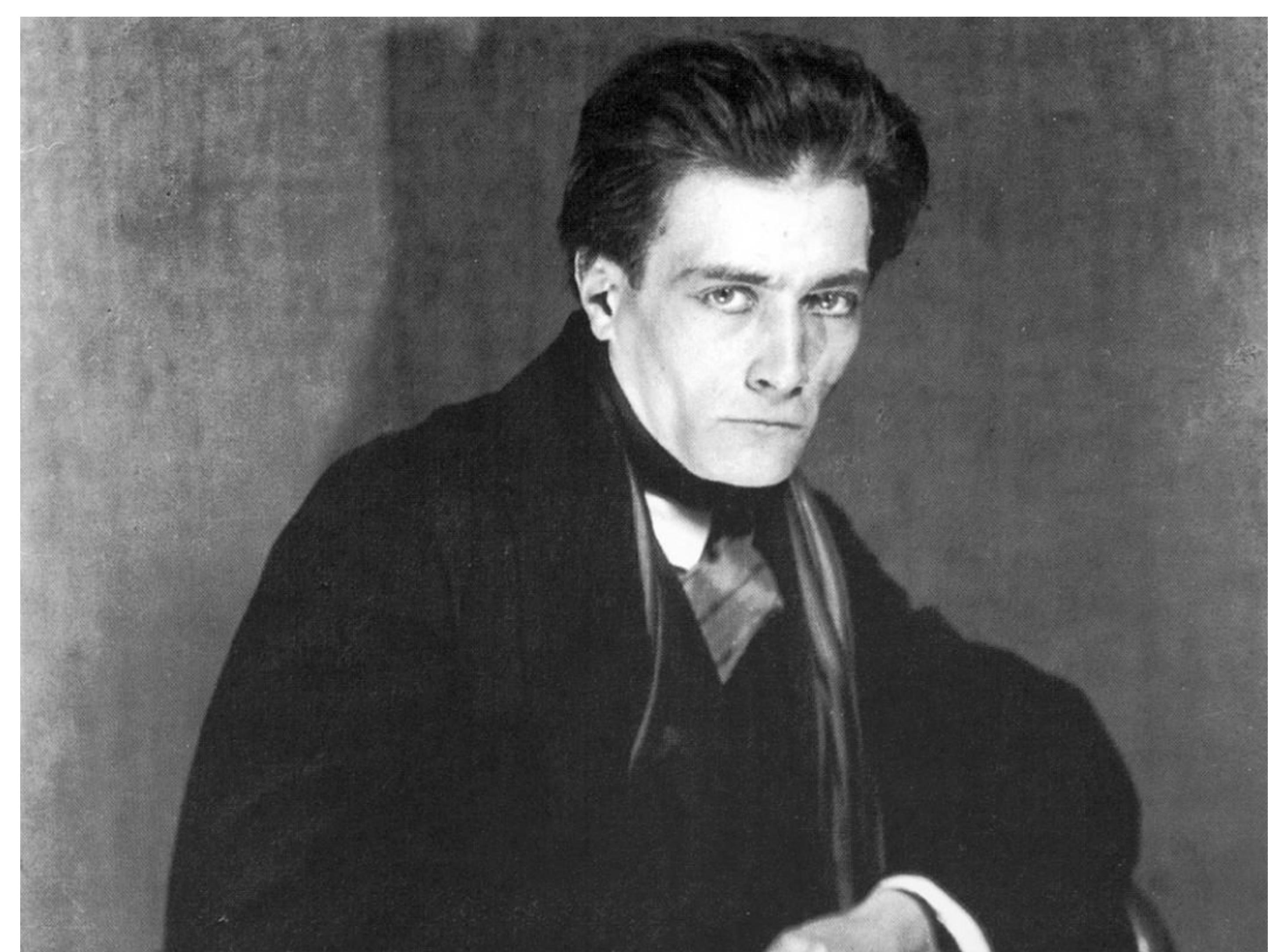










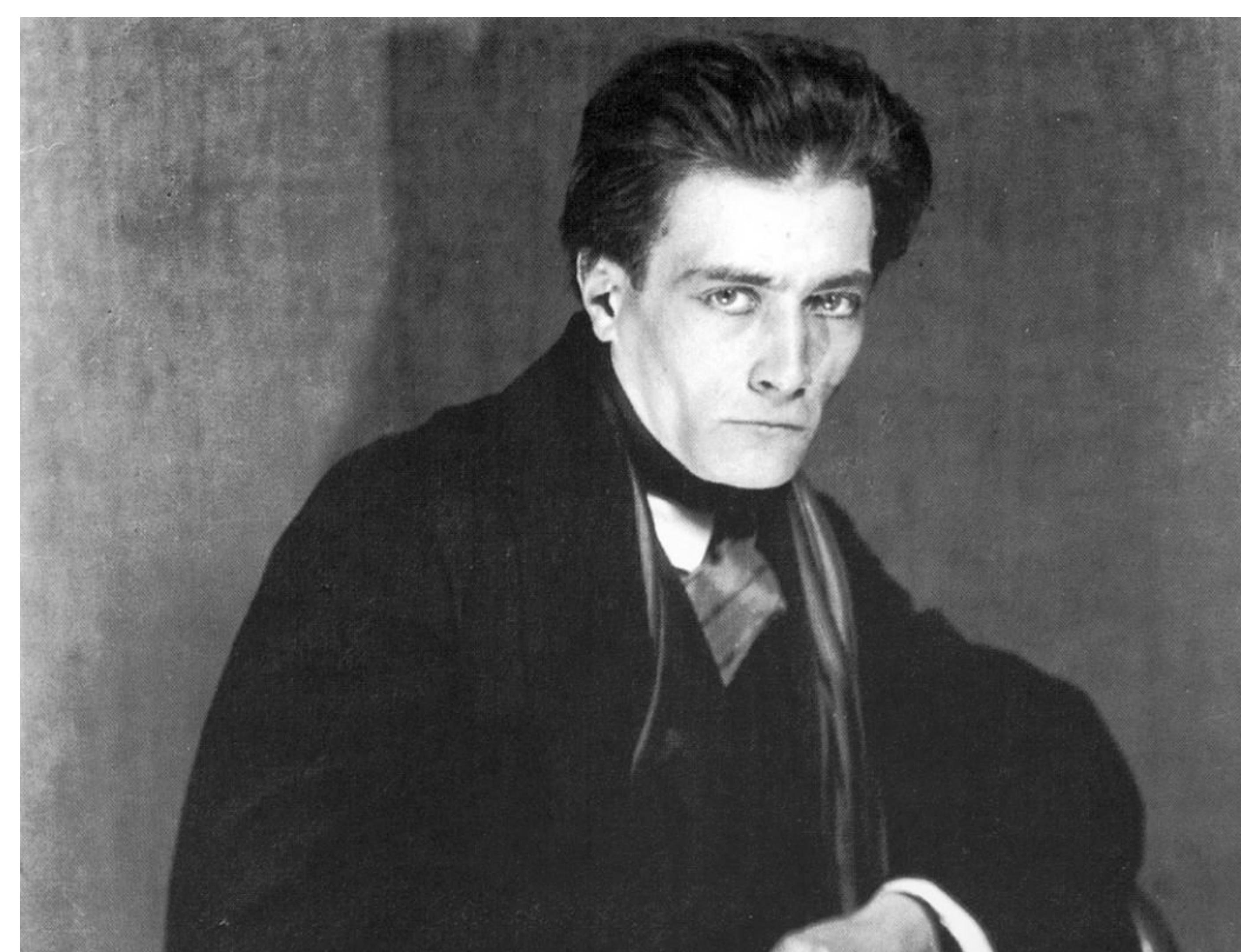


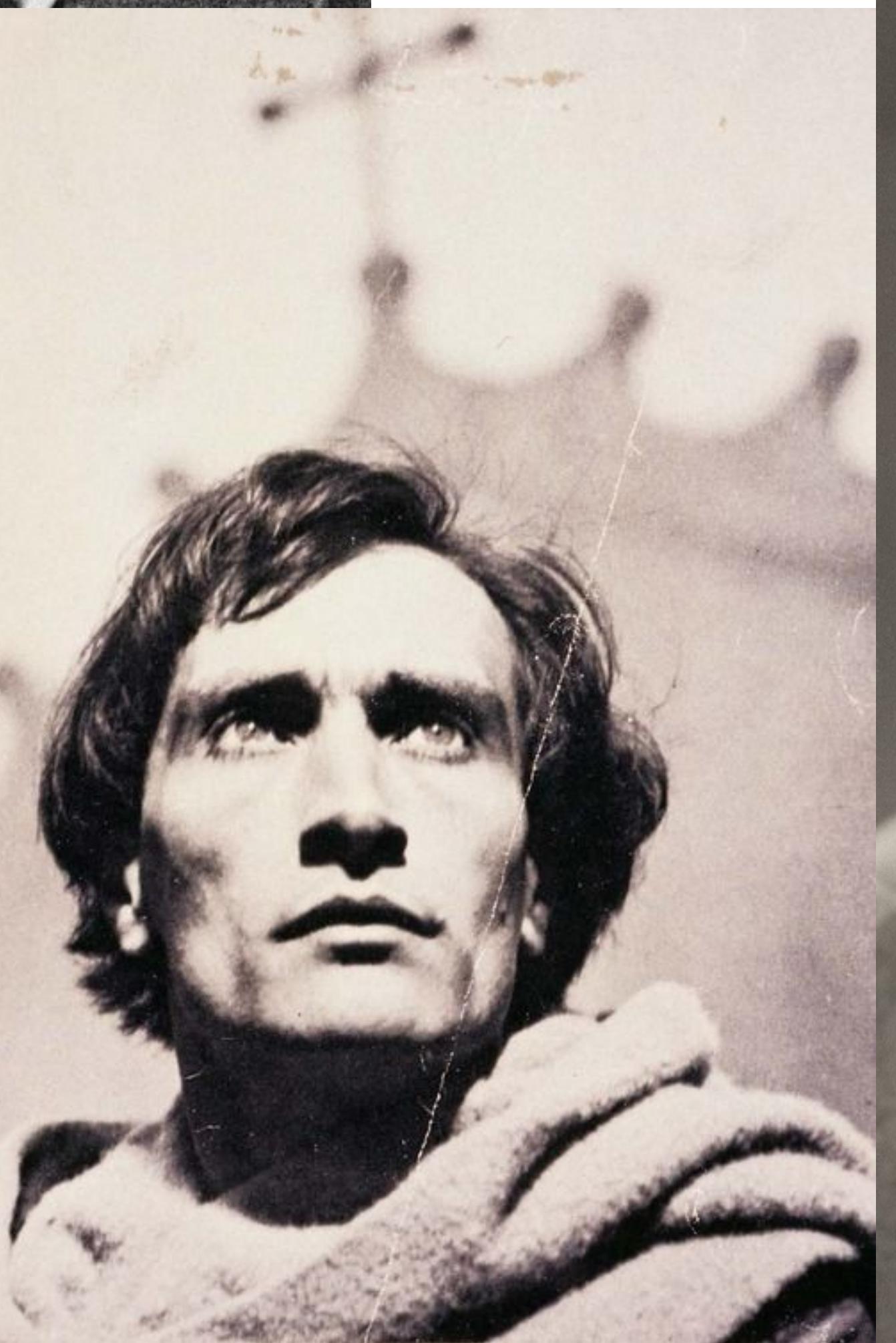
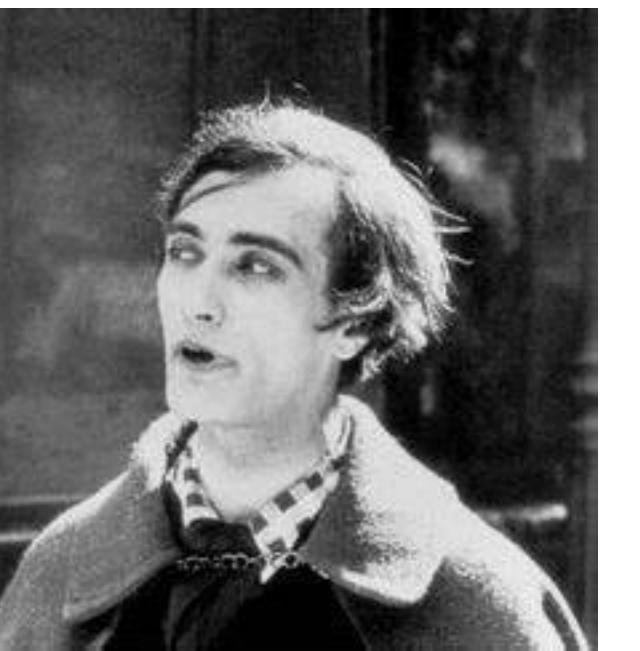
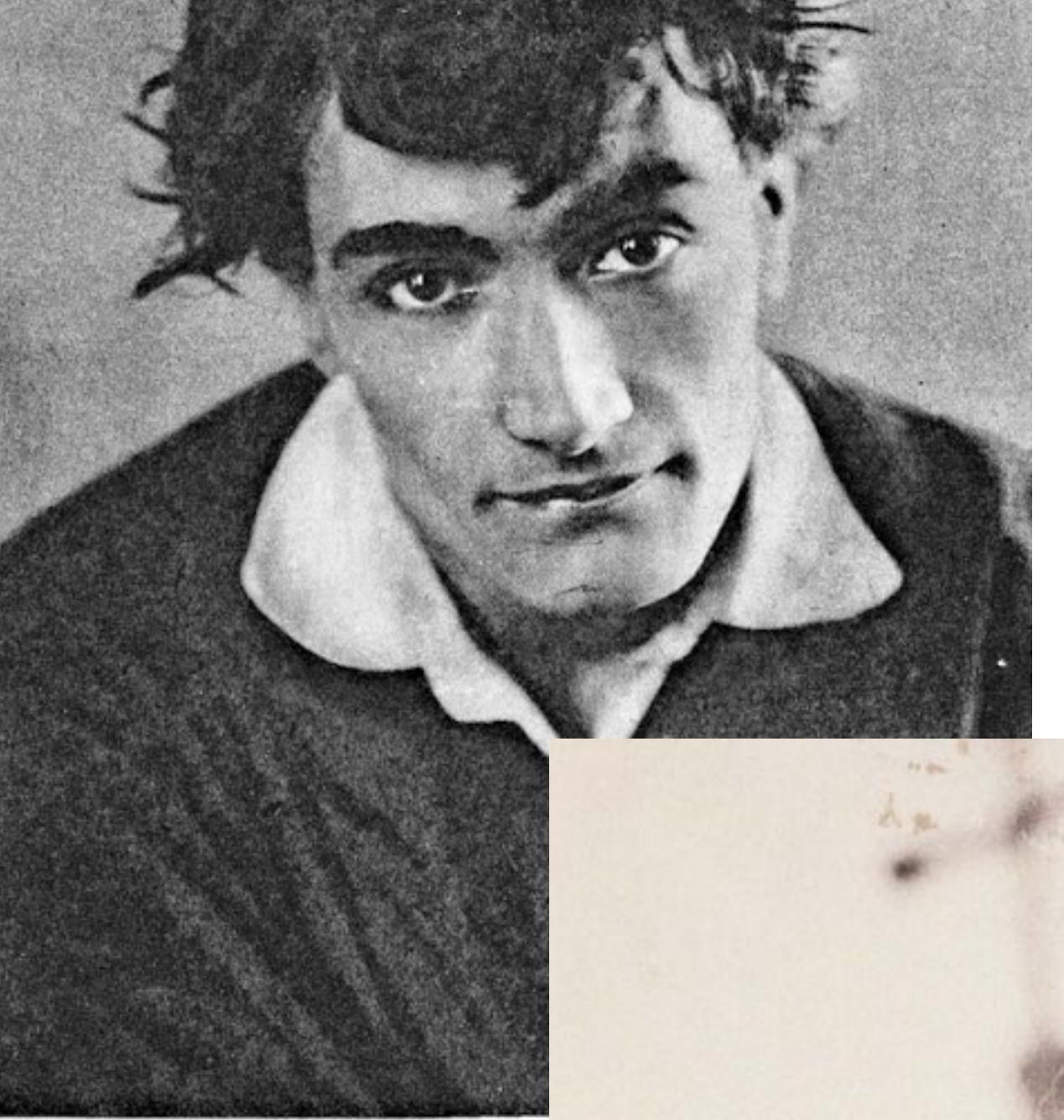
**to adolph hitler by antonin artaud.**

