

rude mechs presents
DIONYSUS IN 69

Adapted from the William Arrowsmith

Original Production
1968-1969

Created by The Performance Group
Directed by Richard Schechner
Set created by Jerry Rojo

Rudes' recreation
December 3 - 20, 2009

Created by Rude Mechs
Co-directed by Madge Darlington and
Shawn Sides
Technical Director, Thomas Graves



photo courtesy of Richard Schechner



photo: Bret Brookshire

Dionysus in 69 is considered the prototypical work of 'environmental theatre.' Find your seat on the floor, or on or around the platforms. PLEASE WATCH YOUR HEAD ON TOP OF THE PLATFORMS!

We invite you to attend moved by the spirit of '69: feel free to wander throughout the room, fall asleep, disappear and reappear, participate in the fun or fade into the background.

The show runs approximately 90 minutes with no intermission.

Dionysus in 69 is the first in a series of Rude Mechs re-enactments of significant, experimental performances from the 60's, 70's, and 80's that radically influenced the work of contemporary performance artists, dancers, and theatre makers. Because all performances are ephemeral, and avant-garde performances even more so, most people never experience these germinal works. Through the Contemporary Classics Series, Rude Mechs will be remounting these productions as closely as possible to the originals.

Richard Schechner's visit to Austin has been generously supported by the Humanities Institute of the University of Texas at Austin.



Heather Barfield as Margaret Ryan
as Agave/Chorus



Elizabeth Doss as Remi Barclay
as Agave/Chorus



Thomas Graves as William Finley
as Dionysus



Jude Hickey as Patrick McDermott
as Chorypheus



Matt Hislope as Richard Dia
as Cadmus

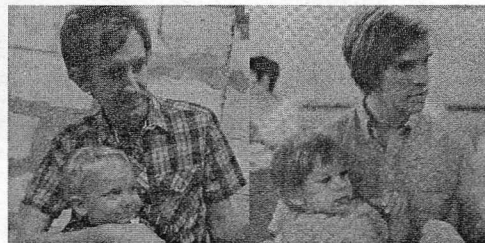
F E A T U R I N G



Jodi Jinx as Joan MacIntosh
as Agave/Chorus



Hannah Kenah as Ciel Smith
as Tiresias



Josh Meyer as Bill Shephard
as Pentheus



Aron Taylor as Sam Blazer
as Chorus/Messenger



Katie Van Winkle as Margaret Ryan
and Roxanne Levine aka Raeanne Rubenstein
as Agave/Chorus

Dramatis Personae:

DIONYSUS, THE GOD (aka Bacchus, aka Bromius), son of Zeus and of the Theban princess Semele.

CADMUS, formerly King of Thebes, father of Semele and Agave.

PENTHEUS, King of Thebes, grandson of Cadmus.

AGAVE, daughter of Cadmus, mother of Pentheus, sister of Semele.

TIRESIAS, an aged Theban prophet, advisor to Cadmus.

Synopsis of *The Bacchae*

The god Dionysus is angry. Despite being the lovechild of Zeus, the king of Gods, his mortal family refuses to recognize him as a deity. Becoming a powerful god, he travels foreign lands, spreading his seductive powers, gathering a cult of female worshipers known as the Maenads, Bacchae, or Bacchantes, and finally returns to Thebes to seek revenge.

Dionysus begins the play with his origin. He tells how Zeus had become enamored with his mother Semele, daughter of Cadmus, how she became pregnant by him, and how her family refuted her dalliance with Zeus. Meanwhile, the goddess Hera, angry at her husband's philandering, tricks Semele into asking Zeus to appear to her in his true form, a lightning bolt, which kills her instantly. Dionysus is spared, and hidden from Hera by Zeus.

