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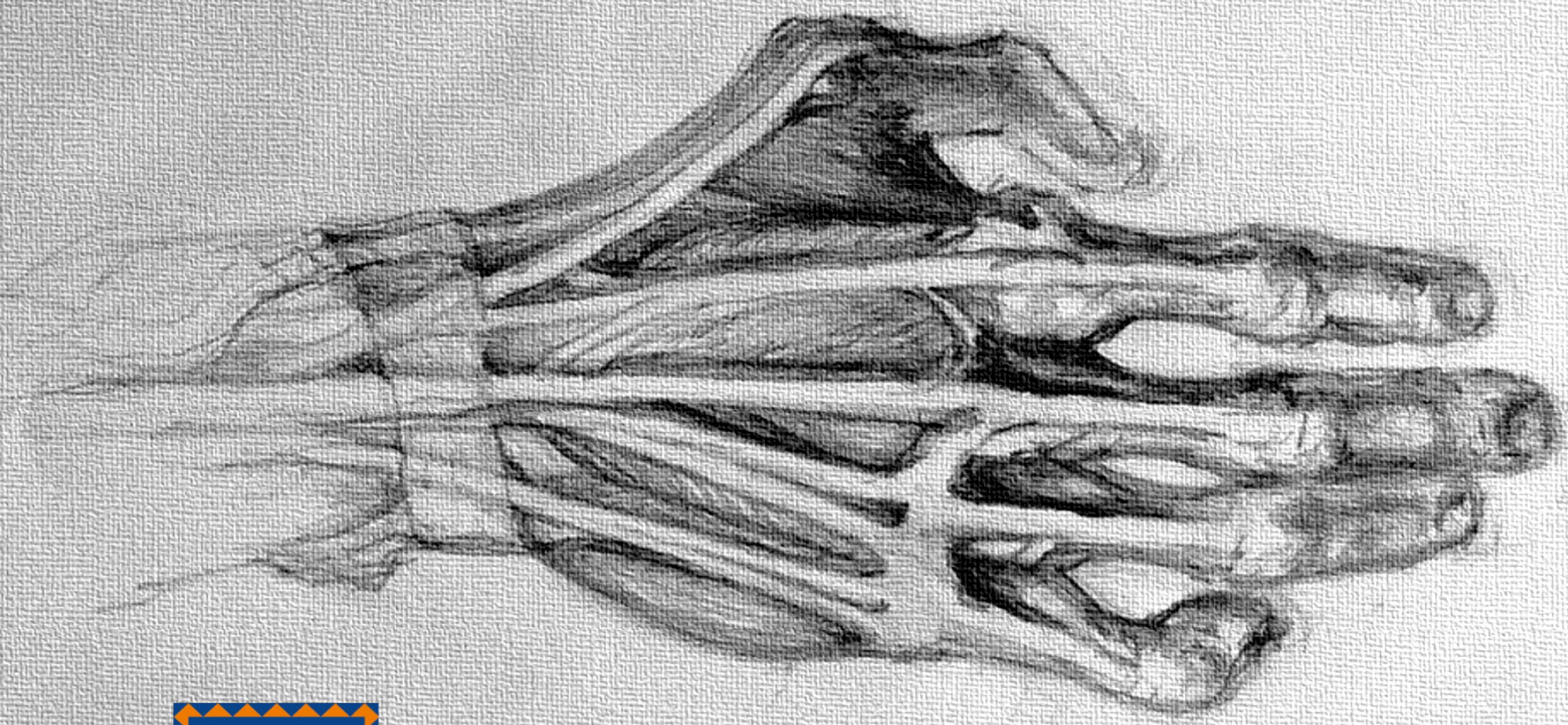

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On Corporeality

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Papers should not exceed 4500 words (including notes and references). Practice-based papers should normally include images in JPEG format (300ppi). Reviews should be around 1000 words. Photo essays should not exceed 2000 words and 10 pictures. All contributions should be formatted according to the MLA style guidelines (see Gibaldi's *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*) and should include a 200-word abstract of the article submitted as well as the article itself. Authors should also send a 50 word bio with their submission.

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Editorial

This issue of *Platform* considers 'the body' as it appears or is experienced in theatre and performance. 'On Corporeality' is partially inspired by the second biannual interdisciplinary symposium, *Trans.form@Work*, hosted by the Department of Dance, Film and Theatre at the University of Surrey in May 2012. Corporeality emerged as a persistent theme in this symposium, as it has in a number of other symposiums, conferences and publications across the humanities, especially over the past five years. This proliferation of engagements with corporeality – part of what Maxine Sheets-Johnstone calls 'the corporeal turn', in a book of the same name – testifies to a burgeoning interest in the body: not only as a site of inscription, but also as a vehicle of expression and possible transgression or resistance. Our concern with bodies also stems, then, from the belief that the debates of the corporeal turn are not only still revolving, but evolving as a consequence of such possibilities. Consequently, this issue marks an attempt to engage with and seek multiple understandings of this politically charged field.

First and foremost, 'the corporeal' refers to physical bodies. Besides well-known theoretical approaches to the body, such as Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological 'lived body' and Foucault's 'disciplined body', corporeality remains a persistent subject of enquiry. This is exemplified by the manifold ways in which the body materialises in theoretical discourses, so as to give birth to what Chris Shilling calls 'the rise of the enigmatic body' (1). The notion of an enigmatic body encourages us to render strange the ways in which our own body, or the bodies of others, might be experienced or apprehended. Moreover, it prompts reflection on the possible ways in which the discourses serving to elucidate corporeality might in fact fortify its enigma. Research on the 'commercialised body' of the early 1980s and 1990s approached corporeality in its relation to capitalist consumer culture. In the hands of the 'second wave' of the feminist critique, the body was denaturalised and became the main

player in the battleground of sex versus gender. The fleshiness of the body has also come to play a pivotal role in discourses on cyber-(post)humanism and digitalization, while the (im)materiality and the porosity of the corporeal – perhaps the most enigmatic expression of corporeality's seemingly opaque reality – is also pertinent to a recent rise of interest in affect. Lastly, the body's enigma has been upset by debates congealed in the cognitive sciences, particularly by proponents of the 'embodied mind' thesis. But one still wonders whether the body's enigma is likely ever to be solved, no matter which weapon in a critical arsenal is deployed. Is it even right to think of corporeality as something that needs explaining? To think about the body is to think at the threshold of subjectivity and objectivity. As such, it seems important to maintain openness to the possibility of multiple, interrelated or divergent insights offered by a plurality of approaches to the body.

This issue has looked to be sensitive toward the concern that writing about the body may overshadow the meaningfulness of corporeality. A rich repository of approaches to corporeality is addressed in what follows in both theoretical and practical iterations. The articles presented engage with varying theoretical currents and critical concerns and attend to the similarities and differences between theoretical and practical means of representing and discussing corporeality. As a consequence, the now firmly established 'Artist's Documents' section that *Platform* has, in the past, taken great pride in defending gains renewed urgency; as will become clear later in this editorial, this has even resulted in rebranding that section. Both difficulties and rewards derive from taking the body seriously in performance studies, where the body assumes, even more than in other disciplines, the material role of protagonist.

In 'Absent Friends: Edward Bond's Corporeal Ghosts', James Hudson innovatively explores the enigma of the body by considering representations of ghosts in Edward Bond's plays. The paradoxical materiality of the ghost in a range of Bond's plays is examined by

considering these unsettling beings as the living dead. Various representations of the ghost are addressed through Hudson's original reading of Bond's work, where the ghost is understood as a means of exploring a coherent philosophy that critiques the violence of living. In the interplay between material bodies and ghostliness, the author shows how Bond troubles the relation between corporeality and liveliness, problematising not only what it means to be alive, and morally so, but also what it means to be a body.

Matt Cawson's contribution, 'Corporeality and Subversion in Post-Renaissance Italy: The Inquisition and the Commedia dell'Arte', digs into some wonderfully unexpected sources. This article explores how the emergence of the Commedia dell'Arte can be seen to have constituted a bodily resistance against the Holy Roman Inquisition. Cawson traces Catholicism's condemnation of the corporeal to the Platonic and Pythagorean traditions and shows how the Commedia took the body's materiality as a point of departure to oppose a hegemonic valorisation of the spirit. Setting in counterposition mind and body, the spiritual and the corporeal, Cawson identifies one of the main debates relating to corporeality in theatre and performance studies. At the same time, he does justice to the identification and examination of social, cultural and spiritual pressures, at a particular historical juncture, that are pertinent to the arousal of interest in the body as a meaningful and potentially subversive resource.

In 'The Performance of Biopower and Liveliness: The Life and Death of Terri Schiavo', Renée Newman-Storen engages with the ethically sensitive and politically troublesome debates surrounding the right to life or death of the American woman Terry Schiavo. Schiavo was kept in a persistent vegetative state for fifteen years as her family and husband engaged in a legal struggle and moral debate regarding the removal of her feeding tube. This debate became the subject of national attention and received extensive media coverage, providing a forum for deep-seated opinions to be expressed regarding the place of euthanasia in the United States. Newman-Storen uses Michel Foucault's

concept of biopower as a means of exploring this controversial media storm, thinking about Schiavo's body not only as the silent receptor of governmental policies, but also, through licit or illicit propaganda, as an actively resistant force to those policies. The body is consequently pitched as a battleground and the author clearly shows how nature and culture play against themselves in such a dispute over life and death.

In place of the 'Artist's Documents' section, this issue of *Platform* includes a section simply titled 'Documents'. Reflecting on the demands that an issue on corporeality raises, it is not just artists, but audiences as well that are considered here as potential co-producers of an artwork. We wanted to include intimate reflections on the corporeal fact of spectating as a creative practice. 'The corporeal' pertains as much to those witnessing as those instigating theatre and performance.

This 'Documents' section, then, considers corporeality as something practiced in the context of two very different spaces: the theatre and the street. These articles point towards current debates surrounding practice-as-research by asserting the validity of corporeally defined and apprehended meaning in theatre and performance scholarship. In 'Forum Theatre, Disability and Corporeality: A project on sexuality in Zimbabwe', Nehemia Chivandikwa and Ngonidzashe Muwonwa reflect on a forum theatre project in which they were both involved, called *Visionaries*. This contribution brings to the issue a necessary and important discussion relating to the disabled body in connection with notions of sexuality, beauty and gender. The play was performed by disabled students from the University of Zimbabwe for an audience of staff and students at the same university. As well as providing an intervention into received understandings of disability and sexuality in this context, the efficacy of the event is considered in terms of political resistance, accountability and institutional organisation. In '"Try to follow the sound of my footsteps...": Walking and the theatricality of imaginative geographies in Janet Cardiff's *The Missing Voice (Case Study B)*', Jane Frances Dunlop reflects on the experience of an

audio performance set in London's East End. What makes this contribution relevant to the 'Documents' section is its onus on the experiential, creative act of participation. If the corporeality of the audience experience is to be taken seriously, if it is to be understood as a creative and participatory process, then it might, the editors believe, be usefully and informatively approached in terms of practice. Focusing on her own corporeal experience of Janet Cardiff's *The Missing Voice (Case Study B)*, Dunlop develops an experiential narrative which reflects on the corpo-reality of movement, space and temporality. Her account of this performance can be seen to contribute to a growing discursive interest in walking as an engagement with the affective texture of a city.

The editorial board at *Platform* would like to express a note of deep and sincere gratitude to the Department of Drama and Theatre at Royal Holloway, University of London. Their support of the journal has been unflinching, despite the ongoing threats to financial stability being imposed on universities at the present time. However, it is not just the financial, but also the academic support that needs to be acknowledged and thanked here. Thank you also to our peer reviewers, who generously contribute to the academic rigor of the journal. We would also like to thank Methuen, Performance Research Books and Routledge for providing books for review. We would finally like to offer a special note of thanks to the authors, whose collective efforts have made this issue a great source of pride for all the editorial board.

