

## Abstracts

### **Translating In? Brian Friel's *Translations* in Irish-language Performance**

Nóra de Buiteléir (National University of Ireland, Galway)

This paper takes as its starting point the crossover of theatre and translation studies – the frequently fraught reception of plays in translation. The play under examination here is that well-established classic of modern Irish theatre: *Translations* by Brian Friel. First performed in Derry in 1980, *Translations* has been staged to great acclaim all over the world, both in English and out of it. My concern here is with a translation of *Translations* which is generally overlooked but is, in fact, probably the most obvious and the most important of them all – that into the Irish language. In examining how Friel's play has been received into the Irish language and onto the Irish-language stage, I consider the notion of theatrical reception from a number of perspectives; that of the translator, making sense of an original text so as to recast it along the lines of his own interpretation; that of theatre directors, taking this translated text and re-contextualising it onto the Irish (or Northern Irish) stage; and that of Irish-speaking audiences, their responses shaped by their own beliefs and linguistic sensitivities, by their collective stance towards the historical background of the play, the questions raised by the play, and in this particular case, the very language of the play.

### **Pumpkin Fruit / Pumpkin Root: Participatory Theatre in a Ugandan Prison**

Kevin Bott (New York University)

This practice-based article describes a theatrical collaboration between the author, an American practitioner of applied and community-based theatre, and male inmates in a minimum-security remand center in northern Uganda. Over the course of three weeks during the summer of 2007, the author worked with 100 inmates and helped to develop original plays based on tribal folktales. The author discusses how a commitment to, and a broad knowledge of, participatory theatre praxis can help navigate the challenges of engaging in humanizing and meaningful creative work within a prison situated in a culture that is not one's own.

### **Feeling Performance, Remembering Trauma**

Patrick Duggan (University of Leeds)

In recent years there has been a surge in the growth of Trauma Theory as an important and engaging field of academic study and while it has begun to engage with both literature and fine art it is yet to be fully theorised in relation to theatre and performance. This paper seeks to briefly highlight one of the ways in which trauma theory might engage with performance and vice versa. Employing both theories of trauma and kinaesthesia this paper examines the felt quality of performance as a catalyst to receiving

an understanding of the performance and to a re-embodiment of (personal) traumatic memory through this. After briefly tracking the history and development of trauma theory, the paper reads it alongside examples of live performances. Through this the paper establishes live performance as the ideal site for an exploration of the difficulties of traumatic experience and the creation of understanding through the visceral quality of performance.

### **The Reception of Oscar Wilde and Bernard Shaw in the Light of Early Twentieth-Century Austrian Censorship**

Sandra Mayer and Barbara Pfeifer (University of Vienna)

Against the background of reception and cultural transfer theory, this paper attempts to investigate the mechanisms of circulation and blockage of (foreign) cultural elements involved in the practices of theatre censorship in early twentieth-century Austria. This will be exemplified by Oscar Wilde's symbolist one-act tragedy *Salome* and Bernard Shaw's political satire *Press Cuttings*, both of which had been objected to by the Lord Chamberlain in Britain. Whereas *Salome* was approved by the Austrian censorship authorities without major internal and public controversy, *Press Cuttings* never made it to the Viennese stage, thus reflecting the early reception of these Anglo-Irish authors in fin-de-siècle Austria-Hungary. Based on unpublished archival sources, the essay explores questions relating to cultures in contact, play selection and the role of national stereotypes within the reception process.

### **Small Town Montréal: Critical Preconceptions and the (mis)Interpretation of Michel Tremblay's *Hosanna***

Jim Ellison (Royal Holloway, University of London)

Michel Tremblay's *Hosanna* was a smash hit that played to rave reviews in both its French- (1973, Théâtre de Quat'Sous, Montréal) and English-language (1974, Tarragon Theatre, Toronto) premieres. Its British premier (1981, Birmingham Repertory Studio, Birmingham), a part of Birmingham's Canadian Days Festival, was not so fortunate and received a largely negative critical response. This article attempts to reconcile the critical reception of the 1981 production with the actual staging of the performance, and to offer some theoretical explanations for the ways in which the play was understood.