

Schultis Brian

**The Art of the Beginner: Towards an Ecological Ethics of Power in Grotowski's Active Culture
standard lecture**

When Jerzy Grotowski's Polish Laboratory Theatre stopped making new productions in 1970, they took the final step in shifting their focus from performance aesthetics to autotelic action. I will describe what emerged through the next fourteen years as an ethics of power in the Deleuzo-Spinozan sense. While I intend to challenge received notions of Grotowski's practice as exclusively focused on transcendence, my primary interest is in the implications for the question of the ecological relations between the human body and its material environment. I read in the Laboratory's gradual and practice led shift from an instrumentalist and representational understanding of materials to an increasingly interactive one as a potential foundation for an ecological ethics grounded both in technics and embodiment. This paper explores this potential, opening avenues for continued research into the ethical possibilities of embodied action and material interaction.

Bio:

Brian Schultis carries out both theoretical and practical research into embodied ways of interacting with others, materials, and environments. He worked for three years with the Akron, USA based New World Performance Laboratory under the direction of former Grotowski collaborators Jim Slowiak and Jairo Cuesta. His PhD research at the University of Kent built a theory around Grotowski's Paratheatre and Theatre of Sources periods using the collaborative writings of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. He has undertaken practical projects including ensemble investigations of landscapes based on moving rather than staying in one place, and facilitating ecological encounters with gold thread.