Paola Crespi, Guest Editor
Adam Alston and Arifani Moyo, Editors

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Notes on Contributors

Matt Cawson has taught theatre for eight years and completed his PhD in Drama and Theatre at Royal Holloway in December 2012, specialising in the history and practice of the theatrical mask and the developing philosophies of selfhood, focusing on classical Greece, the commedia dell'arte and Jacques Lecoq's *masque neutre*.

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Absent Friends: Edward Bond's Corporeal Ghosts

By James Hudson

Abstract
This article provides a genealogy of Edward Bond's use of the ghost in his drama and interrogates the symbolic function which it performs in his political and aesthetic cosmology. It argues that Bond's deployment of the ghost is a signifier of a materialist aesthetic that counter-intuitively embeds these ethereal figures within the corporeal, attributing the same material properties to them as living characters and thereby locating them squarely within his own scheme of affective biopolitics that understands the body as a site upon which the operations of power are painfully inscribed. Using Bond's theoretical postulation of the late-capitalist world as a 'posthumous' society, the article reads Bond's ghosts as the distilled essences of the oppressively dead and dehumanising societies which he believes should be discarded or rejected, while particularly focusing on the unique materiality and specific corporeality that these spectres possess in his plays.

One of the most common tropes in the drama of Edward Bond, consistently deployed from his early works to the present day, is that of the ghost. At first glance the employment of the ethereal might be difficult to reconcile with a writer whose aesthetic and political style is originally derived from a materialist interpretation of the world, grounded in a non-denominational and undogmatic Marxism. Yet perhaps this should not be too surprising. Marx himself pursued many phantoms, fascinated by the vampiric power of dead capital to suck living labour for its own perpetuation, delving to uncover the hidden and elusive presence of surplus value and elucidating the 'metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties' of the commodity (Marx 163). In Bond's drama the ghost is a concrete stage image which frequently enables him to deal in abstractions much like the ones that Marx encountered; the figure of the living dead, either spectral or reanimated, becomes inhabited by metaphorical or emblematic significance and can be understood

as being representative of broader theoretical and philosophical notions in Bond's cosmology. In what follows I will provide an account of the various iterations of the ghost in Bond's *oeuvre* and extrapolate as to their aesthetic operability and political functioning. While much useful scholarship has recently emerged on the cultural relevance of ghosts in contemporary drama, here I shall largely restrict my observations to the importance of the spectral within the framework of Bond's own thought, though my interrogation will place particular focus on the unusually substantive, corporeal presence of the Bondian ghost.

As Stanton B. Garner writes, Bond's is 'a materialism that grounds the political and economic in human corporeality' (158). Throughout his work Bond conducts a consistent engagement with the body as a political unit, as a site upon which the operations of power are inscribed and as the focus of the contest for domination and subjection of the individual. Just as Marx describes in *Capital* how a commodity becomes a 'social hieroglyphic' carrying social relationships that exist between its producers as though 'stamped upon it' (167; 164), so that a material object takes on the significance of social relations, in Bond the human body becomes a commodity which, when exposed to acts of debasement or brutalisation, subsequently becomes a bearer of the stamp of the potential for power to inflict ruinous spoliation on the subject. Originating from his initial explorations of the causes and consequences of violence in society, Bond has developed and refined his political sensitivities and dramaturgical strategies into what Kate Katafiasz describes as 'post-structuralist radicalism' designed to supersede the binary quality of Brechtian hermeneutics, where particular narratives are suspended and abrogated in favour of no less prefabricated and ideological interpretations (237). The result is the calibration of a dramatic practice which displays at every turn appreciation of the importance of 'presence' within performance. This approach has been repeated and replayed in a variety of differentiated contexts across Bond's *oeuvre*, showing him to be a pioneering theoretician of the status of the body in performance and its function in generating meaning and affect.

In this scheme, Bond's use of the ghost posits a set of overlapping dualities which neither cancel out, nor invalidate each other, but rather uneasily coexist: a simultaneous state of being both

alive and dead, where immateriality and spectrality is represented as corporeal presence. It is highly significant to Bond's political scheme that the supplementary symbolic stratum afforded by his ghostly figures is one which generally replicates the preoccupations and presuppositions of the society from which it originates, rather than presenting transcendental or utopian social configurations as alternatives: in Bond's hands, things in the spirit world remain much the same as they are on the ground. Moreover, a curious property of Bond's ghosts is their uncanny corporeality and their stubborn materiality; this is apparent not only in the rudimentary sense of their basic representational status being signified by the body of a performer, but in their designation as physical matter inside the world of the play, being very often tangible, substantial, and susceptible to harm. While less radical, less figurative, less poetic dramatists might accept finitude in a relatively uncomplicated way, one of Bond's most elegant stage metaphors is that some characters both live and die twice: forced to exist, for a time, as spectral residue emblematic of the punitive effects of an unjust society. The word reification, therefore, in its strictest Marxian sense of describing the process whereby the social relations between people take on the form of relations between things, perfectly corresponds with Bond's use of the ghost, where these revenants function as theatricalised reifications of ideology, condensed (dis)embodiments of the corrupt and corrupting societies they inhabit given spectral dramatic shape.

Revealingly, Bond has characterised the contemporary late-capitalist world in terms coterminous with the notion of life being sustained after death. In a radio interview with John Tusa, he describes the superannuation of the postmodernist paradigm in an idiosyncratic yet uncompromising formulation, worth quoting in full:

> What are the consequences about if we say that humanness is created […] and what does that mean. Now I obviously don't believe in anybody called God or anything called God. Supposing however there were a manufacturer of all this, not interested in right and wrong, morality, just a manufacturer who put it together, and this manufacturer, he, she, it or they, are

> up there looking down at us [...] and they look at our world, and they say, well the dogs seem to be doing alright, but there are these other people, human beings, and they have to create their humanness and they have ceased to do it, therefore they are dead, you are dead, I am dead, we live in a society of the dead, not a postmodern society, a posthumous society. We have ceased to create our humanness. Now it is possible for you to go to a hospital and die, and they will put you on a life support machine... What I am saying is that our society, our species, is on a life support thing called technology, it's a life support system. We are kept human at the moment although we are dead, that is we have ceased to create our humanity, by a life support system, and all really, the paraphernalia of modern consumerism are the wreaths we bring to our own funerals. (Bond, 'Interview with John Tusa')

Bond's conception of the late-capitalist world as a 'posthumous' society is very evocative. Capitalist society is able to operate as it does, Bond suggests, because it has an abundance of technology and vast productive capacity which compensates for our failure to organise ourselves rationally, democratically and justly. However, just because we are able to manufacture and produce seemingly *ad infinitum*, it does not necessarily mean that our society is flourishing; quite the opposite, in fact – it means that it has atrophied.

This notion is thoroughly explored throughout Bond's work, where the living can be dead and the dead can be alive. Bond's second play *Saved* (1965) contains no literal stage ghosts but many metaphorical ones. This is a notion articulated by the character of Arthur in *Early Morning* (1968), the play which immediately followed *Saved*, in a description which evokes the spiritual condition of the south London working class of the preceding play in very precise terms:

> Bodies are supposed to die and souls go on living. That's not true. Souls die first and bodies live. They wander round like ghosts, they bump into each other, tread on each other, haunt each other. (209)

The social stalemate of the family in *Saved*, trapped in a permanent state of resentment and hostility, is comparable to the eternity of mutual laceration experienced by the dead trio of souls in Sartre's *No Exit* (1944), except while Sartre's is a thesis play which elucidates the calcifying effect of bad faith on the human subject, Bond's play is an account of the social paralysis engendered through the cultural deprivation of the working class and the accompanying lack of self-determination of their political lives. Of the play's notorious baby-stoning incident, Malcolm Hay and Philip Roberts write that 'the child in the pram is dead long before scene six […] a dead thing being assaulted by other dead things' (51). The characters that stone the baby to death are emotionally and culturally dead, unable to connect with the baby as a human being; the baby itself is a dead thing, destined to grow up culturally deprived and into a total absence of prospects: it is, in effect, 'saved' from its own life. Near the end of the play, where Harry visits Len in his bedroom in scene twelve, he is actually dressed as a ghost, wearing white clothes and with a white bandage on his head, a living ghost, with Len implicitly the only living person in the play at that point. Though Harry's gentle encouragement convinces Len to stay with the family, the ghostly intervention Bond mounts here is not a panacea, couched as it is in the reactionary sentiment that Len lacks proper perspective because 'yer never killed yer man' (*Saved* 128).*

In Bond's next play, *Early Morning*, the dead Albert rises from his grave and tells Arthur that 'the living haunt the dead' (167), urging him to avenge his death in a parody of the scene in *Hamlet* where Hamlet meets his father's ghost. While the ghosts of *Saved* were metaphorical, *Early Morning* literalises the notion of a dead society by creating a world populated by ghosts who are, ironically, haunted by the living Arthur. The society in *Early Morning* is astonishingly depraved but regulated according to what Bond described at this stage in his career as 'social morality'.

* Harry, though alive, is given the most superficially obvious and immediately recognisable supernatural signification of all of Bond's ghost characters as a deliberate echo of the Jacobean stage ghost, a figure of great importance to Bond in the history of drama since it mediates between fiction and reality.

This, for Bond, is the means used to maintain the social metabolism of capitalist culture, which works by harnessing and institutionalising the violence its own injustices perpetuate:

> An unjust society causes and defines crime; and an aggressive social structure which is unjust and must create aggressive social disruption, receives the moral sanction of being 'law and order'. Law and order is one of the steps taken to maintain injustice. (*Lear* 5)

In Bond's diagnosis, this is the sanctioning of hierarchical domination, class oppression and competitive capitalism under the alibi of law and order designed to curb and control the supposedly negative and virulent danger that 'human nature' poses to civilisation. In *Early Morning* these coercive ideologies of the ruling class are articulated through an anachronistic confection of Victorian era personages presiding over an absurd society where queue jumpers for the cinema are summarily eaten and the culprits are models of docility in submitting to their execution by hanging.

When Arthur pursues this society's demented, ouroboros-like logic to its absolute conclusions he manages to orchestrate the death of the inhabitants of the entire world. However, in an image which is umbilical to Arthur's own status as a conjoined twin, even as he celebrates his success of setting everyone 'free', the ghosts of the people that he has killed slowly rise up: '*The ghosts move apart. They are joined together like a row of paper cut-out men*' (*Early Morning* 195-96, original emphasis). There has been no victory, no release and the dead remain shackled to their corrosive ideology. In scene sixteen, Arthur is admitted into heaven and absorbed into the ethereal collective, forced again to live in the society he tried to destroy. In a grotesque twist he finds that the competitive ideals of the former society have become horribly universalised. Heaven is imaged as a place of cannibalism where the dead consume each other, and yet those still beholden to Victorian social morality see it as a place of inexhaustible plenitude and endless satiety. It is a concrete figuration of Bond's notion of a 'posthumous' society, one where a superabundance of sustenance and ostensible material comfort occludes and elides humane compunction and rational consideration. Nonetheless, the cannibalistic ghosts

may only ever achieve temporary respite from hunger and with the final act of the play being Victoria working out a schedule by which the inhabitants of heaven are to eat each other, the image is of a society, as in *Saved*, of stasis rather than progress. The ghosts in *Early Morning* are the vicious mores of 'social morality' given concrete manifestation, dead ideas embodied in material form. Indeed, the title of the play is itself a pun on pronouncing death prematurely, of life going on beyond its prescribed boundaries, with Bond implicitly drawing equivalence between lived experience according to the competitive demands of capitalist society and the cannibalistic mutual parasitism of the ghosts in the play.