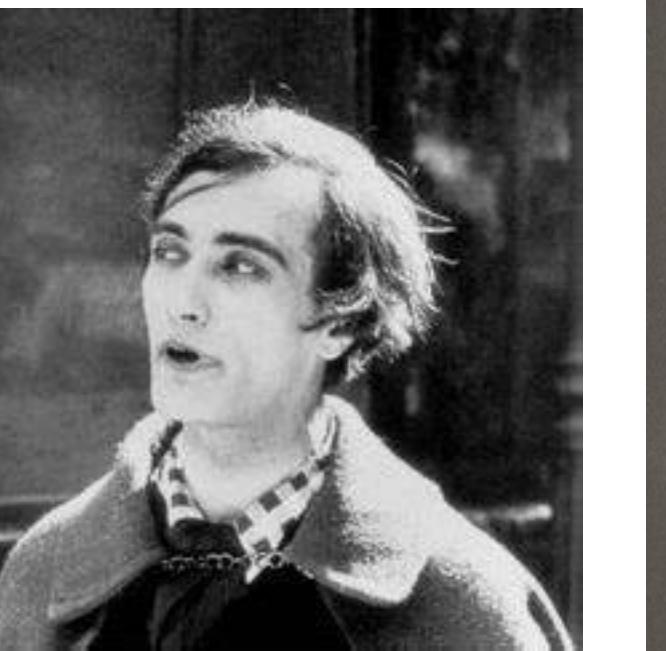
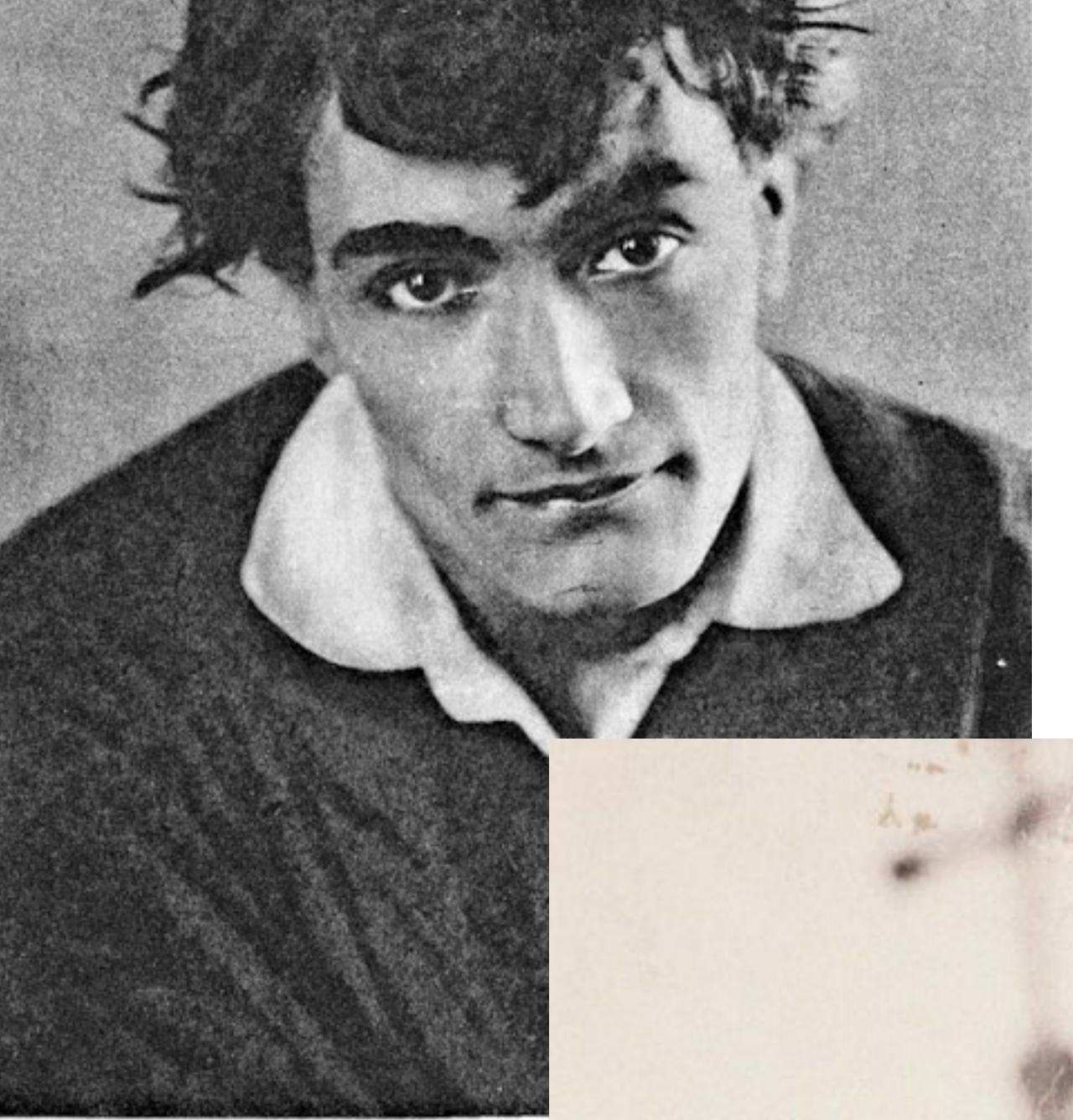
in memory of the  
Romanische cafe in  
Berlin one afternoon in  
May of '32,  
and because I pray  
God  
give you the  
grace to remember  
all the wonders by which HE (sic)  
has GRATIFIED (RESUSCITATED)  
YOUR HEART

this very day  
Kudar dayro Zarish Ankkara  
Thabi  
3 December 1943  
translated by Jack Hirshman

The dedication to Adolph Hitler of Artaud's work, "The New Revelations of Being."





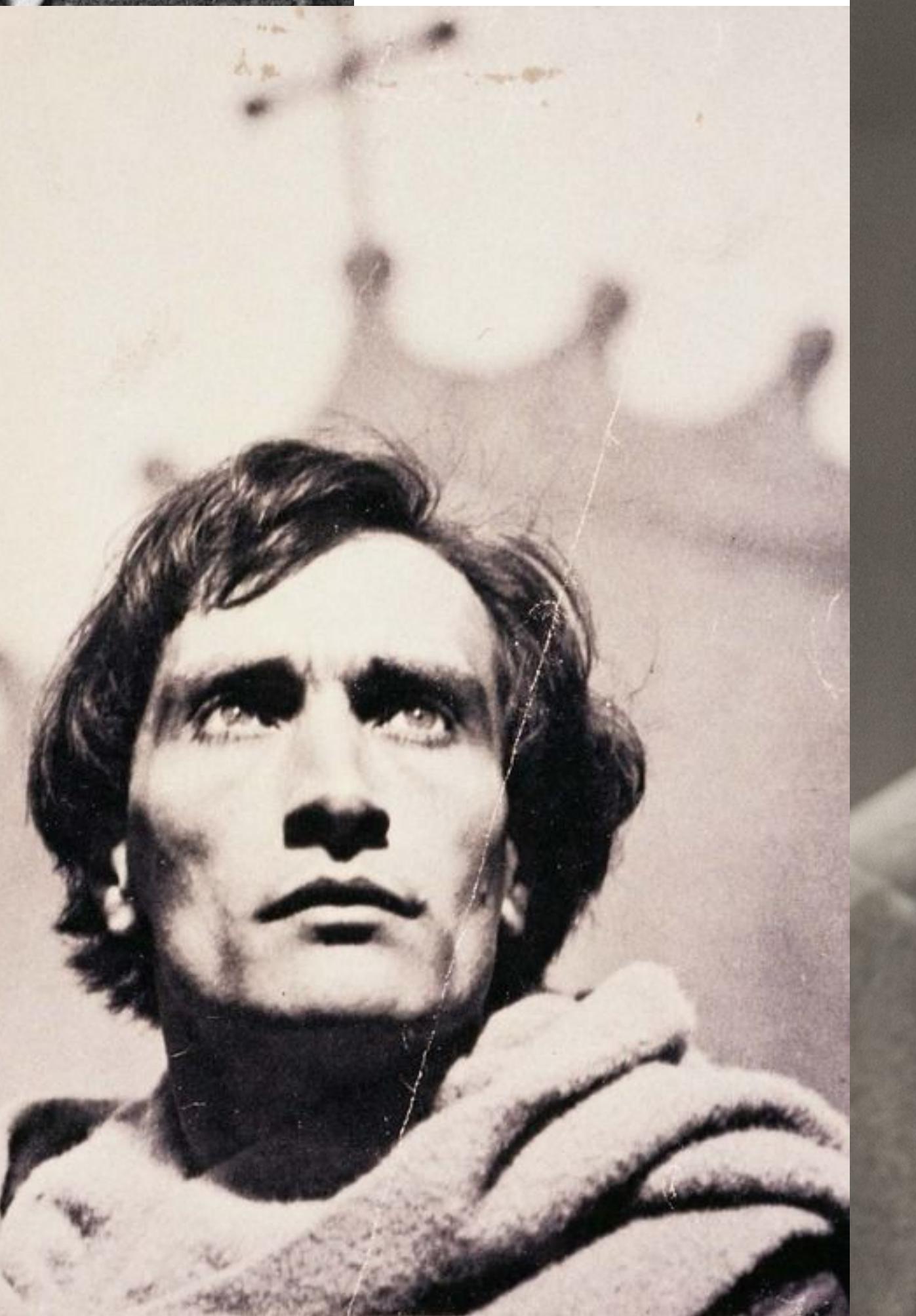


He describes his mind as:  
fissured,  
deteriorating,  
petrifying,  
liquefying,  
coagulating,  
empty,  
impenetrably dense,  
[where] words rot.

Artaud is thinking about  
the unthinkable:  
how body is mind and  
mind is also body.

His work denies there is  
any difference between  
art and thought,  
between poetry and truth.

Susan Sontag.



Antonin Artaud by Susan Sontag



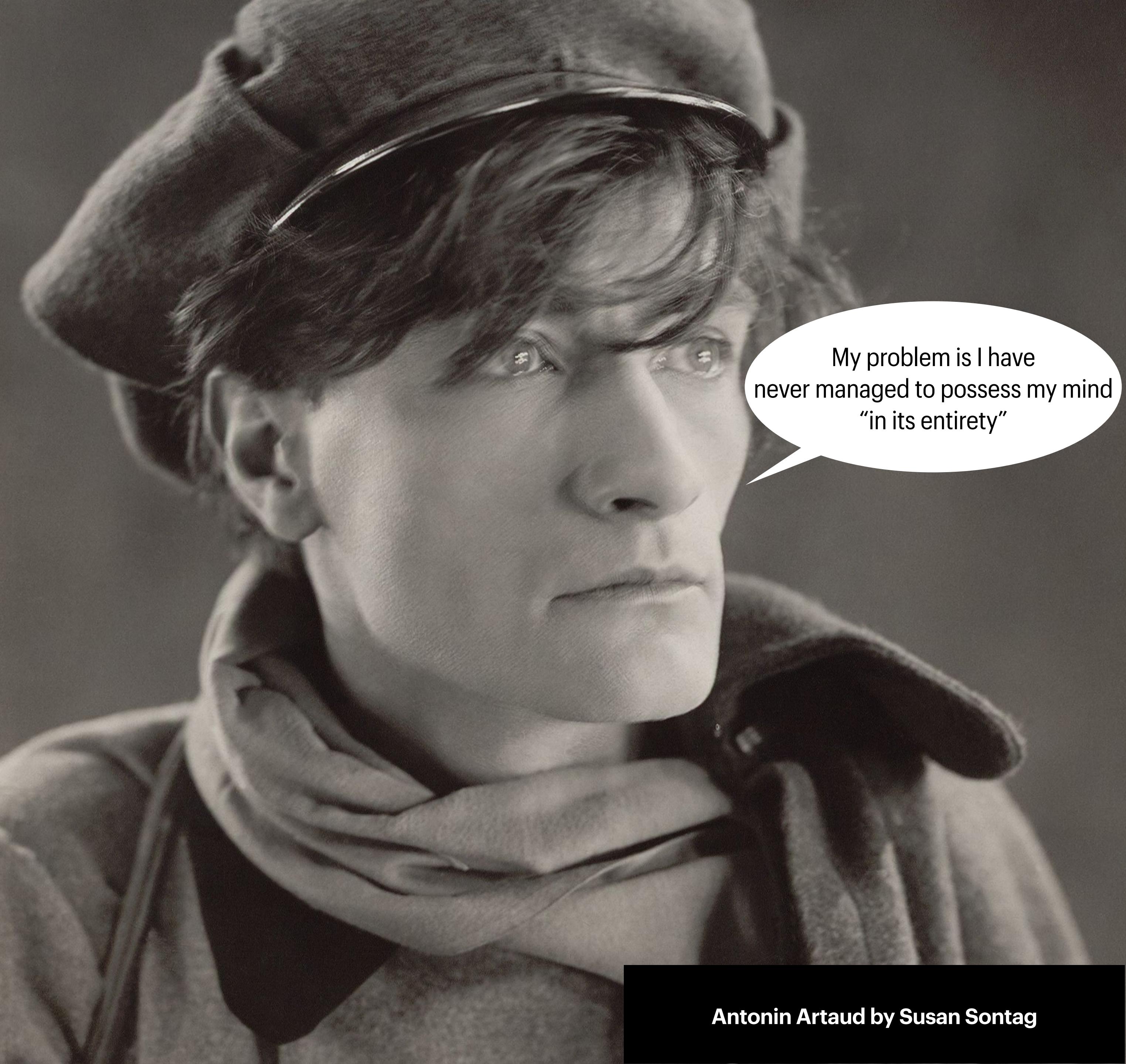
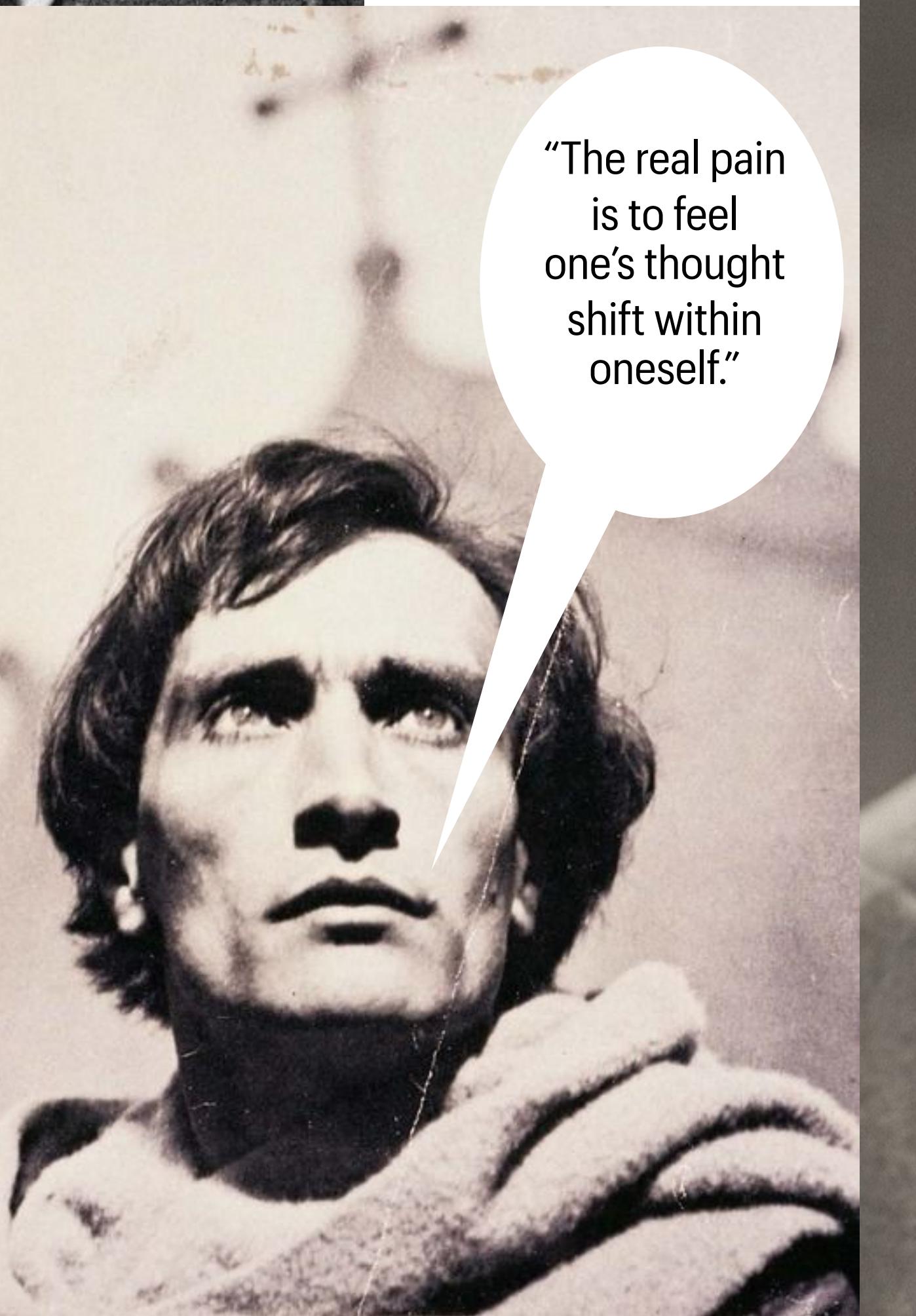
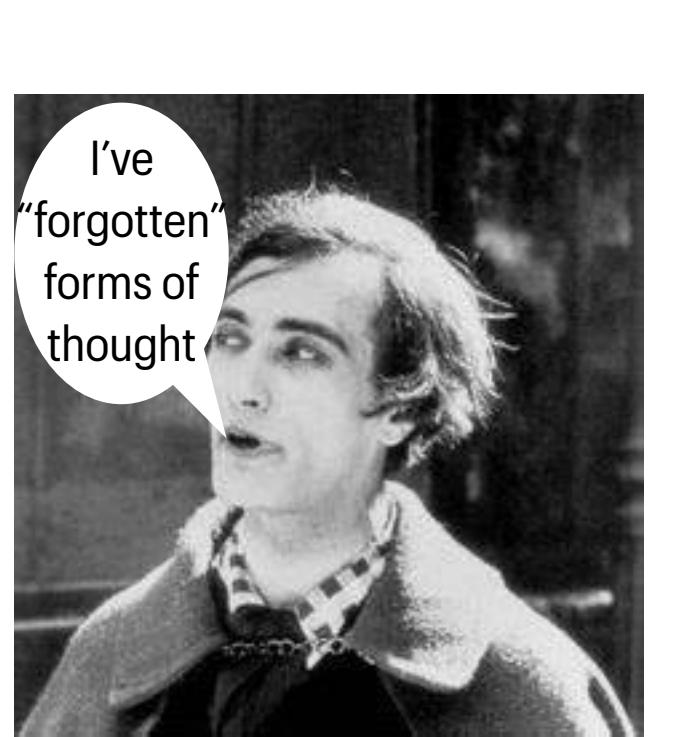
Ideas “abandon” me