Dionysus' cousin Pentheus, grandson of Cadmus, is now the king of Thebes, and keeping true to his family's denial of Dionysus as a god, has declared a ban on his worship. Dionysus commences his plot to avenge his mother by driving the women of Thebes (including his aunts, Ino, Autonoe and Pentheus' mother, Agave) into an ecstatic frenzy and setting them loose on the woods of Cithaeron. Cadmus and his advisor Tiresias have become enchanted themselves and are about to succumb to the seduction, but when Pentheus finds them decked out in the Bacchanalian festive garb of fawn skins and thyrsus (long sticks wrapped in leaves and tipped by a pinecone), he scolds them harshly and sends his guards to arrest the man responsible for the women's ecstasy.

The guards return with the accused, Dionysus himself, disguised as a priest. Pentheus wants war -- to punish the raving Maenads, their god and their ways -- but while questioning the disguised Dionysus, Pentheus lets slip his own interest in the Dionysian rites. Dionysus preys on the young king's desire to watch the Maenads. He convinces Pentheus to dress as one and attend the rites in person.

The plot is nearly complete. A messenger arrives to tell how Dionysus helped Pentheus into a tall tree for a better view of the Bacchantes. Then Dionysus summoned his followers. Believing the intruder to be a lion, the women, including Pentheus' mother Agave, went wild, wrenched him from his perch and ripped his body to pieces.

Soon Agave returns to the palace proudly carrying the head of her son as a hunting trophy to present to her father. In horror, Cadmus gradually awakens Agave to what she has done as Dionysus' possession begins to wear off. Everyone grieves for the loss of the young king. Agave and her sisters are exiled. The family is destroyed.

1964

Yoko Ono's "Cut Piece", Tokyo, Japan

Landmark performance piece in which Ono walks onto stage draped in fabric and invites audience to cut the fabric away until she is naked.

1964 - 1967

Carolee Schneemann develops and presents "Fuses", a silent film of collaged and painted sequences of her and a partner's lovemaking.

1967

Summer: Hippie mecca Haight-Ashbury in San Francisco, California becomes ground zero for American cultural and social revolution dubbed Summer of Love.

September / October: Allan Krapow, coiner of the term "Happening" and participant in the intermedia network Fluxus, produces FLUIDS, an outdoor installation of melting ice in Los Angeles, California.

November 15: The Performance Group begins work together in New York City.

1968

January: The Performance Group begins work on Dionysus in 69.

January 5: Prague Spring: Alexander Dubček is elected leader of the Communist Party in Czechoslovakia.

January 22: Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In debuts on NBC.

January 30: The Tet Offensive begins, as Viet Cong forces launch a series of surprise attacks across South Vietnam.

March 1: The Performance Group acquires The Performing Garage.

March 16: My Lai Massacre

March 19-23: Students at Howard University in Washington, D.C. signal a new era of militant student activism on college campuses in the U.S., staging rallies, protests and a 5-day sit-in, laying siege to the administration building, effectively shutting down the university in protest of its ROTC program and the Vietnam War, and demanding a more Afrocentric curriculum.

April 2: The film version of 2001: A Space Odyssey premieres in Washington, D.C.

April 4: Martin Luther King, Jr. is shot dead at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee. Riots erupt in major American cities for several days afterward.

April 6: A shootout between Black Panthers and Oakland police results in several arrests and deaths, including 16-year-old Panther Bobby Hutton.

April 11: U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1968.

May: May of '68 is a symbol of the resistance of that generation. Agitations and strikes in Paris lead many youth to believe that a revolution is starting. Student and worker strikes, sometimes referred to as the French May, nearly bring down the French government.

June 3: Valerie Solanas shoots Andy Warhol as he enters his studio, wounding him.

June 5: U.S. presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy is shot at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, California by Sirhan Sirhan. Kennedy dies from his injuries the next day.

June 6: Dionysus in 69 opens.

A TIMELINE

June 8: James Earl Ray is arrested for the murder of Martin Luther King Jr.

August 20: The Prague Spring of political liberalization ends, as 200,000 Warsaw Pact troops and 5,000 tanks invade Czechoslovakia.