In the 'Author's Preface' to *Lear*, Bond again castigates the lifelessness and inertia of an irrational society that saw its problems only in terms of symptoms rather than causes: 'Like ghosts we teach a dead religion, build a few more prisons to worship Caesar in, and leave it at that' (11). In the play, Bond again employs a ghost as a phantasmagorical semblance of social pressures produced by particular ideologies. In this instance the ghost is the Gravedigger's Boy who is killed by soldiers fighting for Lear's daughters, Bodice and Fontanelle, in the aftermath of the civil war that ousts the autocratic, eponymous king from the throne. The ghost first appears to Lear in the cell to which he is consigned by his daughters while Lear is undergoing a significant mental collapse. He is a figure who evokes Edgar in the guise of Poor Tom from Shakespeare's original *King Lear*, establishing a rapport with Lear based on mutual consolation of their accumulated woes, the pathos in the bond which develops becoming an indication of Lear's burgeoning apprehension of human awareness and capacity for empathy.

When alive, the Gravedigger's Boy had dealt with Lear with humanity and compassion, sheltering and feeding the fugitive king and asking nothing in return. In death, however, he becomes progressively immature and infantilised, increasingly emotionally dependent on the former king in a way which echoes Shakespeare's Lear's pathetic and childlike supplications to Cordelia to withdraw together from the depredations of the world: 'Come, let's away to prison. / We two alone will sing like birds i'the' cage' (V:III 8-9). Significantly, the apparition describes his state of existence in terms of its corporeality:

> When I died I went somewhere. I don't know where it was. And then I started to rot, like a body in the ground. Look at my hands, they're like an old man's. They're withered. I'm young but my stomach's shrivelled up and the hair's turned white. Look at my arms! Feel how thin I am! (LEAR *doesn't move*.) Are you afraid to touch me? (56)

Lear is able to touch the ghost, who appears to be afflicted with the symptoms of old age. As the play progresses, stage directions indicate that he is to become progressively more emaciated and dishevelled.

The ghost accompanies Lear on his release from prison, but even in his spectral form he is not immune to the effects of the social cataclysm that Lear has unleashed. Bond figures the ghost as Lear's phantasmagorical double and sets them on the same path; yet while Lear's journey is the gradual adagio of the apprehension of insight, emotional maturity and enhanced political consciousness, the Gravedigger's Boy flinches from such things. The ghost is an incarnation of Lear's escapist temptations to secede from an active engagement with the political and social world and retreat into seclusion and nostalgia. Thereafter, however, Lear's journey is one towards the reclamation of his humanity and part of this is the necessary repudiation of the ghost's retrograde and pessimistic entreaties.

The Gravedigger's Boy's ghost is another of Bond's dead characters, like the occupants of the society of *Saved* or the dead of *Early Morning*, that embody acceptance and passivity, without a concept of the future, pathologically incapable of planning or projecting beyond their present immanent moment. When protagonists like Arthur or Lear attempt to live authentically or in a politically effective fashion, the dead that accompany these live characters function as apologists for the status quo, endorse redundant courses of (in)action and, in short, deny the necessity of and possibility for remedial social change. At the moment that Lear commits himself to active resistance and emancipatory action against the reactionary folly of Cordelia, the resistance leader, to rebuild the wall he himself had ordered the construction of, the ghost dies horribly, gored to death by his own pigs.

The most radical affirmation of Bond's 'Author's Preface' to *Lear* is not merely that capitalism's sanctioning of certain forms of violence actually saturates society and metastasises into other forms of social aggression, but the more commonplace observation that the permanent threat of nuclear destruction as 'deterrent' postulates an immediate threat to the survival of the species:

> Violence shapes and obsesses our society, and if we do not stop being violent we have no future. People who do not want writers to write about violence want to stop them writing about us and our time. It would be immoral not to write about violence. (*Lear* 3)

Bond's extrapolation that humankind has no future is not intended figuratively. It is an acknowledgement of the immediate, ineluctable and omnipresent threat that the use of nuclear weapons could instantly extirpate human life from the face of the planet. In *The War Plays* and its surrounding commentary, this theme of a society having foreclosed on its future reaches a critical mass in Bond's *oeuvre*. In this trilogy, the recrudescence of the figure of the ghost allows Bond not just to serve the *beaujolais nouveaux* within an existing supply of bottles, but to continue to use forceful aesthetic means to articulate the idea that urgent action and change is required because the contradictions inherent in capitalism's brutalising tendencies, shackled to the instruments of apocalypse, have already presented us with a *fait accompli*. In inscribing antagonism and threat into fundamental human relations, the nuclear deterrent actually creates a self-fulfilling prophecy where annihilation can be the only possible result, as Bond argued in a piece he wrote for *The Guardian* just prior to the 1987 general election, revealingly entitled 'A Vote for the Living':

> Even if for a while nuclear deterrence worked, it would still be a defeat. We would have taught our children a form of politics that must end in disaster. Our chance is unique. If we fail to get rid of nuclear bombs, we make it far harder for them to do so. And if, long after we are dead, millions of them are killed by nuclear bombs, we will have pressed the button in our graves. (19)

The character of the Monster, the central protagonist of the first part of the trilogy, *Red Black and Ignorant*, embodies this image of thwarted potential perfectly, an individual who never had a chance so aptly commensurate with a society blindly fixated on self-destruction. He is the charred and blackened adult ghost of an unborn child destroyed while in the womb by the nuclear blast of a future apocalypse. Thus, he has been both killed and never born and yet still he has had a life. An incinerated foetus, he is a temporal and ontological paradox; he is, according to Bond, 'a man who has never been born recount[ing] the life he did not lead' (*War Plays* 343). In another *Guardian* article in which Bond castigated the Social Democrat Party (SDP) leader David Owen for his pusillanimous stance on nuclear weapons, Bond also took the opportunity to refer to the Monster, adducing the character's experience within the play as an argument against the retention and development of nuclear weapons:

> His 'ghost' comments on the people who, to preserve freedom condemned him and millions of others to the perpetual imprisonment of death. He argues that a society that invests and labours to make that possible, and gambles on having to do it, ought not be called civilization. That would be the greatest double-think. It should be given its proper name: barbarism. (Bond, 'Imagine Owen' 9)

In the play the Monster narrates the action and provides an authorial perspective, making the audience aware that he has not survived the nuclear apocalypse that he describes, and that as a result the events they are to witness are 'scenes from the life I did not live' (*War Plays* 5). Again, the evocation is of an ontological order liminally balanced between existence and non-existence, another application of the simultaneity of life and death within the 'posthumous' society. At the end of a nine-section piece that presents a series of iterations modelled in a repeated structure of exposition, enactment and reflection, the Monster is killed by his own son, a soldier, who has returned home with orders to kill one person on his street to reduce the population enough to alleviate hunger and prevent food rioting. As with the Gravedigger's Boy

in *Lear*, it is the second time that the Monster has died in the play. The Monster then makes a posthumous speech in which he gives his endorsement to the parricide, exhorting the audience to praise his son 'as you would the first wheel' (*War Plays* 38). Where the Gravedigger's Boy, though vulnerable and pathetic, was a figure that came to espouse a cynical and defeatist view of the world, the Monster is a character whom Bond allows dignity and quiet authority. He is the first of Bond's ghost figures that evokes empathy: the first with a conception of temporality and finitude and the first with genuine moral consciousness. Indeed, he is perhaps the closest to a *raisonneur* figure to appear in all of Bond's plays.

In *Born*, first performed in 2006, Bond mounted perhaps his most ambitious engagement with the trope of the living dead. *Born* is set in an authoritarian future society where riot police are engaged in taking people from their homes and loading them onto trucks for transportation to an unspecified destination. Donna and Peter are Luke's parents who initially try to help him escape the rounding up, only to discover that he is part of the operation and a member of the police. Luke, dehumanised to the point of disavowing his familial ties and in a condition of total identification with the nihilistic dictates of his role, effects the seizure and removal of his parents from their home and then, with his unit, murders a mother and her baby who are apprehended when trying to abscond from the convoy. Subsequently separated from his squad, he is carried by his father back to the family home. Here the audience encounter Donna in the act of spoon-feeding a large number of dead bodies that carpet the floor of the ruined house, caring for, fussing over and addressing the dead as if they are alive, walking amongst them with a ladle and bowl. When Donna brings the corpse of the woman that Luke previously killed into the room, she speaks to Luke and slowly the dead return to life, standing up as one collective entity and gradually assembling the woman's baby from its constituent body parts. Luke appeals to the crowd of the dead to tell him, 'somethin that makes sense a' the life I 'ave t' live!' (*Born* 61), but the dead do not respond. Suddenly the scene devolves into a depiction of horrific carnage as Peter returns in full riot gear and begins beating the dead remorselessly, forcing them to move the table and chair back to the position near the window that they had originally occupied in the first scene twenty

years before. When Peter kicks out at the dead, Bond's stage directions indicate: '*They rise slowly to their feet. They have become KZ Muselmänner. They move with age-old weariness*' (*Born* 63). Bond's dead are envisaged as inmates of Nazi concentration camps, a category of person reduced to inhumanity, the 'living dead', deprived of the capacity for human engagement, resigned to their death. Stage directions describe the table as '*as heavy as if the world stood on it*' (63) and the dead that collapse from exhaustion are beaten with rods by other *Muselmänner* corpses until the scene collapses into frenzy as the dead collectively engage in an orgy of self-destruction. The dead fall and are killed again; as they inexorably accomplish the task of moving the table there appears to be no distinction between those that do the work and those that punish the others. When it is over, Peter and Donna escape, but Luke stays with the dead. He is executed by his former squad mates, who, in the last act of the play, open up their guns and fire on the dead: 'Shootin the dead's fulfillin' (67).

In this extraordinary *coup de théâtre*, Bond's use of the figure of the *Muselmann* foregrounds the conjunction between the constantly redeployed trope of the living dead in his plays and the nuclei of ideas in his theoretical writings associated with the difficulty of producing what he terms 'humanness' or 'human values' in a 'posthumous' society, with the absolute condition that these human values must be collectively realised if the species is to survive. As Giorgio Agamben suggests, conditions in the Nazi concentration camps were generative of a determinative methodology for identification of the human and inhuman, as, since the *Muselmänner* had evacuated all trace of their personality and were resigned to extermination by the Nazis, they were therefore held in disdain within the camps and became pariahs. Reflecting on Jean Amery's definition of the *Muselmann* as 'the prisoner who was giving up and was given up by his comrades, [who] no longer had room in his consciousness for the contrasts good or bad, noble or base, intellectual or unintellectual' (41), Agamben states that the *Muselmänner* had 'marked the moving threshold in which man passed into non-man' (47). For Agamben, the *Muselmann* is the 'complete witness' (47) of the camps who occupies an interstitial realm between the human and inhuman.

In *Born* the *Muselmänner* provide a strict corollary to

the figure of Luke, who, though an inhuman enforcer of the state administered brutality, struggles throughout the play to open up the minimal fraction of psychic distance between himself and his acts, to assert the latent kernel of residual humanity inside him which resists the role of unquestioning authority. Like Len, Lear and Arthur, he strives to assert this humanity in the face of tremendous pressure to conform. Of course, the corporeal dead in *Born* are brutalised and suffer, but the enigmatic employment of the figure of the *Muselmann* presents us with a similar irresolvable problem: neither alive nor dead, human nor inhuman, they are in this play neither wholly blameless nor absolute victims. They batter, bludgeon and shoot each other, like all of Bond's other ghosts, dying again and again, figures of abjection, devoid of hope, their humanity utterly extinguished. Again, as with *Early Morning*, the society of the dead preys on itself. Nonetheless, this vivid scene perhaps best illustrates one of Bond's most oft-repeated definitions of drama: that it fundamentally concerns, to equal degree, 'the kitchen table and the edge of the universe' (Bond 'Notebook'). In this play it is the *Muselmänner*, those at the 'extreme situation' (Agamben 48), that perform the task of moving the kitchen table; it is only the dead, metaphorical and supposedly incorporeal, that manage to do what none of the living characters are able to accomplish themselves.