He describes his mind as:  
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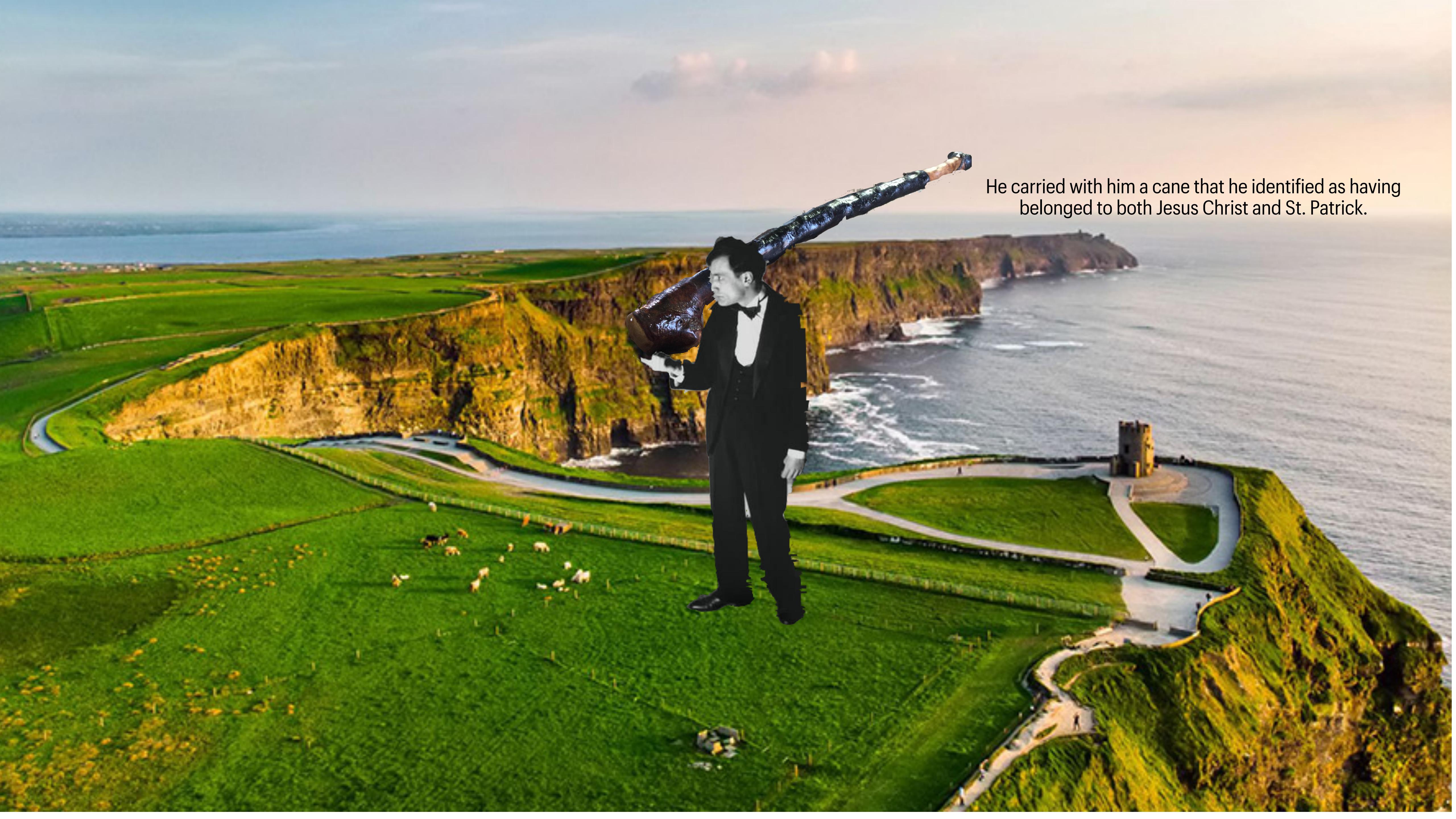


Antonin Artaud by Susan Sontag

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 1937, Antonin Artaud went to Ireland for the coming apocalypse.





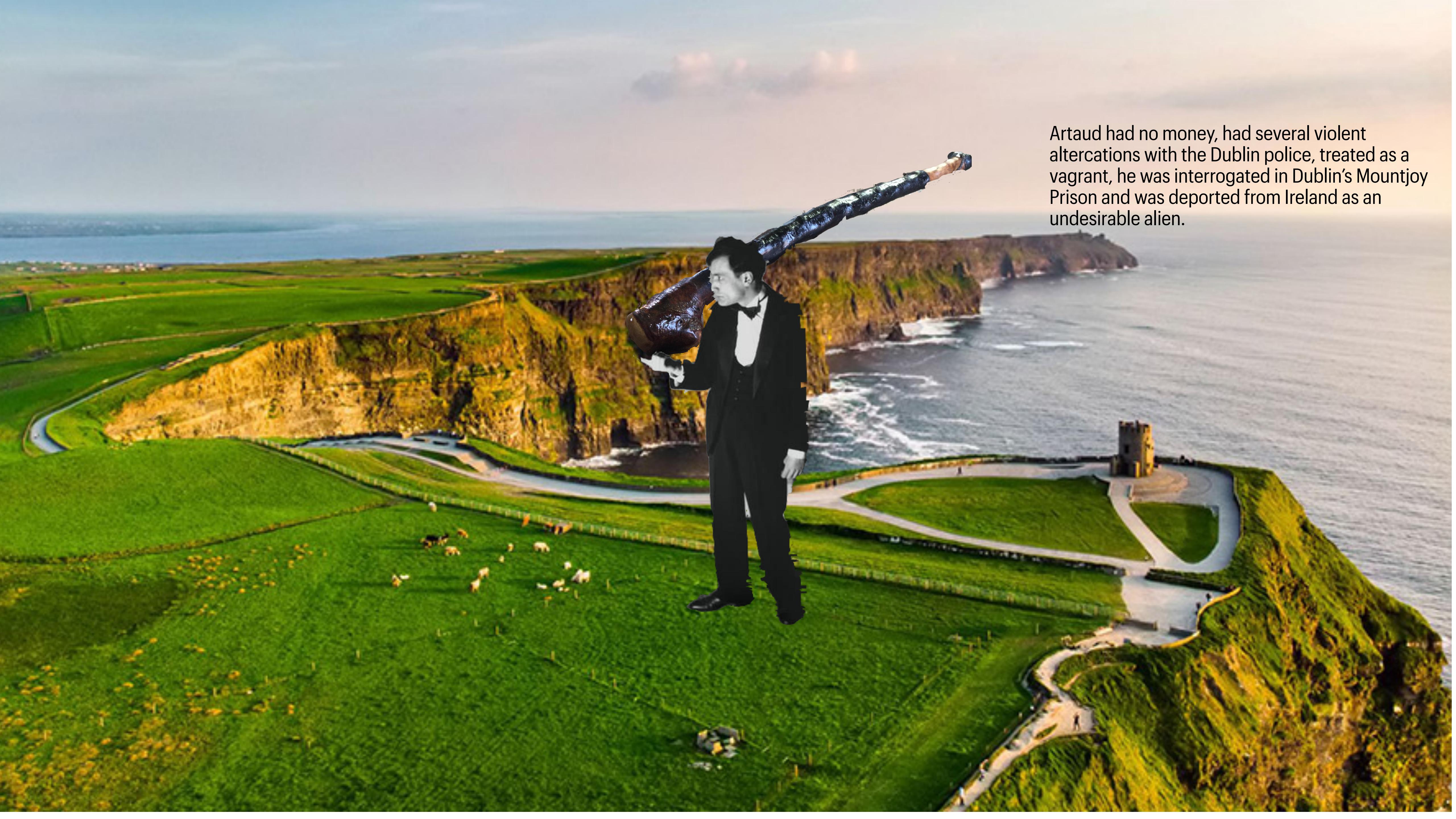


He carried with him a cane that he identified as having belonged to both Jesus Christ and St. Patrick.

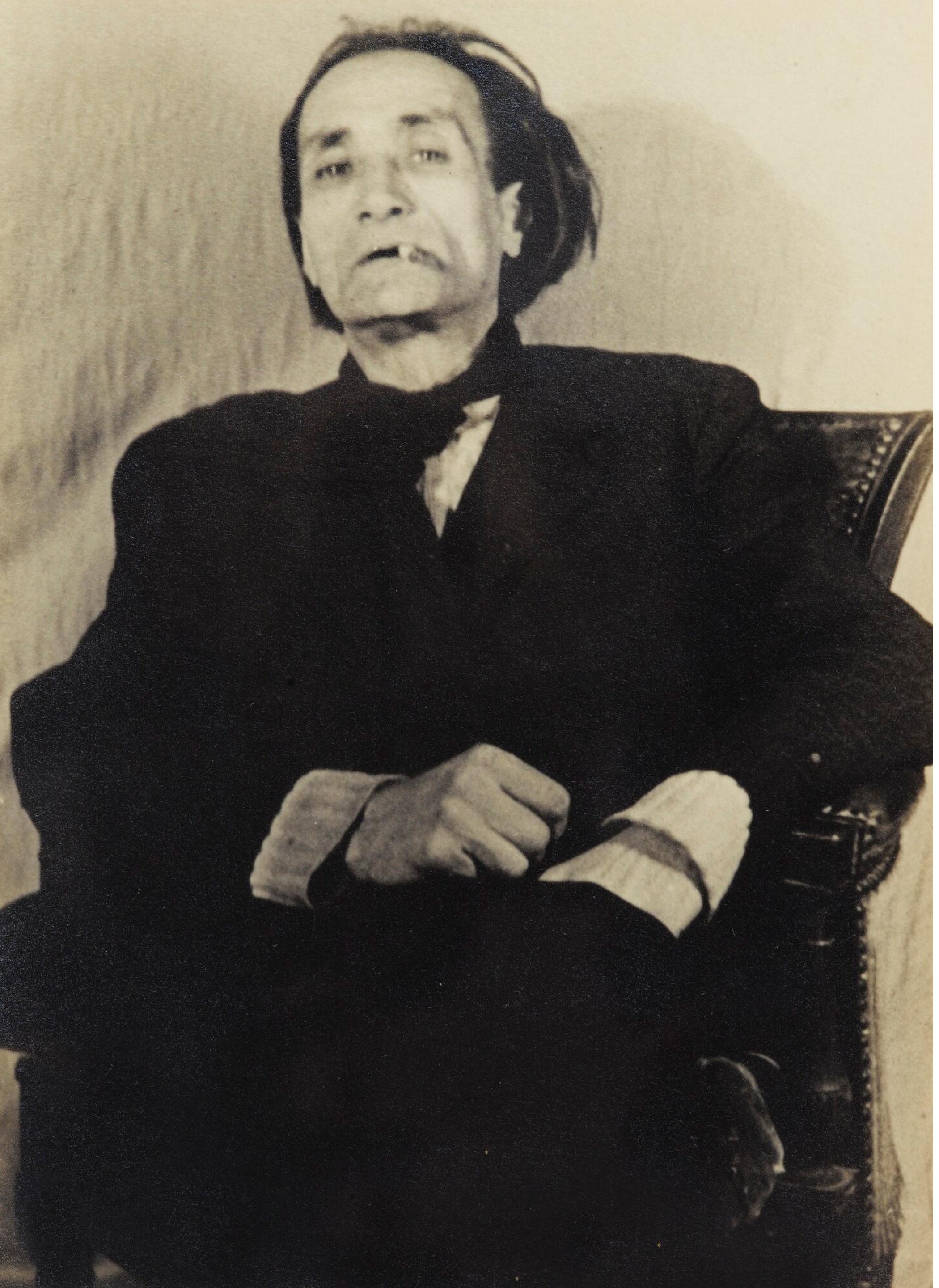
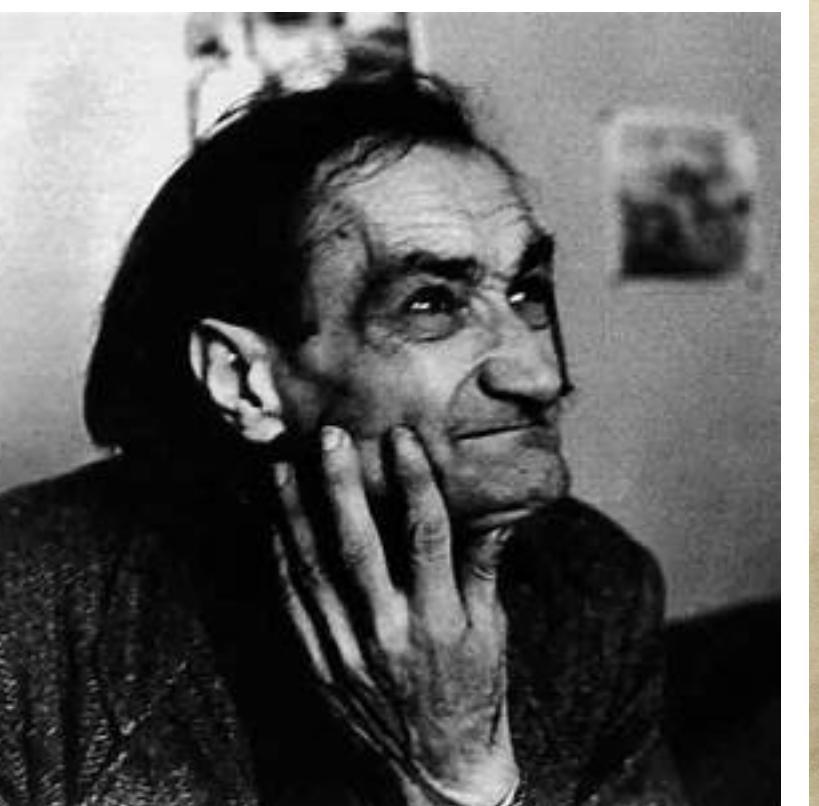