August 22-30: Police clash with anti-war protesters in Chicago, Illinois, outside the 1968 Democratic National Convention, which nominates Hubert Humphrey for U.S. President, and Edmund Muskie for Vice President.

September 7: 150 women (members of New York Radical Women) arrive in Atlantic City, New Jersey to protest against the Miss America Pageant, as exploitative of women.

October 2: Tlatelolco massacre: A student demonstration ends in a bloodbath at La Plaza de las Tres Culturas in Tlatelolco, Mexico City, Mexico, 10 days before the inauguration of the 1968 Summer Olympics.

October 5: Police baton civil rights demonstrators in Derry, Northern Ireland, marking the beginning of The Troubles.

October 11: NASA launches Apollo 7, the first manned Apollo mission (Wally Schirra, Donn Eisele, Walter Cunningham). Mission goals include the first live television broadcast from orbit and testing the lunar module docking maneuver.

October 16: Tommie Smith and John Carlos, 2 black Americans competing in the Olympic 200-meter run, raise their arms in a black power salute after winning, respectively, the gold and bronze medals for 1st and 3rd place.

November 5: Republican challenger Richard M. Nixon defeats the Democratic candidate, Vice President Hubert Humphrey, and American Independent Party candidate George C. Wallace to become the 37th President of the United States.

November 14: Yale University announces it will allow women to register for coursework for the first time in its 267 year history.

November 22: The Beatles release their self-titled album popularly known as the White Album.

December 3: The '68 Comeback Special marks the concert return of Elvis Presley.

December 22: Mao Zedong advocates that educated youth in urban China be re-educated in the country. It marks the start of the "Up to the mountains and down to the villages" movement.

December 24: Apollo 8 enters orbit around the Moon. Astronauts Frank Borman, Jim Lovell and William A. Anders become the first humans to see the far side of the Moon and planet Earth as a whole. The crew also reads from Genesis.

1969

January: The Performance Group arrested in Michigan for indecent exposure while touring Dionysus in 69.

June 28: Stonewall Riots, Greenwich Village, NYC.

August 15-18: Woodstock, Upstate NY.

December 6: Altamont, Northern CA.

1972

March 22: Eisenstadt v. Baird decided, establishing the right of unmarried women to possess oral contraceptives.

GRATITUDE

The Rude Mechs' Co-producing Artistic Directors would like to thank this cast for their untiring help building the set and enthusiasm building the show.

Our undying gratitude and biggest Rude love to:

Richard Schechner

Jerry Rojo

and

Pauline Strong and the Humanities Institute

Without whom this project would not have been possible.

Richard Schechner's work with the cast and directors of the production were made possible through the generous support of the Humanities Institute of the University of Texas at Austin. Richard Schechner is currently in residence at the University of Texas at Austin as Cline Professor of the Humanities.

THANK YOU

Our company members always make sacrifices of their time, money and stuff. For this production, a special thanks to company members: Lowell Bartholomee, Jose Hernandez, Ellie McBride, Jazz McBride, Amy Miley, Robert Pierson, Stephen Pruitt, Graham Reynolds, Leilah Stewart, Meg Sullivan, and Rude Board Members Stephanie Hunter, Patty Olwell, and Buck Van Winkle.

Special thanks:

Jess Wade & Jamie Johnson: Artists Supporting Artists

Ian Reddy/Wingate at Wyndham

Beth at Misc Rentals

Volunteers:

Savanna Adams, Patrick Anthony, Kerri Atwood, Wendy Bable, Ricky Cambier, Henna Chou, Jason Cole, Shauna Danos, Bridget Dilger, Eric Dyer, Michelle Fisher, Luke Gilliam, Brandon Gonzalez, Katie Hopkins, Edmund Martinez, Travis Mills, Dona Reynolds, George Reynolds, Leslie Smith, and Doug Williams

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