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Corporeality and Subversion in Post-Renaissance Italy: The Inquisition and the Commedia dell'Arte

By Matt Cawson

Abstract
This article explores the links between the emergence of the commedia dell'arte and the Holy Roman Inquisition, examining the historical and theological context of anti-corporeality within Catholic doctrine. I begin by identifying the philosophical background to Cartesian dualism, establishing it in the pre-Socratic tradition of Orphism and Pythagoreanism and argue that the real impact of body-mind dualism on the common man came not from theological or philosophical enquiry, but from the anti-corporeal doctrine of the Inquisition. I argue that the commedia dell'arte emerged as a reaction against this anti-corporealism and within its form, particularly through the mask, embodied deeply anathematic, fundamentally heretical principles. Its impunity from Inquisitorial persecution lay in exactly that which made it anathema: the mask and the body. Its avoidance of the written word beyond innocuous scenarios, its emphasis on improvisation, physicality and the pantomimic virtuosity of its performers, made censorship almost impossible. I explore the Church's attitudes towards the mask as demonic and identify within the masks the key cardinal vices, particularly Pride and Covetousness which, according to theologian Thomas Aquinas, are the very roots of heresy. I suggest that the commedia dell'arte rendered corporeality the very locus of potential criticality and subversion within pre-Enlightenment Italy.

In writing about the mask, much focus is given to the centrality of the body and as such the mask and corporeality would seem a natural, even obvious, topic. However, the religious and philosophical context is widely neglected as a critical perspective. Interest in the commedia dell'arte tends to be either performative or historical, the latter of which veers towards theatrical genealogy (Nicoll), political interpretation (Tessari; Taviani; Ferrone; amongst

others), or aesthetic and/or documentary (Katritzky, Richards and Richards, Pandolfi, Castagno, etc.). No approaches I am aware of address the religio-philosophical context in which the commedia operated, or whence it emerged. This article seeks not to redress that balance, but rather looks to act as a provocation and to suggest an alternative perspective that may prove highly illuminating when examining the commedia dell'arte as an historico-cultural phenomenon. In this article, I look at the emergence of the Roman Inquisition and the commedia dell'arte as directly related phenomena, focusing on Italy, particularly the Papal States. I explore the theological backdrop to Cartesian dualism, the philosophical proposition that the mind and the body exist as two distinct and exclusive entities – a dualism entrenched in Catholic theology – and argue that the commedia dell'arte emerged as a counter-cultural response to the dominant papal ideology, placing the body, with all its carnal appetites and vices, at the heart of existence. The commedia was born and died along with the Inquisition, which, I contend, is no coincidence and important links between them have yet to be fully explored – I know of no extant literature on this subject. From a historical perspective, corporeality, arguably demonstrated at its most heightened and theatrical form in the mask, represents not a challenge to criticality, but in fact the very opposite. It offers demonstrably valid tools with which to critically, actively and meaningfully engage with the world, even when both criticality and corporeality are considered heretical.

Anti-corporealism (the rejection of the body in favour of the mind or soul) has a long tradition in Western philosophy. Body-soul dualism can be found in ancient Greece even before Socrates; the body as the temporary flesh to a transmigratory daemon can be found in the thought of Pythagoras (see Xenophanes fr.7) and, later, Empedocles (*Purifications* DK115) and the notion of the divine, eternal soul juxtaposed with the profane, mortal body is a central tenet of the Orphic tradition. In Plato's *Phaedo*, we are told that Socrates spoke of 'freeing' the soul 'from the chains of the body' (67d). In fact, according to Socrates, 'the soul of the philosopher greatly despises the body' (65d). Aristotle likewise thought there was a fundamental dualism at the heart of human existence, between substance (body) and form (soul), the latter being the sum total of the being and its capabilities (*De Anima* 2.1).

In Part 1 of this article, I establish the historical and philosophical background and explore the consequences of Greek dualism on Christian theology and the essential anti-corporealism it embodies. I trace the evolution of the Inquisition(s) in order to establish some key aspects of the anti-corporealism of Catholic doctrine and establish Thomas Aquinas as the key theologian in the formation of subsequent Inquisitorial edicts. In Part 2, I move on to the Roman Inquisition and identify some key aspects of this anti-corporeal theology in relation to the commedia dell'arte and argue that the commedia represents a counter-cultural reaction against this.

My methodology is to identify key historical, theological, and philosophical shifts in order to provide an overview of the epistemic conditions that gave birth to these two phenomena and then to examine some key ways in which they interrelate. As a result, I focus exclusively on extra-theatrical factors. It should be noted that what is presented represents an overview of a much larger area of research, which is impossible to explore in full detail here. As such, there is inevitably a wealth of material that has not been marshalled and alternative perspectives that have not been addressed. It is with these not insignificant limitations in mind that the reader is advised to proceed.

Part 1: The Historico-Theological Background to the Roman Inquisition

The Inquisition is generally split into three waves. The first wave (medieval, twelfth century) was aimed at rooting out Albigenses, Cathars, Waldensians and other such Christian variations. The second wave (Spanish, established 1478) was directed against converted Jews and Muslims (*conversos*) in the Spanish territories who were suspected of reverting to their former heretical practices. Spain was the most powerful empire of the times; in 1519, Charles I of the Spanish Empire became Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire, rendering him by far the most powerful man in Europe. Italy was divided into various states and ruled by various rulers. At the time of the Lutheran Reformation, the devoutly Catholic Charles V ruled over Sicily and Naples in the south of Italy and Milan in the north. The third wave was the Holy Roman Inquisition, established in 1542, and aimed at Catholics suspected of Protestantism.

The Background: Theology, Heresy and Body-Mind Dualism

Article two of the twelve key articles of faith in the Apostle's Creed includes belief in 'the resurrection of the flesh, [and] eternal life' (Kelly 399). The belief is that the dead will rise, body and soul, on Judgement Day. Central to this doctrine is the distinction between body and soul, such as is found in the thinking of Platonic Socrates and Aristotle. Anyone who did not accord with Roman Catholic doctrine was considered a heretic and in 1252 Pope Innocent IV, in the bull *Ad Extirpanda*, declared the extirpation of heresy to be the chief duty of the State. This bull formally introduced torture into the proceedings (violence, or *hupōpiazō*, is sanctioned in 1 Corinthians 9:27) and prescribed burning at the stake as the ultimate punishment for relapsed heretics (Burman 41), a punishment that would become the *modus operandi* of subsequent Inquisitorial executions. The Church's stance against the body was perhaps nowhere more gruesomely – or theatrically – apparent than in these public executions. The key reason behind this method of execution, apart from the power of spectacle, was theological and in full accordance with article two of the Apostles' Creed: by burning the body, it is entirely annihilated, leaving the soul with nothing to embody, thus condemning it to an eternity without the possibility of redemption (Bethencourt 286). Even the dead were exhumed and burned in order to inflict this punishment (Burman 48; Thomsett 177). In 1264, the Italian Dominican priest and theologian, Thomas Aquinas, stated in *Summa Theologica** (hereafter *ST*) that a heretic is 'one who devises or follows false or new opinions' and who deserves the death penalty (II:II 11). However, the Church could not officially execute someone; it must be seen to show mercy. Instead, in a manner perversely reminiscent of the priests handing Jesus over to the Romans for crucifixion, the Church, after excommunicating a heretic, 'delivers him to the secular tribunal to be exterminated thereby from the world by death' (*ST* II:II 11), thereby keeping the Pope's hands 'clean', allowing the later defence that the Holy Church has never executed anyone (Bethencourt 281). Nevertheless, for the common man, the reality was terrifyingly clear.

* Perhaps the most important theological text in Roman Catholic doctrine after the Bible, and became a key reference for Inquisitor's manuals.

Aquinas, following the medieval scholastic tradition of aligning Aristotelian philosophy with Catholic doctrine, was to interpret Aristotle's *On the Soul* by identifying the intellect as something not tied to the body in the way, say, hunger was, but as something separate, a quality of the soul rather than the body (*ST* I.76). He states: 'the human soul, *which is called the intellect or the mind*, is something incorporeal and subsistent' (I.75, my emphasis). This is an important theological point: body-soul dualism at this point is the same as body-mind dualism. This duality is present in the Bible, which states explicitly that body and soul are not only distinct, but *opposed* to one another (Galatians 5:17); it speaks of the original divinity of the soul as the breath of God (Genesis 2:7) versus the corruptibility of the flesh (Romans 8: 7-8). Anti-corporealism was woven into the fabric of Western European thinking.

The actual number of heretics burned at the stake is subject to much dispute, but Bethencourt offers a conservative estimate of around 16,000 burned by the Spanish and Roman Inquisitions alone (444). However, the theatricality of the whole public ceremony, known as the *auto-da-fé*, or 'act of faith', culminating in the burning of heretics, renders the actual number of victims less important than the inevitable impact of these *autos-da-fé* on the public psyche (Johnson 87). Furthermore, if we combine the terror evoked by the Inquisition with that of the witch-hunts, which were effectively an extension of the Inquisition, we may begin to understand the climate of religious fear that prevailed in Europe at that time. In 1484, six years after the inception of the Spanish Inquisition, and almost sixty years prior to its Roman counterpart, Pope Innocent VIII issued the papal bull *Summis Desiderantes Affectibus* (Desiring with Supreme Ardour) in response to a request by Inquisitor and Dominican friar Heinrich Kramer, which officially recognised the existence of witches and authorised the Inquisition to persecute them, threatening non-compliant authorities with excommunication. Witch-hunting manuals, like the infamous *Malleus Maleficarum* (1487) written by Kramer, were modelled on Inquisitor's handbooks and the means of torture and execution were often remarkably similar. There are surviving records of hundreds of witch trials from Venice, Milan, Naples and

Udine in the first half of the sixteenth century (Martin 88-89).* The theatricality of such persecutions set the stage for the Roman Inquisition; the reputation had been burned so deeply into the collective psyche over the past three and a half centuries that the very word 'Inquisition' struck terror into the hearts of the people and it is to this that we now turn.

Part 2: The Holy Roman Inquisition and the Commedia dell'Arte

The Roman Inquisition was established by Pope Paul III in 1542. Its great innovation was the shift from persecuting heretical *deeds*, such as the performance of non-Catholic rituals and worship as was the case with its Spanish counterpart, to persecuting heretical *thoughts*: the mind, after all, is equivalent with the soul. The targets of the Roman Inquisition were reformers, especially Lutherans, though more generally anyone who dared question the doctrine of the Papal Church, directly or indirectly. As a direct result of this, the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries became known as the 'age of dissimulation' and led the Venetian friar and outspoken critic of the papacy, Paolo Sarpi (1552-1623), to write: 'In other centuries, hypocrisy was not uncommon, but in this one it pervades everything' (qtd. in Johnson 87); 'I am compelled to wear a mask. Perhaps there is no one in Italy who can survive without one' (87). Thus a dissimulative duality of self became a necessity, a matter of survival that reified the division between the internal (mind) and the external (body). It is from this theological landscape that the commedia dell'arte emerged, not as somehow disconnected from its vehemently anti-corporeal surroundings, but as a direct result of and in demonstrable opposition to them.

The first known professional troupe of *comici* was registered in Padua, which was under Venetian rule, in 1545, three years after the establishment of the Holy Roman Inquisition and in the same year that the Council of Trent, established by Paul III at the behest of Charles V, established the tenets of the Counter Reformation (Tracy 204). In order to identify the commedia's

* See Christopher S. Mackay's introduction to his translation of the *Malleus Maleficarum* for a scholarly account of the witch hunts, which, unlike the Inquisition, were not exclusive to the Catholic Church. Cf. Robert Thurston's *The Witch Hunts*.

position *contra* the Inquisition, we cannot examine its content textually, it being a largely improvised form. Moreover, from the *canovacci* (basic scenarios or plot-outlines) that have survived,* the topic of religion would seem to be avoided entirely, at least in written form, and for good reason; in 1559, the Inquisition published its *Index Autorum et Librorum Prohibitorum* (Index of Prohibited Books and Authors), highlighting the grave dangers of the written word. In 1600, under Pope Clement VIII, the eminent Italian philosopher and Dominican Friar, Giordano Bruno, was burned at the stake in Rome for his pantheistic beliefs.