"It's You, not Me, who is living in a state of illusion and blindness ... I'm in the process of preparing something which is not some kind of daydream, but an Advanced Calculation, of a kind that the current Era has become too stupid to understand ... A prophecy written-down 14 centuries ago, and which has been published, and which I've VERIFIED point by point in all of its FACTS over the last months, announces a horrendous future for the World ..."

Artaud: Letter to Anne Manson, a Paris-based journalist,

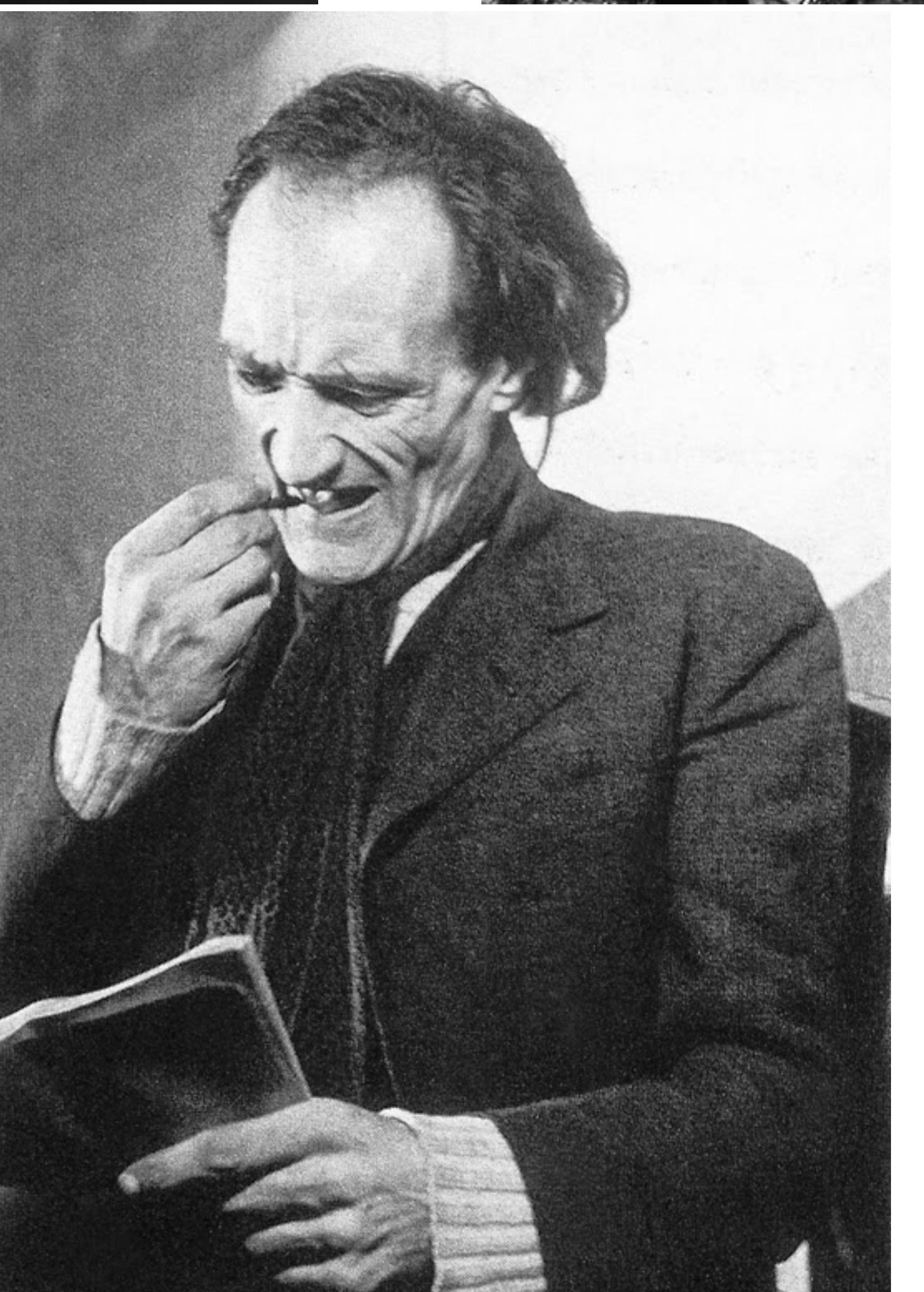
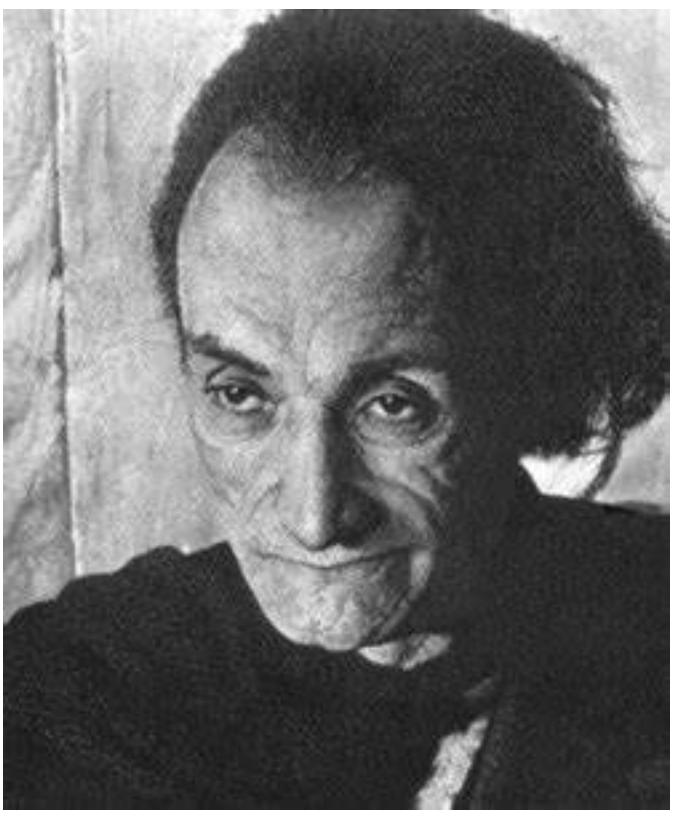


Artaud had no money, had several violent altercations with the Dublin police, treated as a vagrant, he was interrogated in Dublin's Mountjoy Prison and was deported from Ireland as an undesirable alien.



Antonin Artaud.

1896 - 1948







A close-up photograph of a man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a white button-down shirt. He is being held by two individuals whose hands are visible, wearing white nitrile gloves. The man's eyes are closed, and his mouth is slightly open. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

51 Shocks

# ALFRED JARRY THEATRE

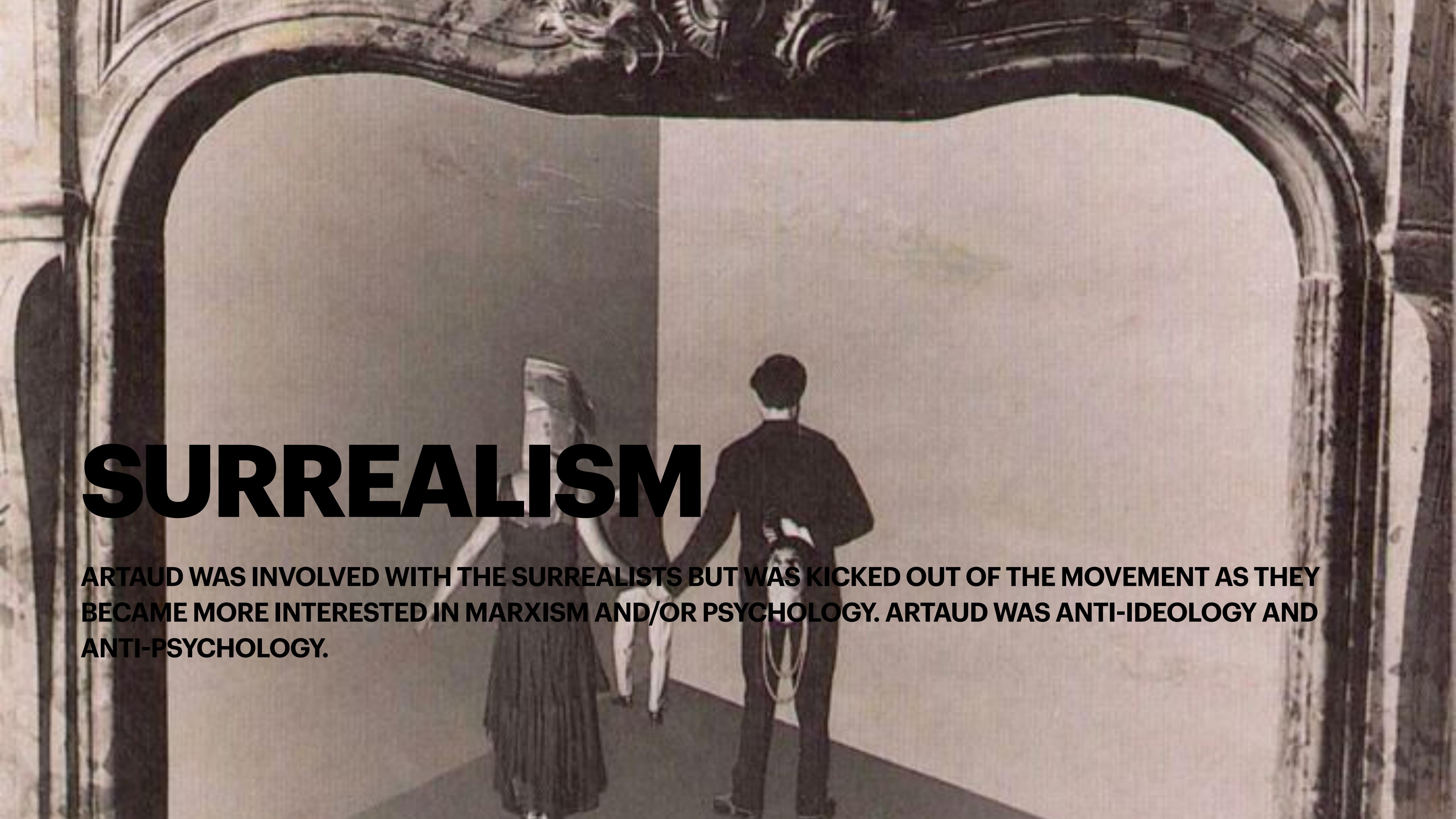
ARTAUD, INFLUENCED BY SYMBOLISM AND SURREALISM, ALONG WITH ROGER VITRAC AND ROBERT ARON FOUNDED THE THÉÂTRE ALFRED JARRY IN 1926

A Jarry theatre production will be as thrilling as a game, like a card game with the whole audience taking part. The Jarry theatre will endeavour to express what life has forgotten, has hidden, or is incapable of stating.

ARTAUD: ALFRED JARRY THEATRE PAMPHLET FOR THE 1928 SEASON



# SURREALISM



ARTAUD WAS INVOLVED WITH THE SURREALISTS BUT WAS KICKED OUT OF THE MOVEMENT AS THEY BECAME MORE INTERESTED IN MARXISM AND/OR PSYCHOLOGY. ARTAUD WAS ANTI-IDEOLOGY AND ANTI-PSYCHOLOGY.

# SURREALISM

ARTAUD PROVED TOO EXTREME FOR BRETON BUT:

Beyond all the mundane details, I place all my  
faith in Antonin Artaud, that man of prodigies.  
I salute Antonin Artaud for his passionate,  
heroic negation of everything that causes us  
to be dead while alive.





# THE MARX BROTHERS

WOMAN TURNS INTO A COW

# MARX BROTHERS

## HUMOUR AND ANARCHY

**Current theatre is in decline because on the one hand it has lost any feeling for seriousness, and on the other hand for laughter. Because it has broken away from solemnity, from direct, harmful effectiveness - in a word, from Danger.**

**For it has lost any true sense of humour and laughter's physical, anarchic, dissolving power.**



# FILMS

## SEASHELL AND THE CLERGYMAN

**So I demand phantasmagorical films [...] The cinema is an amazing stimulant. It acts directly on the grey matter of the brain. When the savour of art has been sufficiently combined with the psychic ingredient which it contains it will go way beyond the theatre which we will relegate to a shelf of memories.**

**La Coquille et le clergyman (The Seashell and the Clergyman, Germaine Dulac, 1928) inhabits the subconscious mind of an obsessive priest, Les Dix-huits seconds (Eighteen Seconds) dismantles the thought process of a suicidal actor in the moments before he shoots himself, and La Révolte du boucher (The Butcher's Revolt) presents a savage world free from moral values.**



# Un Chien Andalou - Luis Bunuel & Salvador Dalí



# ANAIIS NIN

NIN DESCRIBES WHAT HAPPENED DURING A DEBATE ABOUT THE BLACK DEATH

Artaud decided that the audience learned nothing from hearing about the plague, but had to experience it. He stood up, and began enacting the Black Death by twisting and turning his body and screaming, with the result that the entire audience except for his own close friends left the debate.



# **ROGER BLIN**

**(ASSISTANT DIRECTOR TO ARTAUD ON HIS PRODUCTION OF 'THE CENCI')**

Fundamentally Artaud's importance in the theatre means less than his importance on a philosophical level - defining a certain mode of thought.

# DOUBLES

## WHAT IS THE THEATRE AND ITS DOUBLE?

**if theatre is the double of life then life is the double of *true* theatre.**

**[the theatre of cruelty is the only true theatre]**

*The double is the dark force released by plague or theatre, a haunting presence which represents all that is hidden. (fifty one shocks of Artaud)*



# PLAQUE

THEATRE, LIKE PLAGUE, IS MADE IN THE IMAGE OF THIS SLAUGHTER

Once the plague is established in a city, normal social order collapses... nothing left except death or drastic purification... finally we can see that the effect of the theatre is as beneficial as the plague, impelling us to see ourselves as we are, making the masks fall and divulging our world's lies... collectively reveals their dark powers and hidden strength to men, urging them to take a nobler, more heroic stand in the face of destiny than they would have assumed without it.



