

"ASTONISHING"

--The Village Voice

"THE AESTHETIC SHOCK OF ENCOUNTERING ABDOH'S TURBULENT WORK SENT ME REELING ..."

-- Richard Foreman



REZA ABDOH-THEATRE VISIONARY A DOCUMENTARY FILM BY **ADAM SOCH**
WITH **DAR A LUZ MEMBERS, FAMILY AND FRIENDS** IN ASSOCIATION WITH **CULTURES ON FILM**
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS **ALAN MANDELL, DIANE WHITE, MARTA HOLEN, ANITA DURST AND JOHN McDUFFIE**
ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS **DANIEL MUFSON, SID MONTZ, SARAH AND PETER MANDELL**
PRODUCER **ADAM SOCH** CO-PRODUCER **SANDY CLEARY** CAMERA **NICK BODEA**
SPECIAL THANKS **TOM FITZPATRICK, SARVI CHAN, SALAR ABDOH, ADRIAN TOADER-WILLIAMS AND NILS MOLLY**

REZA ABDOH: THEATRE VISIONARY

A DOCUMENTARY FILM BY ADAM SOCH

A creative genius.

A charismatic leader.

A complex man of his times.

Twenty years after his untimely passing, the story of wunderkind theatre director Reza Abdoh is told by his friends, critics, admirers, and through the explosive work he left behind.

SYNOPSIS

The extraordinary life of Iranian-born American theatrical maverick **Reza Abdoh** (1963-1995) resembles in many ways that of the seminal Romantic composer Franz Schubert. Both of these prodigiously talented artists reflected in their work the tumultuous times they had been born into; both died prematurely, in their early 30s, of a slow-killing disease which had been demonized by the societies of their era. Both left behind a substantial body of work that is constantly referenced, quoted, analyzed and taught to eager followers. What makes Abdoh very different from Schubert, however, is that in order to emerge in all its glory, Abdoh's oeuvre required the participation of countless people who followed his daring visions.

Described as a provocateur whose actors "mooned audiences, became slaves under torture, and hung nude upside down in fish tanks," Abdoh was best known for his large-scale experimental works, often



staged outside the traditional theater environment. Created with his company, Dar a Luz, his pieces were performed in lofts, hotels and on the streets of New York City's then-gritty Meatpacking District throughout the early 90s in New York, Los Angeles and Europe. Abdoh's expressive imagery was inspired by everything from classical literature, to his own harrowing experience as a gay man diagnosed with AIDS in the context of the American political landscape of

the 1990s, to TV talk shows and BDSM iconography, with subject matter ranging from personal memories to racial issues, violence in America, sexual repression, cruelty, and death.

Assembled from rare, archival video footage of over 300 hours of Abdoh's most important pieces, alongside interviews with him, his collaborators, critics, friends, and family, the new documentary, **REZA ABDOH: THEATRE VISIONARY** is much more than just an homage to the maverick director. Producer and director Adam Soch – a close collaborator on many of the late artist's projects – has created an intimate portrait of the world and work of Abdoh that can appeal, not only to the theatre cognoscenti, but to everyone fascinated by the power of a creative spirit. Through anecdotes, personal reflections, excerpts from live shows and rehearsals, the viewer is led into the world of a famously demanding, driven and uncompromising artist – but above all, a charismatic leader and an exceptional human being. "You meet a Reza Abdoh once in a lifetime," proclaims renowned director Peter Sellars in the film. By the time the documentary is over, it is clear that this statement is true.