This danger was compounded by the linguistic challenges faced by touring troupes who would play to audiences with whom they did not share a common language. The solution lay in their physicality: their means of performance transcended language barriers by virtue of the bestially caricatured mask and their remarkable pantomimic skills. In the face of Inquisitorial censorship in an age where to dissent or even question Church doctrine could be fatal, the commedia was perhaps alone immune. Interpretation of gesture lies with the interpreter and can be readily denied by the performer (naturally, no one who was seen to enjoy subversive entertainments would testify to seditious content to an Inquisitorial tribunal without fear of implicating themselves). Moreover, no physical script exists beyond the *canovaccio*; the *canovacci* would never implicate the performers. The freedom of this performance style renders the body as the locus of potential criticality. But how do we know it was used in such a way? To answer this, we only need to look at the masks as both objects and characters.** I will begin by examining the mask as object and then proceed to identify in each character the anathematic essence of the cardinal vices.

Corporeality: Demonic Transformation, the Mask and the Cardinal Vices

The mask may be said to have two essential functions. Firstly, as was

* See for example Cotticelli and Heck's *The Commedia dell'Arte* in Naples and Scala's *Scenarios*.

** Masks were prohibited on Christian feast days and in churches (Johnson 50, 106), though the fact that they were tolerated the rest of the time meant that Inquisitors could not use masks alone as damning.

later explored at length by the likes of Meyerhold, Copeau, Strehler and Lecoq, the removal of facial expressions emphasises the performer's physicality: the corporeality of the performer is perhaps never more acutely accentuated than when masked.* The highly physical, often acrobatic nature of the commedia dell'arte is testament to this (Henke 12). Secondly, it acts as an agent of transformation; the performer's physical appearance is visually transformed, which, according to neuroanthropoligists Laughlin and Laughlin, alters the body image to such an extent that it operates according to different neural pathways, effectively creating a new, or at least neurologically transformed being ('How Masks Work' 74). The stock characters of the commedia each have their own specific physicality and strongly bestial appearance,** which in turn drives the performer according to their particular appetitive impulses. Even those practitioners, like Trestle Theatre's John Wright, who deny the more mystical possibilities of the transformative mask (at least in a secular culture), require that a performer removes the mask when receiving instructions on the grounds that *you cannot tell a mask what to do* ('School for Masks'). Commedia practitioner and former protégé of both Dario Fo and Ferruccio Soleri,*** Antonio Venturino, who likewise takes an anti-mystical view of

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* Indeed, this denial of physiognomic expressivity was what led Goldoni to reform the Italian theatre and expel the mask from the stage, claiming 'the soul under a mask is like a fire under ashes' (*Memoirs* 314).

** Descriptions of the masks are widely available; the two standard modern-day works on the subject are Rudlin's *Commedia dell'Arte: An Actor's Handbook* and Fava's *The Comic Mask in the Commedia dell'Arte*. Whilst these refer to modern-day interpretations, early pictorial representations (Katritzky, *passim*), as well as the earliest surviving Arlecchino mask from the 17th century (Driesen 172), show strongly bestial features, more so even than today's versions, which are stripped of the thick black hair that used to frame the mask.

*** Soleri was trained by Moretti, and was the second of Giorgio Strehler's two Arlecchinos in the long-running and seminal revival of Goldoni's *Servant of Two Masters*.

the mask, states that 'when the mask is on, it is only the mask; Antonio is no longer here' (Personal Interview). The maxim 'you do not wear the mask, the mask wears you' perfectly articulates the transformative power of the mask.

The long-established demonic associations of the mask are perhaps best illustrated by the Dominican friar, John de Bromyard, who said in 1360 that only criminals and actors wear masks 'beneath which players are disguised; in the same way demons, whose sport is to destroy souls […], employ masks' (qtd. in Tydeman 260). The physical and transformative aspects of the mask were for many a source of grave concern during the time of the Inquisition. The *Malleus Maleficarum* expressly forbids masks on the grounds that any agent of transformation is the agent of Satan (207). In 1605, Tommaso Garzoni, one of the most important commentators of the day, claimed that the 'first mask ever worn was, without doubt, that of the serpent's face worn by the dark angel to persuade Eve to commit the first sin' (Tessari 27, my translation). Even in England, where the mask was less prevalent, playwright and Catholic convert Thomas Lodge, in *Wits, Miserie, and the World's Madnesse: Discovering the Devils Incarnat of this Age* (1596), identified the brutish *zanni* of the Italian theatre as a particularly pernicious influence:

> Let this suffise for babling, for here marcheth forth SCURILITIE, (as untoward a Devill as any of the rest) the first time he lookt out of Italy into England, it was in the habite of a Zani: This is an onely fellow for making faces, shewing lascivious gestures, singing like the Great Organ pipe in Poules, counterfaiting any deformitie you can devise, and perfect in the most unchristian abhominations of Priapisme. (88)

The phrase 'most unchristian abhominations of Priapisme' highlights the carnality of these masked characters. Whilst no extant scenarios expressly address the Inquisition or indeed any ecclesiastical matters—it is difficult to imagine that any such scenarios ever existed—it seems highly unlikely that such matters were never alluded to in the improvised performances. Even without this speculation, it is inescapable that the characters themselves

(known as *maschere*, or 'masks' rather than 'characters') were directly anathema to Catholic doctrine. Whilst the highly physical nature of the performances, combined with their scatological, bawdy and carnal content celebrates the body, the appetitive nature of the masks celebrates its vices, albeit via lampoon.

We are reminded here of Bakhtin's formulation of the grotesque, which is the underlying aesthetic of the carnivalesque: 'Two types of imagery reflecting the conception of the world would meet here at a crossroads; one of them ascends to the folk culture of humour, while the other is the bourgeois conception of the atomised being' (24). We must remember of course that Bakhtin's paradigm is a political construct. According to David Wiles, the carnivalesque for Bakhtin was derived from Pushkin's historiographically unsound interpretation of the market square and the fairground booth as public performance spaces (92-95). We may likewise see the 'crossroads' as between the somatic and the spiritual. Bakhtin's grotesque is a world that rejects traditional aesthetics, exaggerates and disfigures as well as unites in a sense of folkloristic magic and the transgression of natural boundaries. Bakhtin says the mask is 'the most complex theme of folk culture. The mask is connected with the joy of change and reincarnation, with gay relativity and with the merry negation of uniformity and similarity; it rejects conformity to oneself. […] It reveals the essence of the grotesque' (39-40). In other words, the transgression of boundaries that the mask (and the grotesque in general) embodies inherently defies the dichotomous approach of body-mind separation in favour of a continual synthesis of becoming. The commedia dell'arte, as carnivalesque celebration, dissolves and rejects traditional boundaries and as such exists in opposition to Catholic doctrine. It is worth clarifying this point: what the commedia rejects is not the soul *per se*, but the dichotomy; it rejects the anti-corporeal by celebrating the corporeal: the physical, appetitive, and vice-ridden body. The masks' connections with the seven 'capital vices', established by Pope Gregory I, c.590 (Climacus 201), are in many ways, I contend, definitive.* They can be related as follows:

* For a theological exploration of the seven capital vices, see Aquinas *ST*, I-II, 84.4.

Pride:	all, but especially Capitano, Pantalone, Dottore, *innamorati*
Envy:	Pantalone, Capitano, Brighella; Pulcinella
Anger:	Pantalone, Brighella; Pulcinella
Sloth:	Pulcinella/zanni
Covetousness:	all, but especially Pantalone, Brighella, Pulcinella and Arlecchino
Gluttony:	Dottore, Arlecchino/zanni
Lust:	all, but especially Pantalone, Arlecchino and (arguably) the *innamorati*.

Aquinas asserts that the vices of Pride and Covetousness are the root of all heresies (*ST* II:II, 11.1) which, along with carnal Lust, are the very essence of Christian anathema. Such links were apparent at the time, as commedia actor Niccolò Barbieri (inventor of the masks of Beltrame and Scapino) wrote in *La Supplica*: 'God above – as if one could reform a sinful man without identifying his vices or showing his ugliness' (35, my translation). That Arlecchino should emerge as the appetitive, carnival spirit of the commedia dell'arte, with his infernal associations of carnality, fornication, gender-swapping (Duchartre 56-57), necromancy and magic (Martinelli; Gherardi *passim*) – all explicitly condemned by various Inquisitorial edicts – suggests a demonic force from the annals of European folklore (Driesen *passim*). Interestingly, as many have noted (e.g., Fo 46), a precursor to Arlecchino may well be found in Dante's *Inferno*, in which we encounter the farcical demon, Alichino (canto 21, line 118). Moreover, both Dario Fo and mask-maker Donato Sartori, son of Amleto (responsible for the reinvention of the leather commedia mask in the 1950s), suggest that the traditional wart on the Arlecchino mask is the broken horn of the Devil (Fo 23; cf Bell 87-88). Napier, on the other hand, suggests a pagan 'third eye' (135-87). Either way, it remains anathema. Likewise, Goldoni's *Servant of Two Masters* (1753), considered at once the pinnacle and the death knell for the commedia, is titled *contra* biblical edict ('No man can serve two masters […]. Ye cannot serve God and mammon' (Matthew 6:24)). The conceptual space occupied by the commedia is consistently and fundamentally contrary to Inquisitorial

dogma through its base, appetitive and exclusively corporeal nature. A survey of the extant commedia *canovacci* shows that anything pertaining to the metaphysical is repeatedly shown to be the result of trickery at the expense of the credulous victim.* The theological question of the soul is never directly refuted. Rather, the commedia dell'arte occupies an anathematic space to the anti-corporealism of Catholic doctrine, making the corporeal its sole focus that theatrically, if not doctrinally, negates anything outside the world of the body.

Conclusion

Inquisitorial censorship signalled the end of the Italian Renaissance, leading the English poet John Milton to plead to the English Parliament, after visiting the imprisoned Galileo Galilei in 1638, not to exercise the same powers of censorship as Italy, 'where this kind of inquisition terrorizes [… and] had damped the glory of Italian wits' (*Areopagitica* 40). Such 'wits', I suggest, were perhaps not so much damped as forced to find another form and another language – the language of the body – driven from the incriminatory page and onto the ephemeral stage of the *commedia all'improvviso*. In terms of body-mind (as soul) dualism, if we view the Inquisition as the monstrous face of human spirituality and its relentless enmity against the body, we can view the commedia as the grotesque face of human corporeality and appetite in direct response to this oppression. Both sides share an inherent theatricality: the *autos-da-fé* of the Inquisition were deliberately theatrical, drawing enormous crowds and exhibiting strikingly carnivalesque attributes. The condemned (of the Spanish Inquisition, at least) wore paper bishop's mitres for their procession as a sign of degradation, a practice with its roots in the medieval Feast of Fools (Bethencourt 267; cf Harris 148-49, 157, 209). The carnivalesque Feast of Fools, and perhaps more so its secular counterparts such as the Kalends (Harris ch.1) and the carnival aspect of the commedia offer tantalising glimpses of the potential common ancestry of both the commedia and the *auto-da-fé*: a bifurcation that led in two contrary ideological directions, namely the celebration and the condemnation/destruction of the body. Nevertheless, beyond such genealogical speculation, the moment

* See the *Scenarios* of both Scala and Cotticelli *et al*, in which such instances are too numerous to list here.

of their birth is unquestionably historically concordant and, as I have argued, ideologically dichotomous.