# CRUELTY

WHAT DID ARTAUD MEAN BY A THEATRE OF CRUELTY?

**Cruelty is rigour.**

**Cruelty is life.**

**“There can be no spectacle without an element of cruelty as the basis of every show. In our present degenerative state, metaphysics must be made to enter the mind through the body.”**



# CRUELTY

WHAT DID ARTAUD MEAN BY A THEATRE OF CRUELTY?

**Cruelty... means rigour, application and  
implacable decision, irreversible and absolute  
determination.**



# CRUELTY

## WHAT DID ARTAUD MEAN BY A THEATRE OF CRUELTY?

**Above all, cruelty is lucid, it is a kind of rigid direction, submission to necessity. No cruelty without consciousness, without a kind of applied consciousness. It is consciousness which gives to the exercise of every action in life its colour of blood, its cruel touch, since it must be understood that to live is always through the death of someone else.**



# CRUELTY

WHAT DID ARTAUD MEAN BY A THEATRE OF CRUELTY?

**“Cruelty is appetite for life, cosmic rigour, implacable necessity.**

**I used the word cruelty as I might have said life or necessity.”**

**Fate leaves no room for choices, but necessity does. Not in the sense that we are free to accept it or reject it... but in the sense that we are free to accept or reject ourselves in it.**



# NECESSITY

**SUBMITTING TO YOUR NECESSITY**

**BEING IN HARMONY WITH YOUR  
NECESSITY**

# BEING ALIVE WITHIN THE SCORE



JACQUELINE DU PRE

**COSMIC RIGOUR**



**SIGNALLING THROUGH  
THE FLAMES**

# PEYOTE DANCE

ARTAUD VISITED THE 'TARAHUMARA INDIANS' OF NORTHWEST MEXICO AND PARTICIPATED IN THEIR PEYOTE RITUALS.

PEYOTE IS A SMALL CACTUS THAT CONTAINS MESCALINE - A HALLUCINOGEN THAT WAS A PART OF THE 'INDIANS' SHAMANIC AND RITUALISTIC PRACTICES.



# RITUAL

Artaud described this proposed movement as a return to a tradition where man was in an egoless union with nature and earth, and where magic ruled.







## Balinese Dancers

The dancers' movements were absolutely precise without being in the least bit mechanical. They were animated by consciousness (by life) even in their very necessity. The Balinese dancers were the proof that a theatre of cruelty was really possible.

# ORIENTAL THEATRE

**TRUE BEAUTY NEVER STRIKES US DIRECTLY**

**In oriental theatre with its metaphysical tendencies, as compared with Western theatre with its psychological tendencies , forms assume their meaning and significance on all possible levels.**



# DOUBLES

## WHAT IS THE THEATRE AND ITS DOUBLE?

Tradition is a 'double' of life because in acting tradition one cannot do what one wants, nor passively execute a series of predetermined movements: exactly like in 'acting' life. In the first case tradition dissolves and in the second it degenerates into empty ceremonies. One must really want what is necessary; only then will the gestures of ritual be effective signs, symbols which don't serve to describe reality but actually to recreate reality. This was the profound impression left by the dancers from Bali.



# THE CENCI



A tale of incest and murder. The first and last play produced for the theatre of cruelty and, arguably, the only full-length play Artaud wrote (though it was an adaptation of a play by Percy-Bysshe Shelley). He performed in and directed it. He said it: 'is not Theatre of Cruelty yet, but is a preparation for it.' Received badly, its run lasted seventeen days and ruined him financially, leading him to despair.

# NO MORE MASTERPIECES

'ALL WRITING IS PIGSHIT'

**Masterpieces of the past are good for the past: they are not good for us. We have the right to say what has been said and even what has not been said in a way that belongs to us, a way that is immediate and direct, corresponding to present modes of feeling, and understandable to everyone... I propose, then, a theatre in which violent physical images crush and hypnotise the sensibility of the spectator seized by theatre as by a whirlwind of higher forces.**



# METAPHYSICS

A dark, atmospheric scene set against a brick wall. In the foreground, a man in a trench coat and hat stands on the left. In the center, a woman in a long, dark, flowing dress stands with her hands behind her back. On the right, another woman wearing a bonnet and a dark coat stands. The lighting is low, creating deep shadows and a somber mood.

Those who come to our theatre must understand they are participating in a mystical pursuit, through which an important part of the mind and consciousness may finally be saved or lost.

Artaud: Manifesto for an Abortive Theatre

# METAPHYSICS

## AGAINST THE 'DICTATORSHIP OF WORDS'

To make metaphysics out of a spoken language is to make the language express what it does not ordinarily express: to make use of it in a new, exceptional, and unaccustomed fashion; to reveal its possibilities for producing physical shock; to divide and distribute it actively in space; to deal with intonations in an absolutely concrete manner, restoring their power to shatter as well as really to manifest something; to turn against language and its basely utilitarian, one could say alimentary, sources, against its trapped-beast origins; and finally, to consider language as the form of Incantation.



# WORDS HAVE SOMETHING OF THE MEANING THEY HAVE IN DREAMS

kré

puc te

kré

puk te

pek

li le

kré

pek ti le

e

kruk

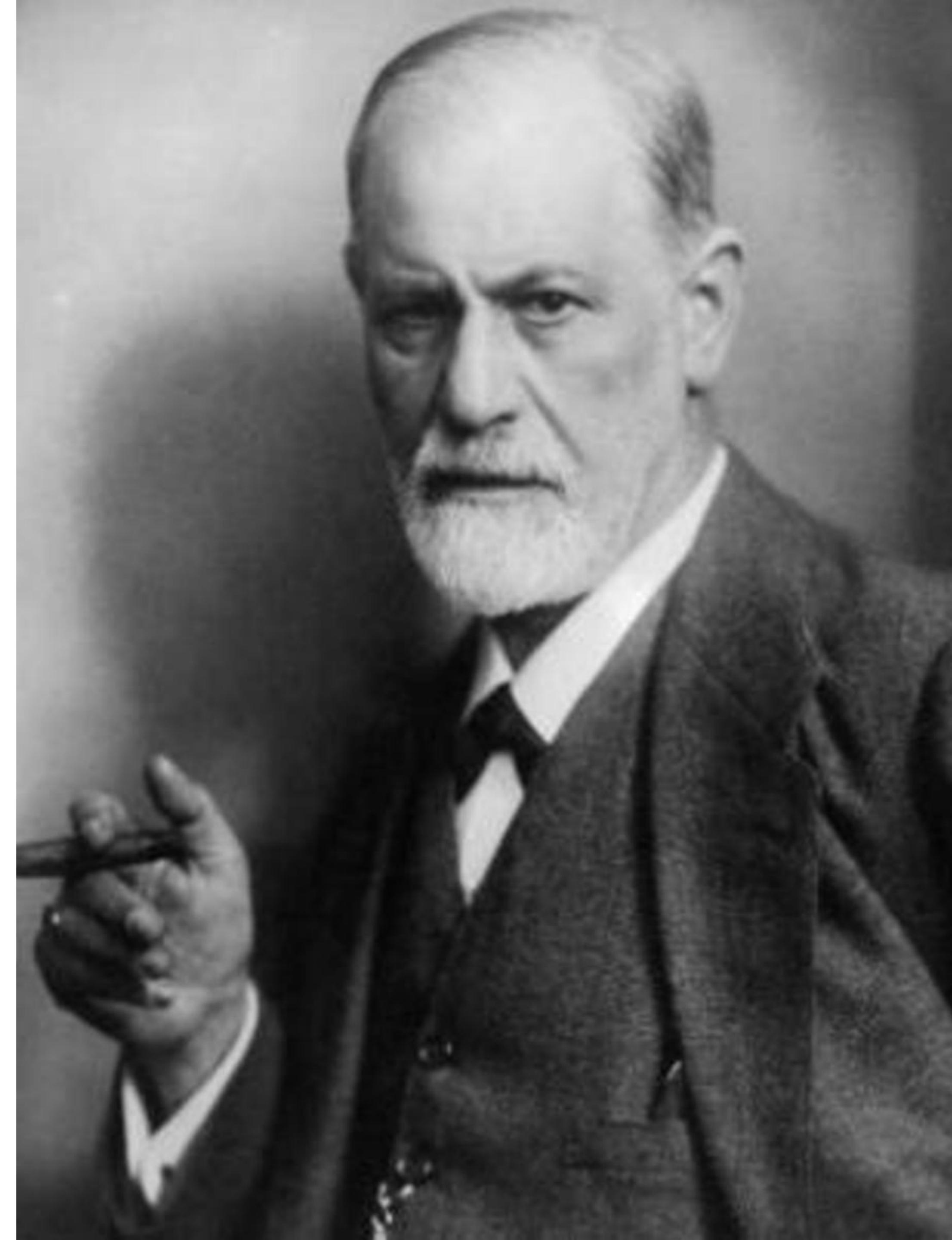
pte

Everything must  
be arranged  
to a hair  
in a fulminating  
order.

# ABANDON PSYCHOLOGY!

THE DAMAGE WROUGHT BY PSYCHOLOGICAL  
THEATRE... HAS RENDERED US UNACCUSTOMED TO  
THE DIRECT, VIOLENT ACTION THEATRE MUST HAVE.

THEATRE AND CRUELTY.



# LOT AND HIS DAUGHTERS

LUCAS VAN LEYDEN 1494 - 1533

'THIS PAINTING IS WHAT THEATRE OUGHT TO BE... I MAINTAIN THE STAGE IS A PHYSICAL PLACE THAT NEEDS TO BE FILLED AND IT OUGHT TO BE ALLOWED TO SPEAK ITS OWN CONCRETE LANGUAGE.' (PRODUCTION AND METAPHYSICS ANTONIN ARTAUD)

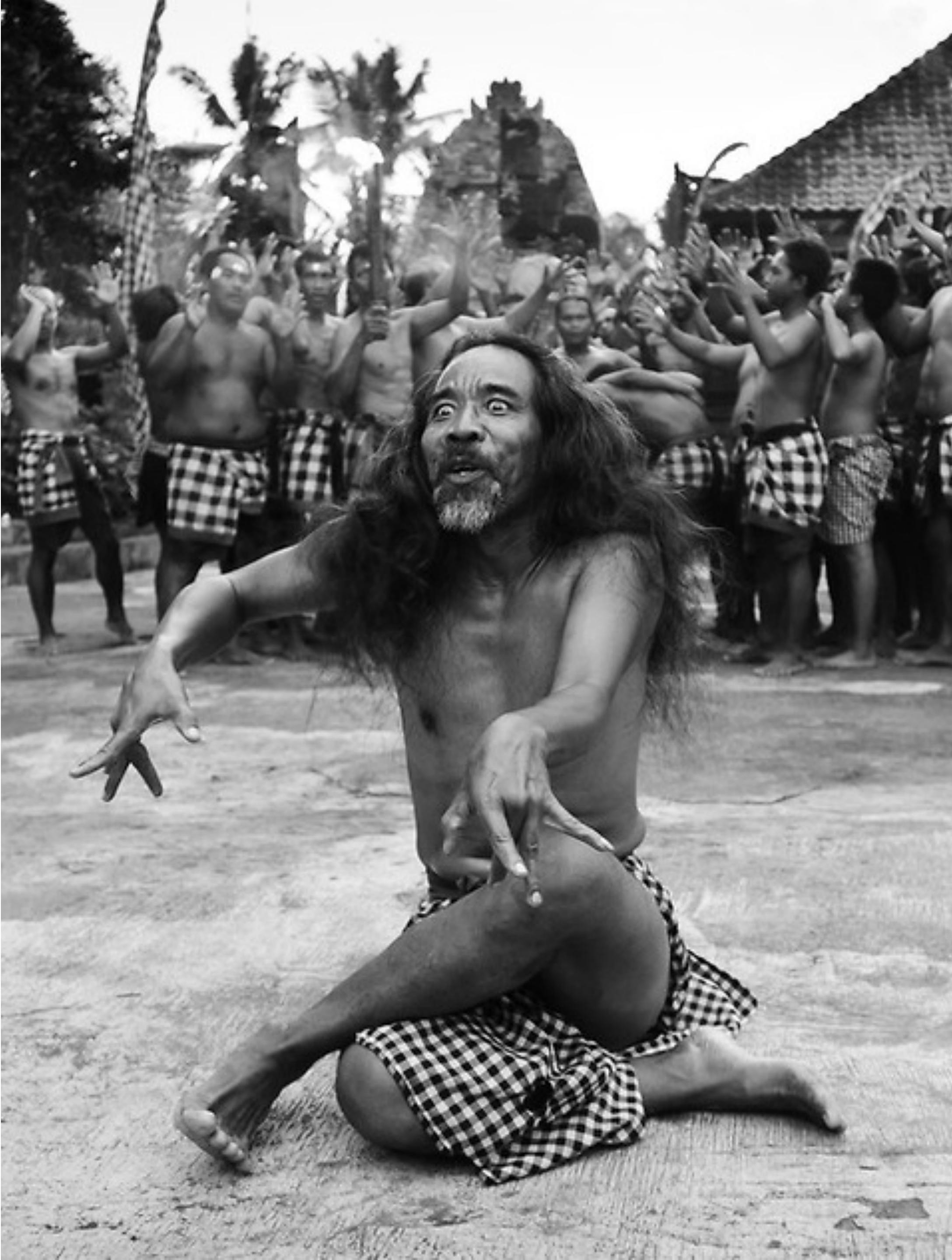


# CONCRETE LANGUAGE OF THE STAGE

THE STATE WE LIVE IN MUST BE DESTROYED...

I maintain that this physical language, aimed at the senses and independent of speech... must be poetry for the senses... it is composed of everything filling the stage... to appeal to the senses, instead of being addressed primarily to the mind...

a language halfway between gesture and thought.



# MISE EN SCENE

THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE SCENERY, PROPS, ETC. ON THE STAGE OF A THEATRICAL PRODUCTION

**As far as I am concerned, the point of departure and the touchstone of true theatre is the mise en scene, as I understand the word in its deeper sense of visual and acoustic effectiveness, and in place of the theatrical style of a written work.**



ARTAUD: LETTER TO JEAN-RICHARD BLOCH. 1931.