WATCH TRAILER

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR



Adam Soch fled the communist Eastern Europe in 1980 to seek creative freedom in the United States. He is an award-winning filmmaker and producer, lauded by the media for the “stunning, remarkable and compelling” images that are a hallmark of his films and theatrical productions, as well as his editing style. He has worked on projects involving such luminaries as opera superstars Placido Domingo and Angela Gheorghiu, actors Jessica Lange, Dustin Hoffman, Leonardo DiCaprio, Vanessa Redgrave, and Nobel Peace Prize winners Desmond Tutu and Michail Gorbatchev. Throughout 1990s, he collaborated closely with Reza Abdoh on many of his most acclaimed productions, including *Hip-Hop Waltz of Eurydice*, *Bogeyman*, *Tight Right White*, and *Quotations from a Ruined City*. Mr. Soch is one of four founders of an international television channel

Classic Arts Showcase. Viewed daily by millions of people throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico, The ARTS Channel focuses on highlighting the disciplines, pleasures and wonders of classic arts such as ballet, opera, theater, dance and film/video, through the power of television.

DIRECTOR' STATEMENT

I first crossed paths with Reza Abdoh in 1989, while he was doing a show called *Peep Show* in a hotel in Los Angeles – actor Alan Mandell, who was performing in it, recommended me to help with video design. We became friends, but I was still the admirer of his creativity, boldness and imagination. He trusted me enough to permit me to film anything I wanted, at any time. It turned out to be an amazing blessing. Most of the footage of him and his work that has survived comes from what I was able to capture. Now, with the permission of the Abdoh estate, I am extremely happy to share these unique documents, and hope they will broaden the knowledge of one of the most unique American artists of the 1990s.

We are planning to make the full-length videotaped performances widely available for viewing through the website dedicated to the documentary film and hope that the more people learn about this amazing artist, the more interest there is to view his work – not only from theatre scholars and and new generations of artists, but also from the general audience.

CREDITS

A Cultures on Film Presentation

Executive Producers

ALAN MANDELL
DIANE WHITE
MARTA HOLEN
ANITA DURST
JOHN McDUFFIE

Associate Producers

DANIEL MUFSON
SID MONTZ
SARAH AND PETER MANDELL

Co-Producer

SANDY CLEARY

Created, directed and edited by

ADAM SOCH

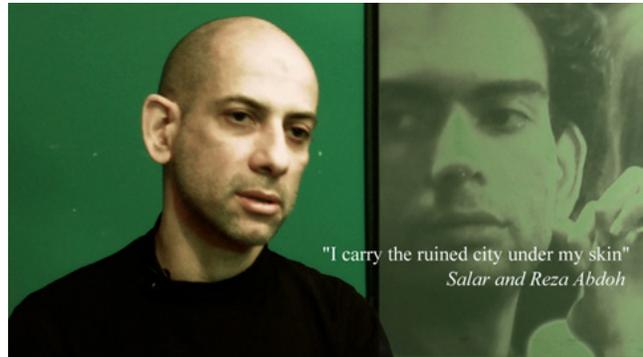


*“A theatrical,
visionary”*

– Stephen Holden,
The New York Times

PARTIAL INTERVIEW LIST

Peter Sellars	Ken Roht
Alan Mandell	Tony Abatemarco
Tom Fitzpatrick	Daniel Mufson
Morgan Jenness	Klaus Bachler
Anne Hamburger	Richard Stayton
Norman Frisch	Laural Meade
Juliana Francis Kelly	Marta Holen
Tony Torn	Elsbeth M. Collins
Anita Durst	Sylvie Drake
David Schweizer	Bonnie Marranta
Tal Yarden	Jon Sinner
Sabrina Artel	
Diane White	
Peter Jacobs	
Tom Pearl	



***“You meet a
Reza Abdoh
once in a
lifetime.”***

**– Peter Sellars,
director & friend**



FILM SPECS

Original Title:
REZA ABDOH: THEATRE VISIONARY

English Title:
Same

Director:
Adam Soch

Country Of Origin:
USA

Year Of Production:
2015

Running Time:
1hr. and 44 minutes (104 min.)

Language :
English

Subtitles:
For foreign Language Speaking segments

Prod. Company:
Cultures on Film

Producer:
Adam Soch

Filmed in:
High Definition Video, Color

Aspect Ratio:
16x9

File Type:
QuickTime Movie and MPEG

WWW.REZAABDOHDOCUMENTARYFILM.COM



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