It is also significant that not only did the commedia dell'arte and the Roman Inquisition share a common birth, but also fell into decline together. Both saw their heyday in the Mannerist and Baroque periods of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and both fell into irrevocable decline in the eighteenth as a direct result of the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment's focus on psychologism and a renewed interest in physiognomy were entirely incompatible with the mask (Goldoni, *Memoirs* 200). The increasing empiricism, combined with the acceleration of humanism towards secularism, resulted in a growing suspicion of the authority of the Roman Catholic Church and a severe decline in its power (Bethencourt 416-39). The masked commedia was a reaction against the Inquisition and its dogmatic rejection of the body, placing the carnal, with all its vices, at the very heart of human existence. The enthusiastic use of commedia masks by revellers of all statuses at the Venatian Carnivale, including Prince Ferdinand of Bavaria in 1579 (Katritzky 95), is testament to this. The mask's anathematic status is confirmed by the fact that the wearing of masks, even in Venice, was banned during Lent, the ten days before Christmas and on Christian feast days (Johnson 50). The commedia dell'arte grew out of the same theological and epistemic soil as the Roman Inquisition, thus their destinies were inextricably intertwined, both falling victim to the same cultural and epistemological shifts. The mutuality of their decline, just as their birth, was, I contend, inevitable.

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The Performance of Biopower and Liveliness: The Life and Death of Terri Schiavo

By Renée Newman-Storen

Abstract
Between 1990 and 2005, American woman Terri Schiavo was in a Persistent Vegetative State (PVS), kept alive by a surgically inserted feeding tube. A perceived liveliness, or lack thereof, was used as evidence on divergent ideologies and value systems and, in addition to the existing social and political landscape of the US at the time, assisted in igniting a ferocious debate on the value of life. The tragic case of a woman caught between life and death, existing in neither state entirely, was supplanted by a performative spectacle, the activated spectator and the ensuing moral panic over the nature of what being 'alive' itself might mean. In this article I utilise Foucault's understanding of biopower; the concept that life, populations and the body are regulated according to systems of power and that biopower is a dominant discursive function of modernity. I examine the specifics of the tragedy of the Schiavo case in relation to the prevailing ideological (religious and political) conditions in the US that formed the conditions for the regulatory operations of the biopolitical/biopower, concluding that the battle for life at any cost becomes greater than the object or the subject of this debate and that this fight is ultimately an ideological interplay and a struggle for power.

In 1990, American woman Terri Schiavo suffered a cardio and respiratory attack and until her death in 2005 was in a Persistent Vegetative State (PVS), kept alive by a surgically inserted feeding tube. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett suggests that to 'perform is to do' (33) and yet in the case of Schiavo, to *do* was to perform. The slightest bodily movement was perceived as a signalled vestige of her former self. Because of the prevailing social and political landscape of the United States at the time, the particularities of the Schiavo case became the canvas for a broad debate on the value of life. In this article, I examine the larger operations

of biopower by focusing on the specifics of the Schiavo case, by exploring the entire event as a performance of contested truth formations in the regulatory operations of biopower. In addition I consider the corporeal significance of her open eyes and occasional bodily movement as evidence of a contested liveliness.

Conceptual and Methodological Frame

Biopower can be understood as the discursive set of power relations centred on the regulation and control of populations, on our understanding of life (and death) and the body itself. According to Evans, the biopolitical specifically refers to the 'political strategization/technologization of life for its own productive betterment' (415). This paper relates biopower and the biopolitical, principally from the work of Foucault, to notions of the 'self' and state governance evidenced in the case of Terri Schiavo.* I view the Terri Schiavo case as a spectacle and in many ways a mediatised spectacle. In this instance I understand spectacle to involve the circumstances and key players, institutions and ideologies surrounding the case and an active spectatorship who felt propelled to question what the case meant for them. By becoming actively engaged the spectatorship transformed the case into an *event* or, as I see it, a spectacle. This spectacle was built on a life and death battle between the administration of life and what appears as the performance of liveliness: in this case, the battle over the very meaning of her seemingly animated and wide open eyes and her spontaneous and involuntary muscular spasms. The intensity of the case, the polarisation of her audience and the profound questions raised regarding the nature of subjecthood, can be interpreted as existing within the machinations of biopower. This case involved a battle between various truth formations and I am interested in how this corporeal battleground was used to further a discourse of biopower endemic in the neoliberalism and neoconservatism of the former President George W. Bush era in the US.

Most of the opinion-as-evidence in this case came from old and new media, including newspaper articles, websites, television talk shows and blogs. Bloggers concerned with the case were

* Foucault explores biopower in several works including *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction and Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings: 1972-1977*.

generally either of a critical, liberal faction or attached to websites concerned with Schiavo's parents' – Robert and Mary Schindler's – fight to save her (and with interest groups associated with the pro-life movement). The spectacle accelerated because of the vitriolic judgments between opposing sides and their divergent claims to truth; 'scandalous' opinions were validated as the prerogative of the individual, the family, of religion and/or of the State. As a result, the objectification of Schiavo and the battle over her liveliness was compounded by a continual cycle of members of the public becoming an activated spectatorship furthering the making of a spectacle. This resulted in a moral panic that furthered the discursive relations of biopower.* Hardt and Negri argue that biopower 'is a form of power that regulates social life from its interior, following it, interpreting it, absorbing it, and rearticulating it' (23-24). Through an examination of biopower, this article will evidence the strange but 'true' life and death of Terri Schiavo.

The Life and Death of Terri Schiavo

Teresa Marie Schindler Schiavo (Terri Schiavo) was born in Philadelphia on 3 December 1963. She was the eldest of three children born to Robert and Mary Schindler, devout Roman Catholics, and married Michael Schiavo in 1984. On February 25 1990, when she was 26 years old, Schiavo suffered a cardiac and respiratory attack. She was resuscitated, defibrillated, ventilated and remained in a coma for ten weeks (Wolfson 7-8). After three years in a continuous sleep-wake state condition without change she was diagnosed as existing in a Persistent Vegetative State (Florida Legislature a).** Her only mechanism of survival was a surgically

* In this article I refer to a moral panic as the public perception of a threat to morality or social normalcy triggered by an event, movement or trend. This understanding of a moral panic takes from social theory and sociology and from such theorists as Stanley Cohen (Folk Devils and Moral Panics, 1980) and Chas Critcher (Moral Panics and the Media, 2003).

** Florida State law defines PVS as: 'a permanent and irreversible condition of unconsciousness in which there is: (a) The absence of voluntary action or cognitive behaviour of any kind, and b) An inability to communicate or interact purposefully with the environment' (Florida Legislature a).

inserted feeding tube and she remained in that state for fifteen years.

From 1998, Michael Schiavo began seven years of legal proceedings to have Shiavo's feeding tube removed. He argued that it was what Terri would have wanted in the absence of an advance directive (Flordia Legislature b).* Her family disagreed. In 2000, a trial was held to determine Schiavo's wishes, which ruled in Michael's favour. The Schindlers appealed, however the ruling was upheld in 2001. What followed involved a request for oral feeding, a guardianship challenge,** and a frantic attempt by the Schindlers to prevent the removal of the tube, including a motion citing new evidence. This motion was denied and Schiavo's feeding tube was removed. The Schindlers quickly filed a civil law suit for alleged perjury and Judge Frank Quesada ruled that the tube be reinserted until the allegation could be heard. It was reinserted two days later.

After Judge Greer declared that Schiavo was in fact in PVS without any hope of improvement (Wolfson 17), the Schindlers edited the six hours of video footage of their daughter apparently responding to a floating balloon into various clips, amounting to a total of six minutes, and released the clips to the public via the Internet. The resulting images portrayed Schiavo as responsive and aware when in fact her occasional movements were found to be involuntary spasms (Wolfson 17). Over time this footage came to be used to point toward her liveliness: an animation that showed just how tragic a situation it was and in its edited form appeared to support the Schindlers' perception

* Florida law permits the removal of life support of a patient in PVS without an advance directive if they have a judicially appointed guardian, or a guardian acting on the specific advice of a physician (Florida Legislature b).

** This challenge was on the grounds that Michael was intimately involved with other women and that he was not providing adequate care for Schiavo. Michael was involved with Jodi Centonze and at the time had one child with her. They later married after Schiavo's death. Michael argued that he had always been open about the relationship and that earlier, in the first years of Schiavo's incapacitation, her family had encouraged him to see other women. He argued in response to the guardianship challenge that divorcing Schiavo was not in his interest, as it would mean reneging on his duty to fulfil her wish to die (Wolfson 1-38).

of cognition, but in fact did not reflect her actual physiological condition. The footage and how it came to be interpreted reflects how 'truth' is contested and performed. In this instance it was used to support either side of the debate in order to sustain the spectacle (and hence sustain the moral panic) and therefore the vindication of a spectator's particular version of the truth – to kill or not to kill.

The actions of the government, religious groups, lobbyists, politicians and the courts were critical in sustaining the growing moral panic surrounding Schiavo and her feuding family and the case became a symbol of a larger ideological struggle. Schiavo had her feeding tube removed in 2003 only to be quickly followed by the passing in the Florida legislature of what came to be known as *Terri's Law*, enabling Governor Jeb Bush to intervene by authorising the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to take Schiavo to hospital where her tube was surgically reinserted. However, by the time of her death, after the removal of the feeding tube for the third time, the Florida court system had heard some fourteen appeals, motions, petitions and hearings, rulings by the Federal United States Supreme Court, and intervention by the United States Senate and House of Representatives. President Bush, in the early hours of 21 March 2005, signed a Congressional Bill later known as the *Palm Sunday Compromise*, allowing the federal courts to intervene, only to be overturned by the Federal United States Supreme Court. On 31 March 2005, at the age of 41, Schiavo died, thirteen days after the removal of the tube and fifteen years after her initial collapse. The autopsy report revealed that not only was Schiavo irreversibly in PVS but also that the pyramidal neurons essential to the cerebral cortex had been destroyed. Dr Jon Thogmartin reported that 'no amount of therapy or treatment would have regenerated the massive loss of neurons' (Cerminara and Goodman). The significance of the Schiavo case was not only that it related the personal story of a woman's life cut tragically short and the grief of her family and her husband, but also who she came to represent for so many in a debate surrounding what constituted 'liveliness' and the administration of life itself.

New Media Performative Engagements

Brian McNair argues that at 'times of global crisis the blogosphere comes into its own as a uniquely diverse and rich information pool,

for which the occasional error or malicious rumour may be judged a small price to pay' (129). The evidence presented in court was examined and debated on blogs and this discussion was often imbued with the ideological position of the blogs' creators and contributors. The judiciary system was placed in a contested parallel with the court of popular opinion and thus the distinction between hearsay and evidence became blurred. The ideological interplay among various interest groups influenced particular institutional bodies to respond, thus extending the spectacle and what Schiavo came to represent.*

One particular blog, *A Family's Torment – Terri Schiavo*, contained a dialogue between pro-life campaigners and, in my opinion, represented the magnitude of the spectacle surrounding the case. What is telling and perhaps inevitable about this blog is how speculation was presented as truth and not the unsubstantiated hearsay that it was. This particular blog provided what seemed to be a blow-by-blow account of the various court proceedings, yet the 'evidence' was grossly manipulated due to the particular intentions of its creators. Theodore posted on the same blog on 12 February 2005: '[We] need to remove that line "land of the free, home of the brave" in reference to poor Terri' and later commented that the Schindlers were 'understanding first-hand the definition of "American tyranny"' (Theodore). This post was followed by a comment by 'cyn': '[As] has been often noted, we are not allowed to treat prisoners or animals the way Ms. Schiavo is treated. Apparently the only rights that are important to Michael Schiavo are those that will lead to her death' (cyn). Acts of negligence and physical abuse were falsely purported; nevertheless, this rumour and suggestion of abuse amounted to a perception for those agreeing with the sentiments of the blog that a crime against humanity had been committed.

Biopower: Religion, Politics and Ethics

The Schiavo case was embraced by neoconservative right factions as representative of the continuing struggle for the sanctity of life.

* In both the 2000 and 2004 US elections, both the pro-life and pro-choice movements in association with political action groups donated millions of dollars to the Democratic and Republican parties (OpenSecrets.org).