# CONCRETE LANGUAGE OF THE STAGE

## THEATRE SPACE

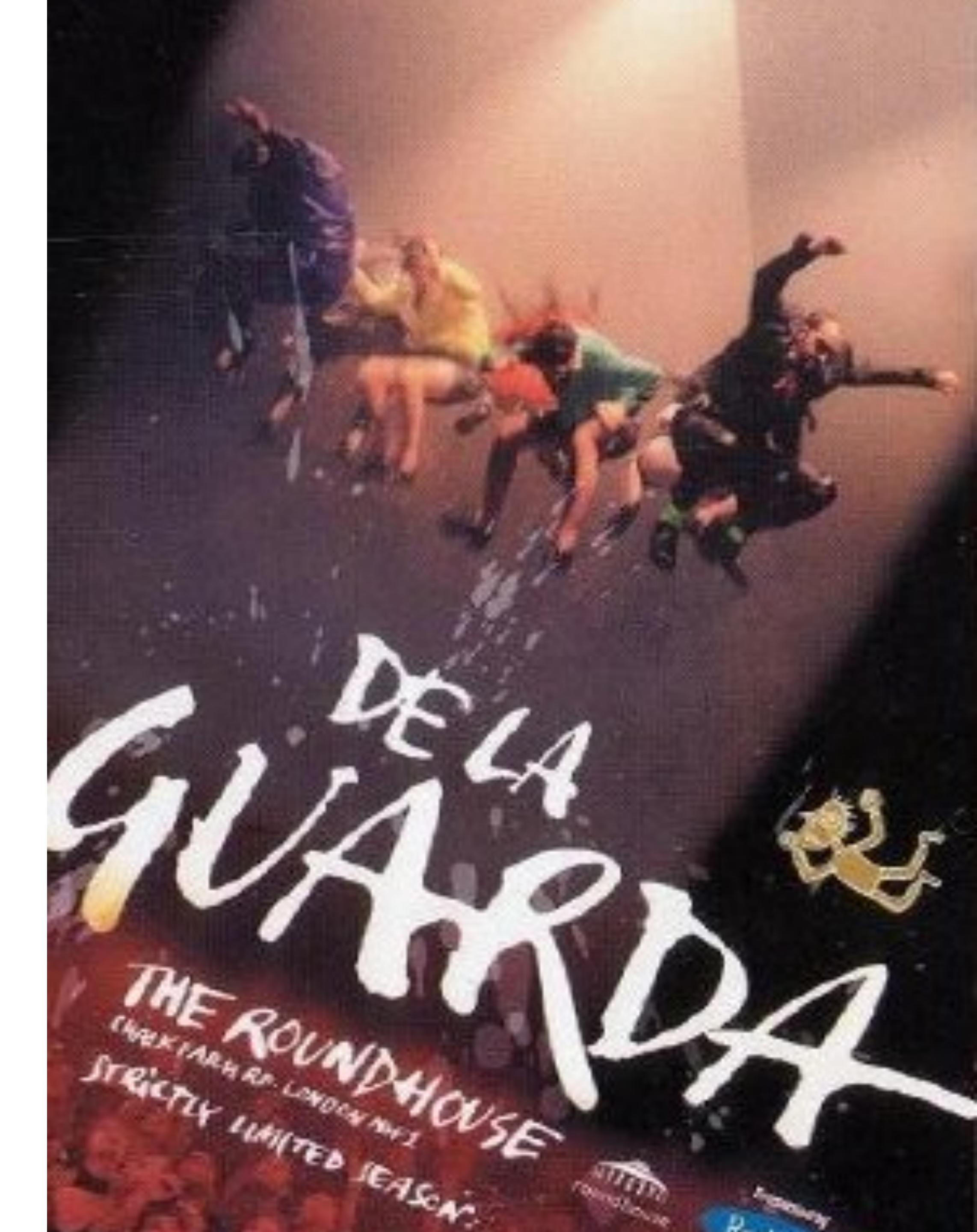
**Direct contact between audience and performers, immersing the audience in the action.**

**Empty spaces which become holy places in which to perform 'poetry in space'.**



# HANGAR OR BARN LIKE BUILDINGS

A KIND OF SINGLE, UNDIVIDED LOCALE... DIRECT  
CONTACT WILL BE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE  
AUDIENCE AND THE SHOW, BETWEEN ACTORS AND  
THE AUDIENCE...



A photograph of a theater audience during a performance. Many people are standing and raising their hands, suggesting a moment of collective participation or cheering. The lighting is dramatic, with bright spotlights illuminating the crowd against a dark background.

# SENSORY THEATRE

IN OUR PRESENT STATE OF DEGENERATION IT IS THROUGH THE SKIN THAT METAPHYSICS MUST BE MADE  
TO RE-ENTER OUR MINDS



# EXTERNAL ASSAULT OF TEMPESTS

CIRCUS ARCHAOS

A photograph of a concert or festival scene. In the foreground, a large crowd of people is seen from behind, with many of their hands raised in the air. The atmosphere is filled with bright, colorful stage lights, primarily in shades of orange and red, creating a vibrant and energetic atmosphere. In the upper right background, two performers are suspended in the air by a crane, adding to the sense of spectacle and height. The overall mood is one of excitement and collective enjoyment.

**SPECTACLE**

**DE LA GUARDA**

# ACTION IN FOUR CARDINAL POINTS

THE LACK OF STAGE IN THE NORMAL SENSE OF THE WORD WILL PERMIT THE ACTION TO EXTEND ITSELF TO THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE AUDITORIUM. SPECIAL PLACES WILL BE SET ASIDE FOR THE ACTORS AND ACTION IN THE FOUR CARDINAL POINTS OF THE HALL.



# CENTRAL PERFORMING AREA

HOWEVER, A CENTRAL SITE WILL BE RETAINED WHICH, WITHOUT ACTING AS A STAGE... ENABLES THE BODY OF THE ACTION TO BE CONCENTRATED AND BROUGHT TO A CLIMAX WHENEVER NECESSARY.

# SWIVELLING CHAIRS

## THE AUDITORIUM

**The auditorium will be enclosed within four walls stripped of any ornament, with the audience seated below, in the middle, on swivelling chairs allowing them to follow the show taking place around them.**



# ENGULFING

DE LA GUARDA

A photograph of a crowded concert or festival. In the foreground, many people are seen from behind, their hands raised in the air. The stage is visible in the background, with several performers and bright stage lights. Two large, dark, curved structures, likely overhead galleries or balconies, are suspended from the ceiling above the crowd. The overall atmosphere is energetic and festive.

# OVERHEAD GALLERIES

DE LA GUARDA

# SENSATIONS

PUNCHDRUNK 'IMMERSIVE THEATRE'

# CONCRETE LANGUAGE OF THE STAGE

## MUSIC

They will be objects, part of the set.

Ancient or forgotten instruments.

Or invent new ones.

Unbearable and piercing sounds.



# CONCRETE LANGUAGE OF THE STAGE

## GESTURE

**Extreme.**

**Mythical, lyrical and Archetypical.**

**Non-naturalistic, not a sign of social status or character's psychology.**



# CONCRETE LANGUAGE OF THE STAGE

## COSTUME

Ritualistic costume.

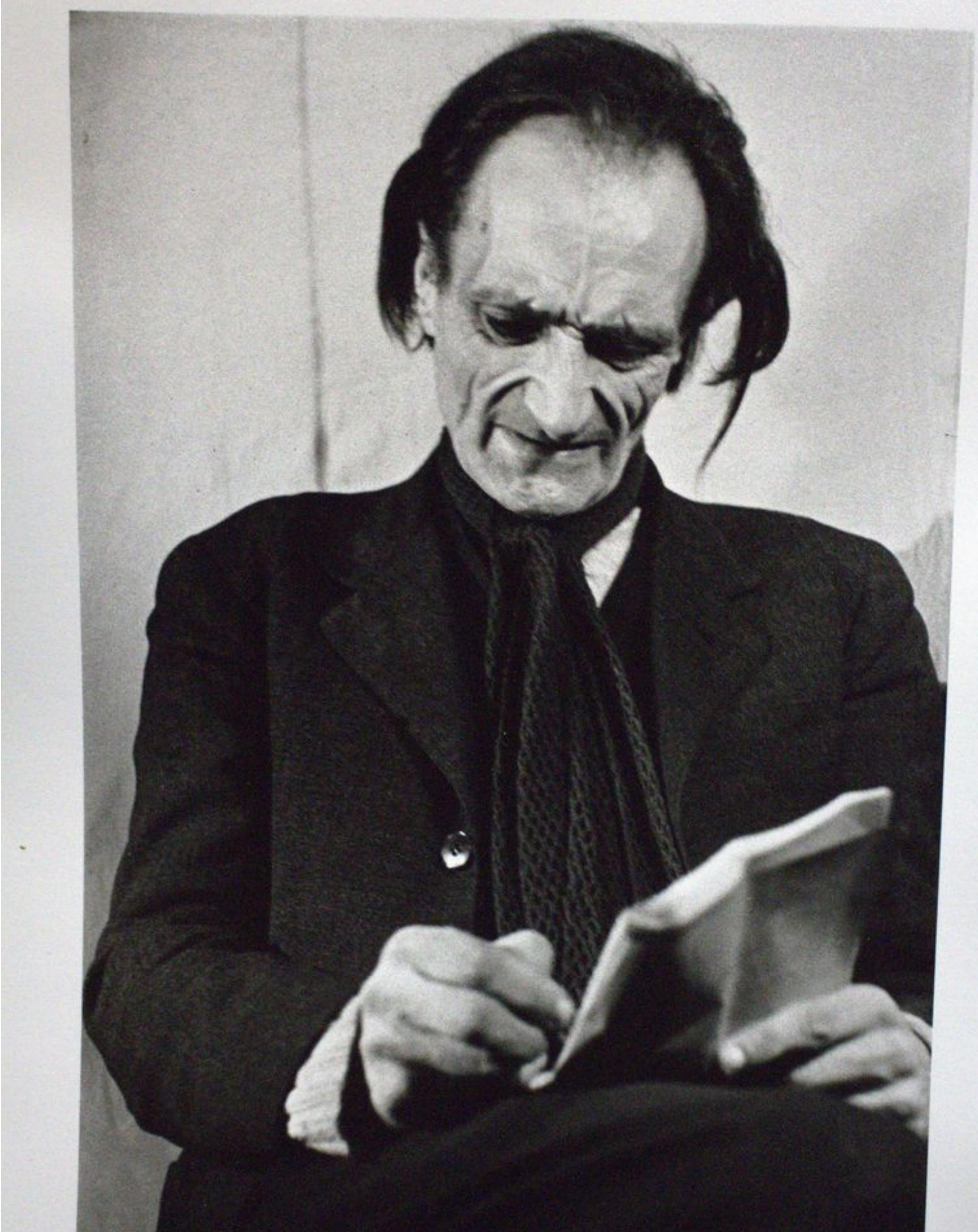
Esoteric, revealing secret truths and dark powers.

KATAKHALI



# DECOR

NO DECOR. HIEROGLYPHIC CHARACTERS... THIRTY FOOT HIGH EFFIGIES OF KING LEAR'S BEARD IN THE STORM... OBJECTS OF UNKNOWN FORM AND PURPOSE ARE ENOUGH TO FULFIL THIS FUNCTION.



# CONCRETE LANGUAGE OF THE STAGE

## THEATRICAL OBJECTS

**'Puppets, huge masks, objects of strange proportions' emphasising ritual, ceremony and magic.**



# CONCRETE LANGUAGE OF THE STAGE

## POSTURE

Actors must be neutral, completely receptive to what they have to do with 'utmost malleability'.

ETIENNE DECROUX



# CONCRETE LANGUAGE OF THE STAGE

## THEATRICAL LANGUAGE

**Incantation. Speech prior to words. Language 'as a virus'. Extremes of vocal range - laughter to orgasmic groans. All part of the 'anti-text'.**

**"Coding and musical notation will be valuable as a means of vocal transcription."**

ARTAUD



# SCREAMS AND GROANS

A SHOUT COULD BE TRANSMITTED BY WORD OF MOUTH FROM ONE END TO THE OTHER WITH A  
SUCCESSION OF AMPLIFICATIONS AND INFLECTIONS... APPARITIONS, SURPRISE...

# CONCRETE LANGUAGE OF THE STAGE

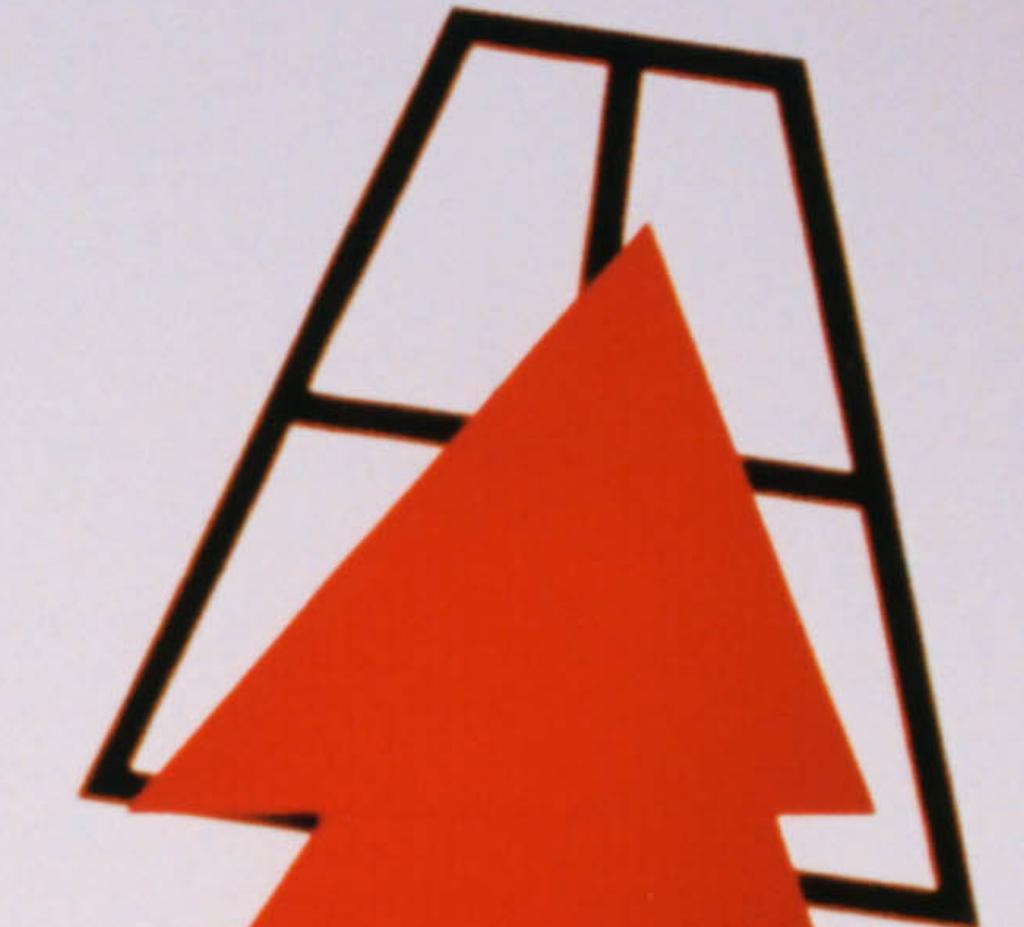
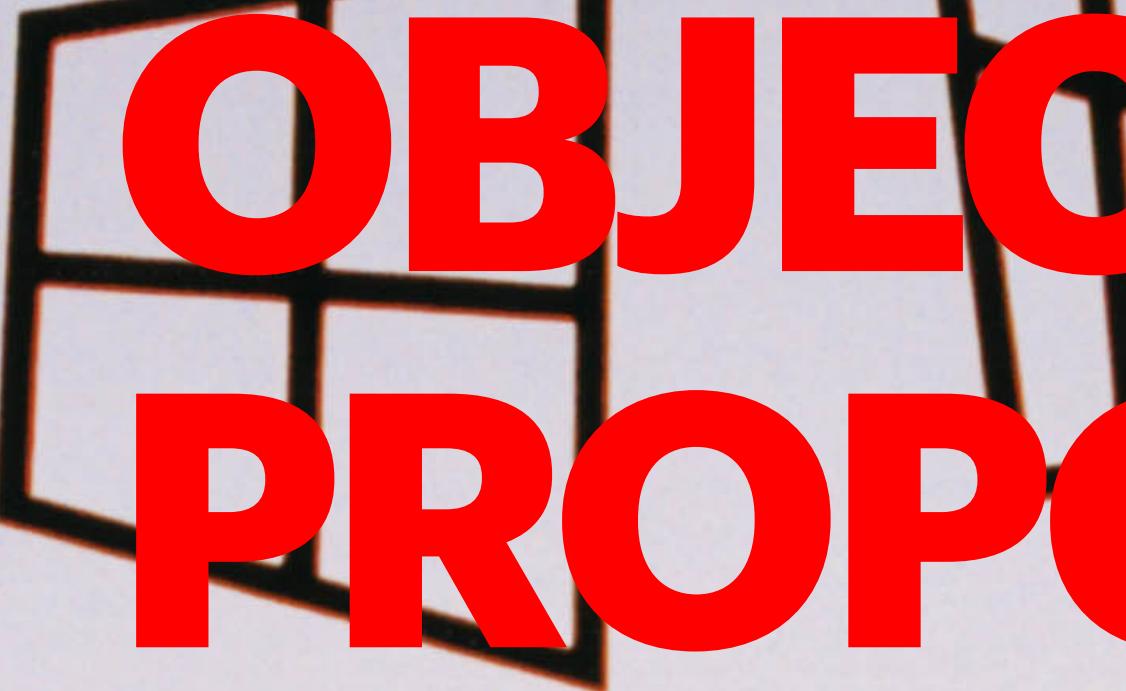
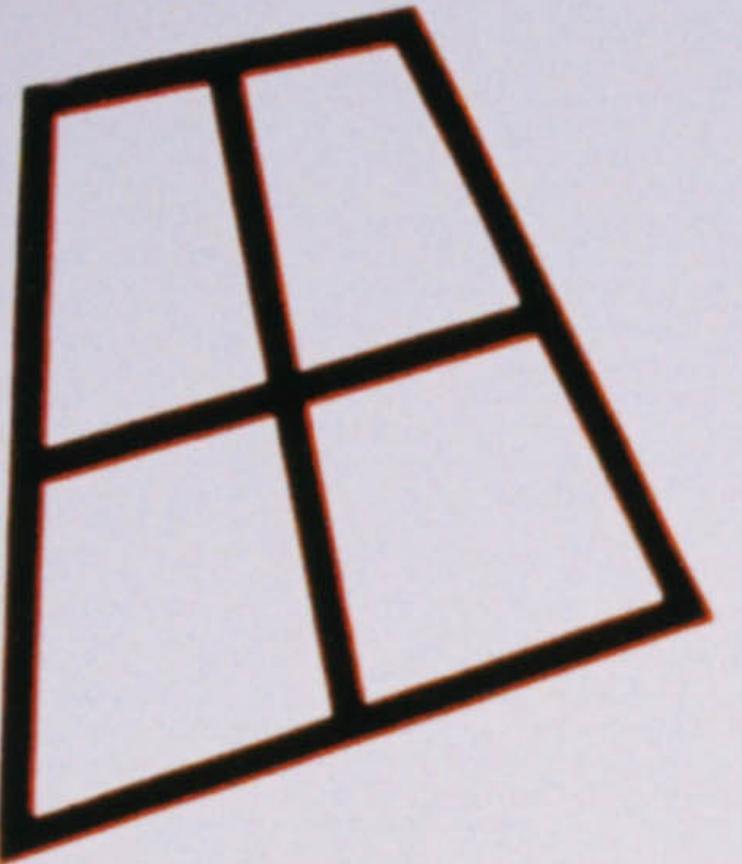
## SET DESIGNS