Didion reported that groups such as the National Right to Life, the Traditional Values Coalition, the Family Research Council, Focus on the Family and Operation Rescue, were involved in supporting the Schindlers' case (10). The National Right to Life is the largest pro-life organisation (political action group) in the US and was instrumental in rallying both public and political support for the passing of *Terri's Law*, which allowed Governor Jeb Bush to intervene. Overall, public commentaries supporting the Schindler family and the pro-life campaign tended to be emotional and sensationalist. The extent of the moral panic would never have been reached if this outpour of emotion and political intervention had not contributed to the extraordinary spectacle of disputed liveliness and the role of the activated spectator which compounded the inevitable feedback loop between the performative spectacle, spectator and moral panic.

By 2005, religious groups had joined with the political conservative factions of the right-to-life argument of the case. The passionate and vitriolic sentiments linking support for the Schindlers and the Christian right became more frequent and emotive as the moment of Schiavo's death drew near. In an online article in *The New York Times* on 25 March 2005, six days before Schiavo's death, Abby Goodnough and Maria Newman wrote: '[Many] of those supporters are making parallels between Ms Schiavo and Jesus, describing "the passion of [Terri Schiavo]" as Easter approaches' ('Few Options'). The final entry in the blog *A Family's Torment- Terri Schiavo* by an individual simply named 'GeekDejure' was: 'Hail Terri… Child of God… We Pray those judicial sinners… Do not cause the hour of thy death… Amen' (GeekDejure). On 7 March 2005, the leader of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Cardinal Renato Martino, on behalf of the Vatican, issued this statement regarding Schiavo:

> [how] is it that this woman, who has done nothing wrong, will suffer a fate which society would never tolerate in the case of a convicted murderer or anyone else convicted of the most horrendous crime? (Martino)

Didion referred to the Christian symbology of the case

when she wrote of the final removal of the feeding tube in March 2005: '[It] was the convergence of that countdown with the holiest week in the Christian calendar that exacerbated the 'circus', the displays of theatrical martyrdom outside the hospice' (10). For millions of Catholics worldwide and the supporters of the Schindlers and pro-life advocates, the case must have seemed quite simple: it was morally reprehensible to 'kill' Schiavo.

Elizabeth Dauphinee and Cristina Masters locate the transition to modern biopower as 'transformation of modern sovereign power from the right to "let live and make die" to the right to "make live and let die"' (xiii). Intrinsic to the 'make live' is the invisibility of death, or what they refer to as the 'desubjectification process' (xiii). The domestic socio-political landscape of the US at the time of the Schiavo case was complicated further by global political machinations. Members of the Coalition forces had been fighting and dying in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001. Furthermore, the American military was steeped in controversy over the Abu Ghraib prisoner-abuse scandal. In 2005, at the height of the Schiavo spectacle, the legitimacy of the incarceration of foreign prisoners at Guantánamo Bay was being challenged. Meanwhile, the Bush administration was questioned over US military involvement in Iraq after admitting a lack of evidence concerning supposed weapons of mass destruction (WMD). This time also saw the release of information regarding torture and clandestine CIA interrogation centres. Departing from Dauphinee and Masters' use of biopower, in one way, the killing of civilians in Iraq and Afghanistan was deemed a casualty of war (perhaps even a quasi-retribution for the killings of September 11), whilst, in another way, to 'make live' (through the pursuit of liberty and democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan) was ultimately an argument for invasion. Philosopher Slavoj Žižek referred to the War on Terror and the Schiavo case as the 'legitimisation of torture and the excessive care for a human life reduced to vegetative state are thus two manifestations of the same grotesque logic' (3). In addition he argues that Guantanamo Bay detainees were rendered invisible in subject status; defined by the fact that they were 'missed by the bombs' these prisoners were then considered the 'living dead' (2). For Schiavo, in one way, she became a symbol of a life that should be allowed to 'let die'. However, in another way,

she was representative of the life still living, the subject not quite desubjectified enough to warrant a visible killing. She was the literal example of Agamben's 'bare life' forced to exist in states of exclusion' in that she was neither entirely dead nor alive (159). She was neither granted subject status as truly 'alive' nor rendered an object of dismissal or denial thus; through performative spectacle Schiavo became a tragic puppet for the various ideological factions. The Bush administration were faced with an increasingly unpopular war and a faceless and nameless 'enemy' that could be used and disposed of with impunity and thus, I suggest, the administration's support for the Schindlers' fight was not merely a crisis of conscience but rather a timely intervention in attempting to regain political favour.

Four days after he declared his vision of a 'culture of life',* President Bush signed the *Palm Sunday Compromise Bill*. The Bush administration had been re-elected four months earlier and the government intervention in the case was largely attributed to 'paying back' the conservative right factions for returning a Republican majority and President Bush to office (Stolberg). Around the time of the congressional intervention, the CBS network found that 82 per cent of Americans thought that Congress and President Bush should not have become involved in the case (Stolberg). Speculation about the political appeal for the administration's support of the right to life campaign was rife. The *Palm Sunday Compromise Bill* was passed in the Senate with only three senators present and passed in the House of Representatives

* The political pursuit of what President Bush referred to as a 'culture of life' utilised the discursive formation of biopower as a fundamental endeavour of the industrialised modern world (Bush). He pursued 'life' as a political pursuit of liveliness itself when claiming that 'our society, our laws, and our courts' must regulate, control and maintain populations 'in favour of life' (Bush). What for many was considered a 'private' case, or at least a matter solely for the State of Florida, was made a Federal issue when the case became emblematic of a larger political and cultural conservatism endorsed directly by the Executive Office. These sentiments were not isolated to the Schiavo case. Early in 2001, President Bush issued a 'gag-order' on US aid to family planning services around the world (Bennis 3).

on 21 March 2005 at 12.41 am. Republican Senator Susan Collins declared that it 'went through like a tsunami' (Stolberg). In all, 74 per cent of people interviewed in the same CBS poll believed that the government intervention was enacted only for political mileage (Stolberg):

> [when] the case of Terri Schiavo came along – a brain-damaged woman, grieving parents, a husband painted as a villain and a Greek chorus of protestors – many in Congress leaped into the stage light. (Stolberg)

Furthermore, in 2005 it was revealed that an unsigned memo had been distributed to several Republican senators, revealing the potential political merits in supporting the Schindlers (Allen). It seems that the Schiavo case was a political opportunity that the conservative Republican right could not pass up.

On one side, the traumatised family and the morally, ideologically and politically motivated factions supported the sustenance of life and the dismissal of judicial discretion. On the other side, the decisions made by the courts were considered a victory for the pro-choice, pro-euthanasia cause. For the pro-choice (and liberal) movements, the case reflected a sense of gross intervention of political and governmental forces. I argue that underlying these arguments is a fundamental fear of death. George Felos, Michael Schiavo's lawyer, speaks of this fear in an interview with Larry King: "[This] is a death-adverse society. Death is one of the last taboo subjects. We don't like to talk about it. We don't like to contemplate our own death. And watching somebody else die, like Terri Schiavo, makes people very uncomfortable" (Felos). In this sense, the presence of a perceived liveliness choreographed and distributed by the family – with her eyes open and occasional bodily movement – triggered a spectacle about the nature of life and death in the modern body politic. In relation to the Felos' comment, this reflects a taboo about death that can only operate in the biopolitical valuation of life. Zygmunt Bauman contends that 'fighting death is meaningless. But fighting the causes of dying turns into the meaning of life' (317). This observation becomes particularly pertinent when the woman depicted in print, on television and on the internet appears to be alive, with her eyes

open to reveal her liveliness. The modern discourse of biopower provides the conditions for life and death to be either rendered visible or invisible (in the instance of Schiavo where the discursive conditions of the activated spectator determined how they wished to interpret her incapacitated state) or the sanctioned killing of an already perceived invisible subject (in the instance of the nameless victims of war not considered worthy of life). Foucault argues that in the biopolitical regime the main concern is to 'make live'; hence, death has no authorised or enunciated place: 'power no longer recognises death. Power literally ignores death' (*History of Sexuality* 248).

Conclusions

The body and case of Terri Schiavo became the object of intense public scrutiny invoked by an ideological, political and religious conservatism and the regulative forces of biopower. The spectacle surrounding her body, where her open eyes came to symbolise subjectivity, inspired a conflict that spanned fifteen years, numerous government interventions, and the breakdown of a family. The video footage and courtroom testimony became synonymous with gossip and speculation, ultimately leading to the symbolic trial of all parties, including Michael Schiavo, the Schindlers, the government, and the US judiciary system. The significance of the case was not so much about the debate surrounding the removal of a feeding tube, as it was about the questioning of the rights and responsibilities of participation in a spectacle which provoked a moral crisis. In this sense, the fight for life at any cost becomes greater than the object or the subject and it is here where the discursive forces of biopower are evident. The battle for life is ultimately the struggle for power: 'it was the taking charge of life, more than the threat of death, that gave power its access even to the body' (*History of Sexuality* 143). To examine this particular case is to understand how modern power operates and how it performs. Exploring the Schiavo case as a moral panic brought about through biopolitical discourses is an opportunity to tease out the ambiguities inherent in understanding biopower in all its liveliness, particularly when the familial tragedy meets the larger discursive discipline of the biopolitical.

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Forum Theatre, Disability and Corporeality: A Project on Sexuality in Zimbabwe

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Abstract
This article discusses *Visionaries*, a forum theatre project on sexuality and disability in Zimbabwe. Focus is placed on the notion of beauty and its association with myths of sexuality among disabled and non-disabled persons. The paper posits that forum theatre can be a significant site to negotiate the complexities and possibilities of disability and sexual corporeality.

This article discusses *Visionaries*, a forum theatre production which explores the relationship between politics of corporeal beauty and sexuality in the context of disability discourses. *Visionaries* was devised and performed by disabled students from the University of Zimbabwe in partnership with theatre arts students from the same institution. The authors of this article were facilitators of this action research project. The sexuality of disabled people is a subject that is yet to gain sufficient attention in both academic and public spheres in a conservative Zimbabwean society. Several myths surrounding the subject complicate the matter (Chivandikwa; Matereke and Mungwini 2). The challenge then becomes one of identifying strategies of contesting stereotypical and normative constructions of physicality, while at the same time empowering the marginalised. Performance on and by disabled people has been identified as one of the strategies through which myths and stereotypes on the bodies of disabled people can be deconstructed (Kuppers and Marcus 150). Performance seems to occupy a central place in exploring, subverting, negotiating and affirming 'the meanings of bodies' (Kuppers, 'Unknown Body' 129). The central questions guiding the analysis of *Visionaries* are:

a) What are the possibilities and complications of using forum theatre in negotiating the politics of sexual corporeality in Zimbabwe?

b) How can insights from forum theatre productions impact and benefit disabled people?

The article's contribution is in the form of three observations emerging from the analysis. First, inspired by the recognition that performance enables 'bodies, metaphors and breaths' to come into contact with each other (Kuppers and Marcus 151), the article argues that the simultaneous dramatisation of pain (oppression), pleasure, humour and 'seriousness' in forum theatre can activate participants into deep engagement and awareness of the dynamics and complexities of aspects of the sexuality of disabled people. Second, forum theatre performances can destabilise the boundary between the private and public dimensions of alternative sexual corporealities. Lastly, in the context of action research, ideas from forum theatre discussions can be 'immediately' implemented in the ontological realities of oppressed groups.

Background and Context of the Play

We had always wanted to facilitate an applied theatre project with disabled students, who are at the periphery of cultural, social and political spheres at the university. However, our efforts were met with various barriers which included the reluctance of the students to participate in theatre because at that time (2007-09) most students were out of campus residence because of serious water shortages at the university. This made it difficult to get sufficient time to participate in rehearsals. An opportunity came in 2010 when the Director of the Disability Resource Centre invited members of the Faculty of Arts to respond to specific concerns on matters affecting the academic and social lives of disabled students.