**Minimal, tangential. Stage as metaphysical space, representing our inner worlds. Underlying sense of ritual, ceremony and magic.**

ROBERT WILSON



# OBJECTS OF STRANGE PROPORTIONS



WOYZECK - ROBERT WILSON



# LUMINOUS VIBRATIONS

**LIGHTING**

# CONCRETE LANGUAGE OF THE STAGE

## ACTING

**Interruptions and disturbances. Impersonal in the sense of not being a 'character' in the naturalistic sense. Athletes of the heart.**

**An affective athleticism. An actor is like a physical athlete... the actor is a heart athlete... with a physical athlete the breathing relies on his body... the actor's body relies on breathing.**



# BREATH

The way to achieve the actor of the heart is through breath control:

androgynous	male	female
balanced	expanding	attracting
neuter	positive	negative



# Athlete of the Heart

Actor includes two parallel organisms:

Bodily organism and Affective organism,  
the latter includes all the residue of the  
corporeal, that is the psychic and the  
mental.

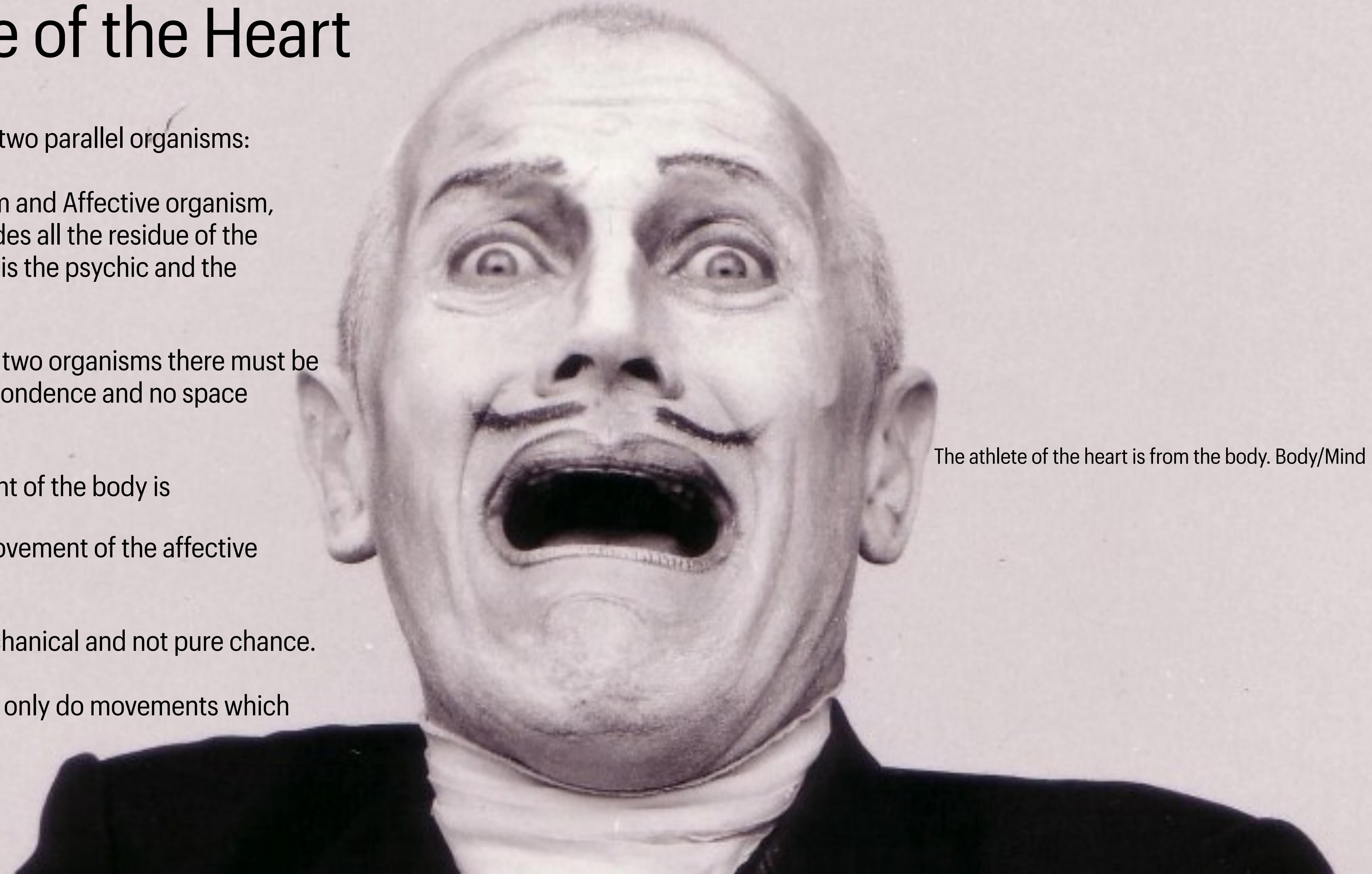
Between these two organisms there must be  
mutual correspondence and no space  
between.

Every movement of the body is  
accompanied  
by a parallel movement of the affective  
organism.

Not purely mechanical and not pure chance.

The actor must only do movements which  
involve  
his total being.

The athlete of the heart is from the body. Body/Mind



# CONCRETE LANGUAGE OF THE STAGE

## DIRECTOR

**Master of Ceremonies at an ornate ritual.**

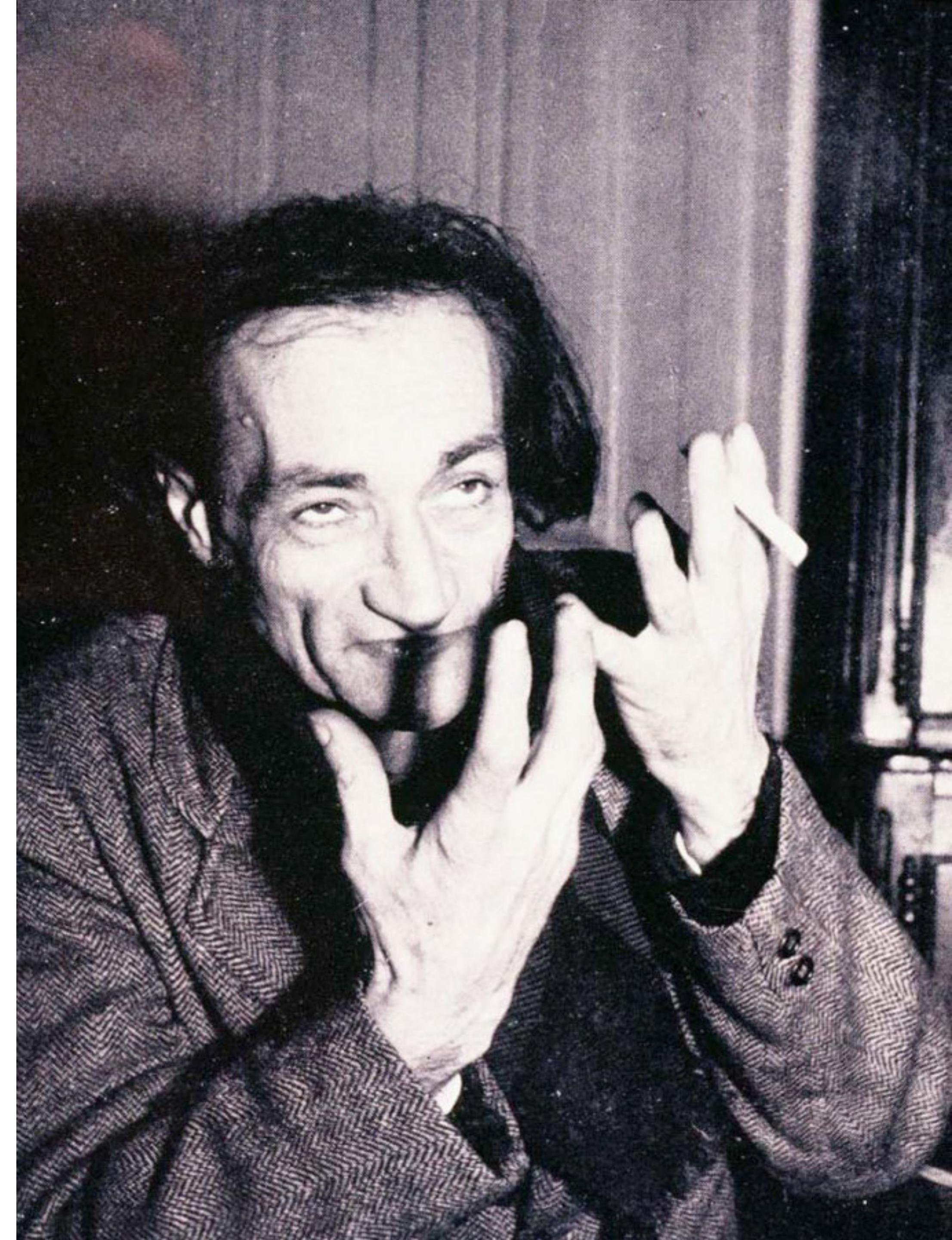
**The old duality between author and producer will disappear, to be replaced by a kind of single Creator... responsible both for the play and the action.**



# CREATOR

## ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR

A sort of magic co-ordinator, a master of sacred ceremonies.



# HIEROGLYPHICS

## SIGNS

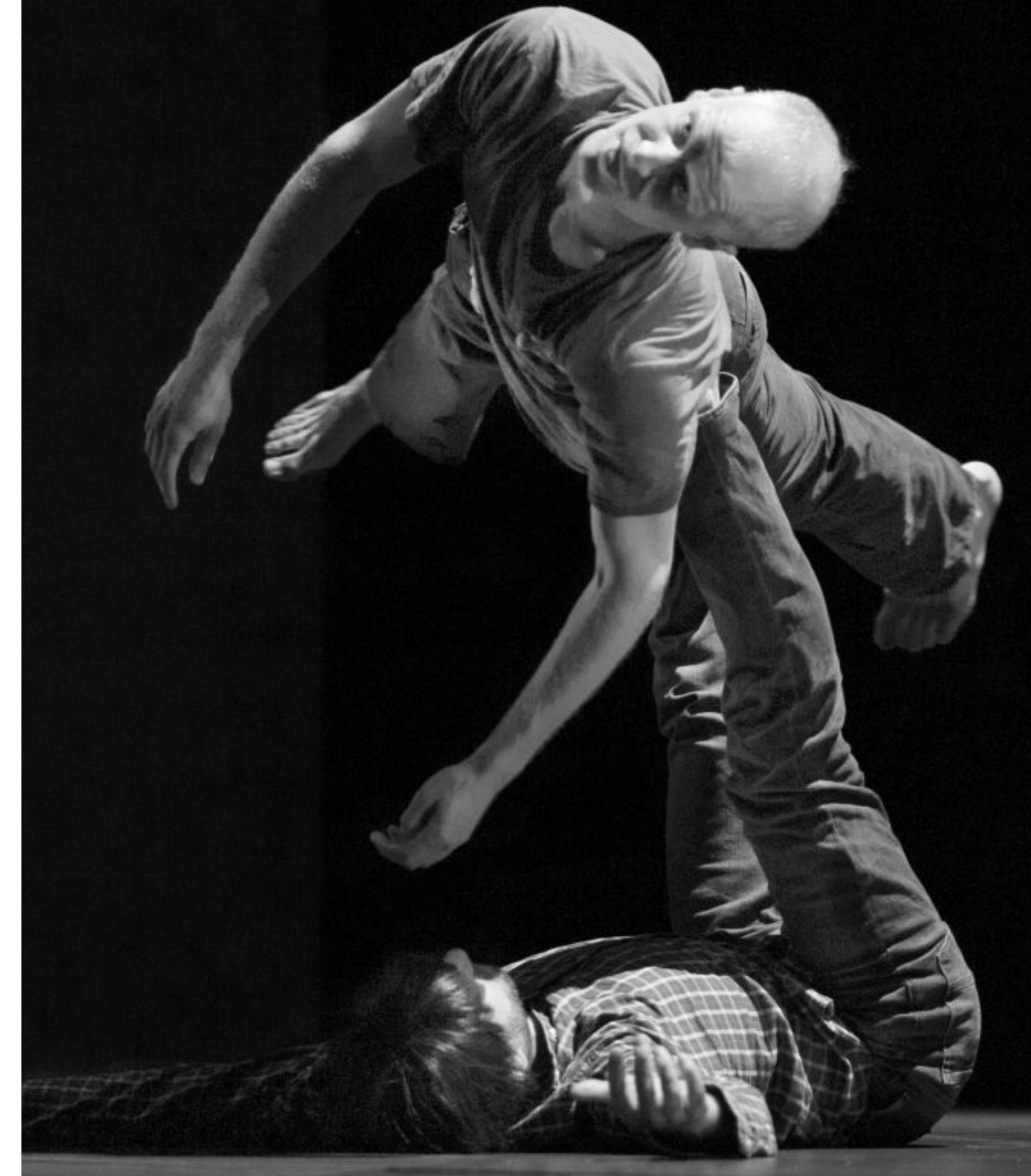
Artaud called for 'the creator' to impose their will onto the performers who are turned into 'powerfully evocative hieroglyphs'.



# HIEROGLYPHICS

## STAGE LANGUAGE

As to ordinary objects, or even the human body, we... take our inspiration from hieroglyphic characters... these symbolic gestures, masks, postures, individual or group moves, whose countless meanings constitute an important part of the tangible stage language of evocative gestures, emotive arbitrary postures, the wild pounding of rhythms and sounds will be multiplied... connections, levels are established between one means of expression and another...



A dense crowd of people with various expressions of surprise, shock, and concern, looking upwards.

# THE AUDIENCE

FIRST, THIS THEATRE MUST EXIST.

# **WE INTEND TO STAGE:**

**AN ADAPTATION OF A SHAKESPEAREAN WORK...  
THE STORY OF BLUEBEARD...  
THE FALL OF JERUSALEM...  
ONE OF MARQUIS DE SADE'S TALES...**



# **BUCHNER'S WOYZECK**

**IN A SPIRIT OF REACTION AGAINST OUR PRINCIPLES,  
AND AS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT CAN BE DRAWN FROM  
AN EXACT TEXT IN TERMS OF THE STAGE.**



# THE FIRST THEATRE OF CRUELTY SHOW WILL BE ENTITLED:

## THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO

[it] raises the question of colonisation. It revives Europe's deep-rooted self conceit in a burning, inexorably bloody manner, allowing us to debunk its own concept of its supremacy... it treats the false conceptions the West has somehow formed concerning paganism and other natural religions with the contempt they deserve... it questions the real supremacy some races have over others... it contrasts the tyrannical anarchy of the colonizers with the deep intellectual concord of those about to be colonized.





# THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO

(THE ROYAL HUNT OF THE SUN: **PETER SHAFFER**): "MY HOPE WAS TO REALISE ON STAGE A KIND OF TOTAL THEATRE, INVOLVING NOT ONLY WORDS BUT RITES, MIMES, MASKS AND MAGICS. THE TEXT CRIES FOR ILLUSTRATION. IT IS... A PANTOMIMIST'S PIECE, A MUSICIAN'S PIECE, A DESIGNER'S PIECE."



# JET DU SANG

ARTAUD CREATES VIOLENT IMAGES OF THE CRUELTY OF HUMAN EXISTENCE IN A WORLD IN WHICH THE SKY BOMBARDS HUMAN BEINGS AND SHAKES THEM TO THEIR CORE... THE SPURT OF BLOOD ATTACKS THE SENSES WITH BIZARRE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS AS IT REACHES TOWARD OUR SUBCONSCIOUS IMPULSES AND FEARS.

BERT CARDULLO

# SPURT OF BLOOD

## JET DU SANG

YOUNG GIRL: [In the same high-pitched voice] We love each other.

YOUNG MAN: We are intense. Ah, how beautifully the world is built.

[Silence. There is a noise as if an immense wheel were turning and moving the air. A hurricane separates them. At the same time, two Stars are seen colliding and from them fall a series of legs of living flesh with feet, hands, scalps, masks, colonnades, porticos, temples, alembics, falling more and more slowly, as if falling in a vacuum: then three scorpions one after another and finally a frog and a beetle which come to rest with desperate slowness, nauseating slowness]

YOUNG MAN: [Crying with all his strength] The sky has gone mad.

[He looks at the sky] Let's hurry away from here.

[He pushes the Young Girl before him]

[Enter a medieval Knight in gigantic armor, followed by a Wet-Nurse holding her breasts in her hands and puffing because her breasts are swollen]



Anarchy



# ORGANISED ANARCHY

"ARTAUD DEVELOPED AN APPROACH TO THEATRE THAT IS INHERENTLY FASCISTIC IN ITS RELATIONSHIP TO AND EFFECT ON THE AUDIENCE" KIMBERLY JANNARONE



# THEATRE, SPECTACLE AND FASCISM

"SHE UNCOVERS AN ARTAUD WHO HAS NOTHING IN COMMON WITH THE ICON OF FREEDOM AND EXPERIMENTATION THAT EMERGED IN THE 1960S; INSTEAD, JANNARONE DISCLOSES A DEEPLY AUTHORITARIAN MAN WHOSE THEATRE OF CRUELTY REPRESENTS SADISTIC FANTASIES OF POWER AND CONTROL AND BEARS AN UNCANNY STRUCTURAL SIMILARITY TO THE DYNAMICS OF MASS POLITICS EMERGING AT THE TIME HE WAS WRITING THE ESSAYS INCLUDED IN HIS MOST FAMOUS WORK, THE THEATRE AND ITS DOUBLE... COMPARING IT TO AUDIENCES AS A MASS ENTITY FOR THE PURPOSES OF POLITICAL MANIPULATION BY THE LIKES OF ADOLF HITLER AND BENITO MUSSOLINI..."

# **PHYSICAL THEATRE**

**NON-WESTERN THEATRE  
TOTAL THEATRE  
DISCIPLINE  
TECHNOLOGY  
SPECTACLE**



A dense, chaotic scene of performers in a theater production, with many people in various states of undress and intense, expressive poses.

# LIVING THEATRE

JUDITH MALINA, JULIAN BECK



# JERZY GROTOWSKI

POOR THEATRE/THEATRE LABORATORY

GROTOWSKI LIKED THE IDEA OF 'SIGNALLING THROUGH THE FLAMES', BUT DISTANCED HIMSELF FROM ARTAUD'S WORK...

# EUGENIO BARBA

ODIN TEATRET

INTERNATIONAL/NON-WESTERN...



# PETER BROOK

THEATRE OF CRUELTY SEASON, LONDON 1964, INCLUDED FIRST EVER PERFORMANCE OF SPURT OF BLOOD, FORTY YEARS AFTER IT WAS WRITTEN.



# TOTAL THEATRE

HOW THE NATIONAL THEATRE WOULD LOOK IF KEN CAMPBELL GOT HIS HANDS ON IT

Non text-based theatre, get Keith Johnstone back, Total Theatre, stunt artists, stage-fight contests, martial artists, ventriloquists, Punch and Judy. Bread and Puppet, Welfare State, Ridiculismus, cabaret, harlequinades, weekly rap, abstract comedy, tree music, one-inch play festival, Close-Up Magic in the bar, Guinness Book of Records world's largest balloon Sculpture utilising a million and one balloons - no one gets to go home until we've burst it - Bollywood musical, Tuvan Opera... I've got a dog that sings. How about a canine chorus as malamutes and huskies charge around above our heads in the Olivier... the space is never used. I mean all the space above our heads, above the actors' heads, cubits 'pon cubits of unconquered emptiness. Time to think Harold Lloyd and Buster Keaton, Circus Archaos, Cirque du Soleil and Gerry Cottle; studying Grimaldi, Lupino Lane and the Ziegfeld Follies; Victorian "sensational drama", forgotten Boucicault plots; the Australian Fruitfly Kids. What were these "masques" that Ben Jonson devised? I'd like to see one. Terry Pratchett, Quidditch matches...



# SHOCK

FORCED ENTERTAINMENT

**Our sensibility has reached the point where we surely need theatre that wakes us up, heart and nerves.**



# ROBERT LEPAGE

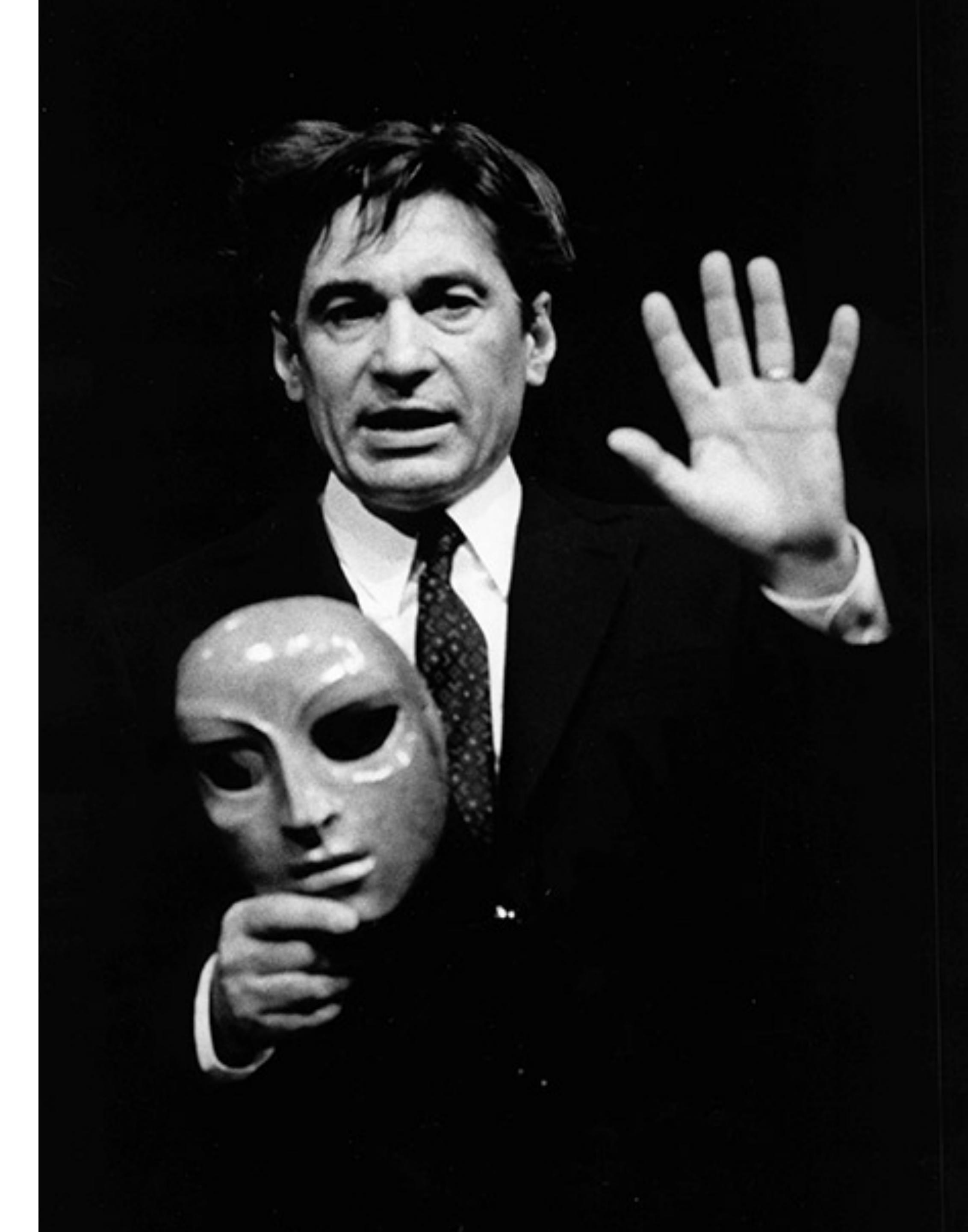
FAR SIDE OF THE MOON



# LE COQ

## PHYSICAL THEATRE

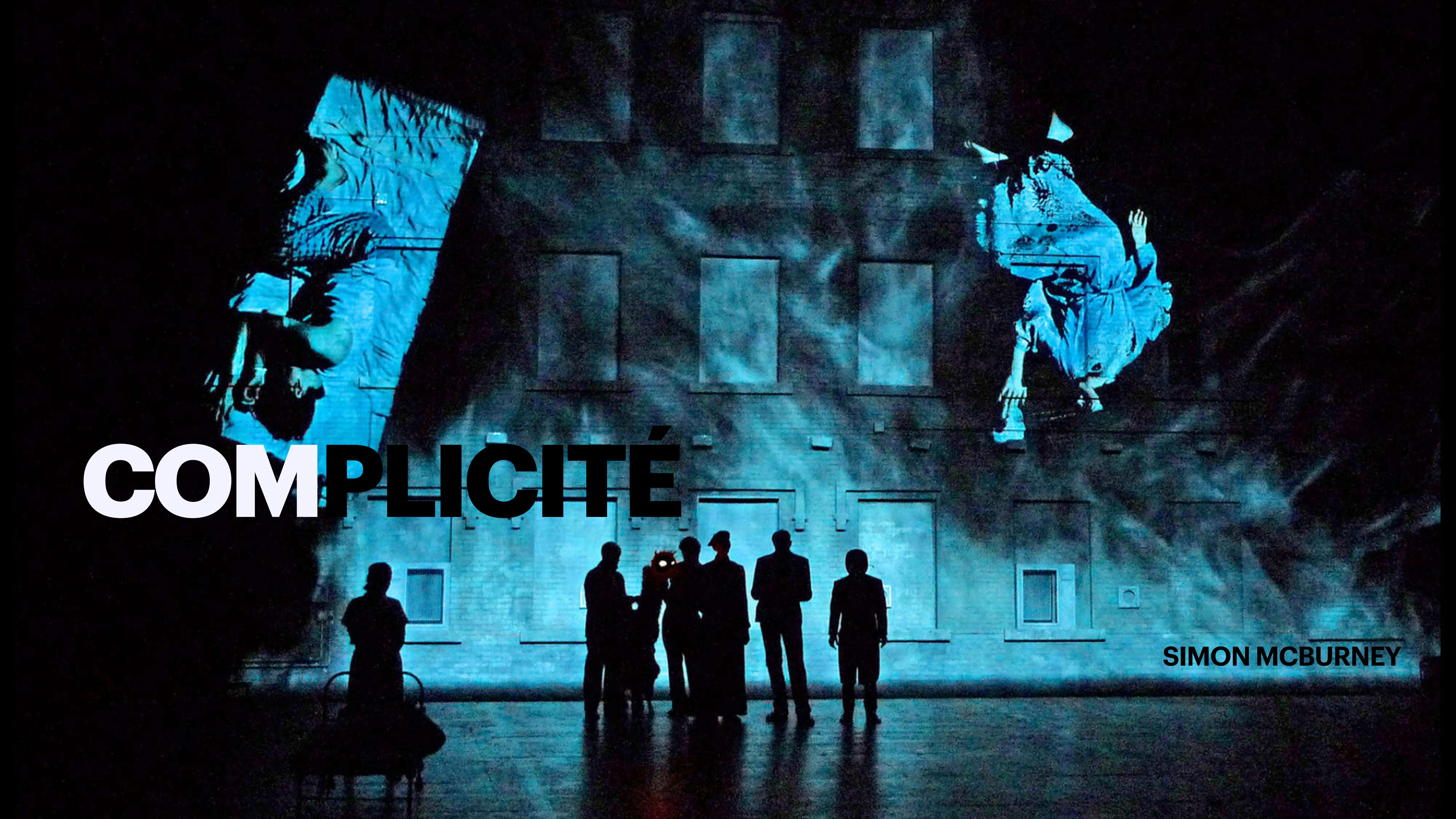
**Artaud's influence on Lecoq's thinking and teaching is clearly evidenced in the connection Lecoq developed between the breath and physical action, in his sense of the athleticism and agility of the actor, and in his writings around the relationship between movement and emotion**



# BERKOFF

**“ARTAUD SEEMED TO BE ARTICULATING EVERYTHING I HAD EVER FELT ABOUT WHAT THEATRE COULD BE.”**





# COMPlicité

SIMON MCBURNEY

# PINA BAUSCH

NELKEN

# DV8

ENTER ACHILLES



# SARAH KANE

4.48 PSYCHOSIS





# SHOCKHEADED PETER

OBJECTS OF STRANGE PROPORTIONS... PUPPETS... MUSIC...

# JULIE TAYMOR

## LION KING

**The theatre, as Antonin Artaud said, involves a flirtation with danger, and Taymor conscientiously danced on the edge.**

**'The shaman,' as Taymor explains, 'takes an inanimate object and imbues it with supernatural powers - maybe a puppet, or a doll, or a mask.'**





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