At this meeting we were to respond to the question of why our department (Theatre Arts) did not recruit disabled students. While this question was factually accurate, we did not have sufficient knowledge to determine whether this was because of departmental policy. However, we seized the opportunity to invite students to collectively devise an applied theatre project which would explore possible solutions to the challenges faced by disabled students at the University. The students agreed to participate in the project. However, because of the heterogeneity of the group, it was decided to include several plays focusing on a

variety of challenges faced by different groups of disabled students. One group decided to focus on albinism and harassment in lectures, the second on disability and marginalisation in sports participation, while the third focused on physical disability and medical oppression. The fourth group, which is the focus of this paper, decided to focus on disability and sexual politics.

Initially, *Visionaries* had three visually challenged students from the faculties of law, social science and engineering. Three female theatre arts students were invited to assist in basic acting and playmaking processes. After the first performances of all the plays at the inaugural University of Zimbabwe Disability Arts Festival held in April 2011, the increased awareness of *Visionaries* grew and there were several requests to have the play performed at various forums in Zimbabwe and South Africa.

This project is set against a background of Zimbabwean society which has been and continues to be concerned about the shape, size, nature and configuration of the body in conceptualising economic, social and political citizenship. Zimbabwean society has created barriers, discourses and structures that regulate sexual relations and practice. For example social norms stipulate *rooranai vematongo* ('do not marry a stranger'). Metaphorically, those whose corporeality is untypical are strangers, whose sexual behaviour and expression should be regulated and controlled.

***Visionaries*: Performance Text**

Cliff fails to resist Kim's sexual advances. Kim's motivation for seeking a sexual relationship with Cliff is the myth peddled by her friend Regina that having a sexual relationship with a visually challenged man enhances her chances of securing the love of rich Nokia, the 'coolest' young man on campus. Regina also points out that Kim's sexually transmitted infection will be miraculously cured if she engages in a sexual relationship with Cliff. Cliff's struggle to resist Kim's seduction is compounded by pressure from Hardlife (Cliff's visually challenged friend) who regards Kim as a 'perfect gift from God'. *Visionaries*, is an improvisational text that maintains a basic structure while leaving room to incorporate suggestions and debates from forum sessions. The basic performance text is as follows:

i) A health officer demonstrates the proper use of a condom. Cliff, Hardlife and Norma are clearly out of the discussion. The Health Officer refuses to assist the disabled trio from accessing information as he considers them angels of God who do not indulge in sex.
ii) Regina and Kim: Regina advises Kim to seduce Cliff in order to win Nokia and also to have her sexually transmitted infection cured.
iii) Kim and Cliff: Kim makes several attempts to seduce Cliff.
iv) Hardlife and Cliff: Cliff tells Hardlife that he is fed up of Kim's advances. Hardlife insists that Cliff should seize the opportunity to get a 'perfect gift from God', unlike Cliff's current girlfriend who has 'several defects'.
v) Cliff and Norma: Kim enters to disrupt the two young lovers. Norma protests by bolting out of the room. Cliff eventually succumbs to Kim's seduction.
vi) Kim and Cliff: Kim insists on having sex with Cliff without a condom. Cliff is reluctant. Cliff struggles to open a condom while Kim refuses to assist him. Cliff gives up on his attempt and proceeds to have unprotected sex.

Forms and levels of oppression in *Visionaries* do not strictly adhere to the conventional Boalian forum theatre in which there is a single, unmistakable embodied antagonist (Baxter 140). Instead, *Visionaries* has several oppressors and antagonists. The main protagonist is Cliff, while Kim is the main antagonist. However, Kim also oppresses Norma. The health officer oppresses Cliff, Norma and Hardlife. Hardlife is an embodiment of internalised disability oppression. These 'innovations' came from the disabled students who expressed that they did not want to have a single oppressor to show the complexities of oppression that they faced.

Forum Sessions: Politics of Sexuality and Corporeal Misrecognition

This article focuses on public performances at the University of

Zimbabwe, Midlands State University and the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa. The Midlands State University performance was held on 16 October on the occasion to commemorate HIV awareness among disabled students. The University of Witwatersrand performance was held during the Drama for Life (DFL) annual *Sex- Actually Festival* (1-9 September 2011). In all these performances, most forum interventions focused on the politics of sexual relations, particularly the misrecognition of sexual corporeality of disabled students. A lot of interest was also generated around the possibilities and challenges of sexual relations between able bodied and disabled students.

At the University of Zimbabwe performance, a male student suggested to Cliff in a hot seating session that there was no genuine sexual relationship between an able bodied student and a disabled student, to which Cliff wittily retorted: 'how could I lose such an opportunity to enjoy those fleshy hips?' At the same time, this scenario generated intense debate as some female students intervened to replace Norma in order to challenge Kim. One male student suggested to Cliff that he should insist on using a condom. Cliff responded that it was a good suggestion as long as 'you lend me a pair of eyes' to be able to open the condom. Here we see how disabled performers can use the fictional context to celebrate difference and affirm 'the pleasures of disabled lives, different sensoria or ways of being in the world' (Kuppers and Marcus 143). At the Witwatersrand performance, one young non- disabled lady implored Cliff to have his sexually transmitted infection treated and go back to Norma. While some male disabled students cheered this suggestion, most disabled girls protested. The same suggestion was hinted at the Midlands State University performance, prompting one visually challenged female student to remark that, going back to Norma was an unacceptable oppression which must be dealt with. She highlighted that male disabled students become interested in '"us" after they have been "used" and dumped by their angels'. Another interesting response was on the celebration of the virility of visually challenged people. This is the scene between Regina and Kim where the former peddles the myth that visually challenged people are highly erotic because, '*vakakubata maimwana munozhamba*' ('when a visually challenged person caresses you, you will lose your mind with erotic pleasure').

At the Midlands State University and the University of Zimbabwe performances, this scenario drew wild cheers of approval from disabled male students as if to 'market' their erotic prowess. One male visually challenged student remarked that this was a 'scientific fact' because disabled males compensate for their lack of sight with an 'electrifying sense of touch'. Clearly forum theatre sessions provided space to expose, challenge and debate the misrecognition of disability sexual corporeality (Peumans 94).

Eroticism, Desire and the Disabled Body

The disabled body has been rendered sexless and disability discourse has not been sensitive to the sexual corporeality of disabled people (Shakespeare 179). In *Visionaries*, there is an attempt to re-invest focus on the 'disabled body' by investigating the deep concerns, desires and experiences of disabled people. The characters in the play who inhabit 'affected' bodies reveal their emotional and sensual lives that go beyond the stereotypical representations of mainstream cultural medium (Rembis 52). Cliff and his girlfriend, Norma, are shown as experiencing a healthy physical relationship and exhibiting and exchanging emotional energies usually 'denied' or ignored in normative discourses about the disabled body. Through their flourishing relationship, there is a displacement of the concept of 'lack', which resonates with what Gudlin refers to as a construction of 'not so sexy bodies but nonetheless sexy beings' (14). The two characters in love show that they have a positive relationship with their 'undesirable' bodies as they desire each other, an adverse challenge to the dichotomy of body and affection, physical attractiveness and sexiness. Society's narcissism of bodily configuration is thrown into question as the two young lovers show that non-physical and psychosocial qualities of individuals can supersede body limitations. In short, the two disabled characters function to resist the identity of docility in sexual matters (Peumans 94).

The play reincorporates the discourse of corporeality and sexuality by exploring the fantasies, eroticism and sexual desires possessed by the 'affected' body. Socio-cultural representations of the affected body suggest that the performativity of the body is in crisis when disability is present in normative sexual terms (Rembis 21). The prevailing images of masculinity portrayed in

the play, and of disability, challenge the normative representations of masculinity and disability. Cliff *and* Hardlife speak passionately about their desires and sexual needs. Watching the two young people speak animatedly about their sexual desires and engagements redefines the assumptions of physical determination in the negotiation of masculinity and disability. However, at the same time, reconstructions and renegotiations of masculinity and disability are undertaken within discourses that endorse body configuration as determining attractiveness and desirability. Hardlife explains to Cliff that Kim's body configuration is that of an 'angel' and her curvature is extraordinary as compared to that of Norma, Cliff's current girlfriend. In the first place, the performers critically appropriated normative ideals of beauty in the Zimbabwean context and further destabilised these normative expectations, giving credence to the argument that disabled bodies in performance space can trouble normative boundaries of physicality (Kuppers, 'Deconstructing' 27). Meanwhile, *Visionaries* does not gloss over the sexual limitations imposed by visual impairment. For instance, Cliff's access to sexual practices is limited because he cannot open a condom and therefore engages in unprotected sex.

Fleshy Hips and Plumpness: Femininity, Sexuality and Body Perfection

The conflict between Kim and Norma is a contest of socially constructed body ideals and sexual attractiveness. As soon as Kim is convinced that a sexual intercourse with Cliff will cure her of her sexually transmitted infection, she becomes determined to win Cliff. In Africa there are explicit and implicit perceptions on the relationship between physicality and sexual attraction (Matereke and Mungwini 10). In Euro-America, the image of the female romantic body seems to be a tall and slender woman, which has been characterised by critics as the tyranny of slenderness and perfection (Louis 160). Yet in the African and Zimbabwean contexts, plumpness and roundness have connotations of sexual attractiveness. With the above 'assets', Kim is shocked to realise that a visually-challenged young man is reluctant to 'partake' of her 'obviously' sexually-attractive body. Earlier on, she had arrogantly boasted of her beauty contest accolades such as 'The Miss Legs', 'Miss Fleshy Hips' and 'Miss Kissable Lips' awards.

The students' crafting of Kim's character was highly satirical to mock the basis of body discrimination. Kim's arrogance, that it is easy to win Cliff at the expense of a 'little blind girl', is evidence of the extent to which society relegates and denigrates the sexuality of atypical bodies (Shildrick 223). This scenario brings to the fore the contradiction of normative ideals of corporeality. For instance, the image of a plump woman as a sexually attractive body is a product of colonial western stereotypical constructions of a hyper-sexualised African woman who has large buttocks, hips and breasts (Matereke and Mungwini 12). The performance unmasked this contradiction in a thought-provoking and humorous way.

Controversies and Complications

Forum theatre is not automatically empowering, liberating and democratic. Dwyer has argued that the forum space is not a value-neutral space and that different social groups such as sponsors, facilitators and audiences have conflicting ideological interests (201). Outlined below are three complications and controversies that saddled the project.

The first relates to the gap between the ideal of forum theatre and the specific social realities of a given context. Ideally, in forum theatre spectators who intervene to correct or change an oppressive environment should belong to the same class as the protagonist who is struggling to overcome oppression in a given scenario (Dwyer 203; Baxter 133). In most cases, only a limited number of visually-challenged people intervened. Although this did not compromise the quality of the debate, the preferred situation would be one in which members of the affected social group would be more visible in order to generate authentic responses from their lived experiences. In a performance at the University of Zimbabwe, the intervention of one visually-challenged male student was quite fascinating, as he used his walking stick to challenge Kim before he embraced Norma in a romantic way. Such corporeal interventional texts would have been more beneficial to the project than the verbal texts that emerged from visually-challenged students. One of the reasons for such 'limited' corporeal intervention was that although most scenarios relied heavily on dialogue, there were other non-verbal elements which emerged during improvisation. Although most of these images were fascinating, they were inaccessible to

visually challenged people. That is perhaps an inherent complication of theatre, especially improvisational theatre. Some of the most powerful theatrical images can be visual in the form of movement, gesture or design. An example is the scene in which Kim comes to disrupt a romantic encounter between Cliff and Norma. Kim tries to adjust Cliff's neck tie which was 'wrongly' placed by Norma because of her visual challenge. The gestures and the facial expressions of the actors were the most intriguing aspects of the scene. As a result, some visually-challenged students would be surprised to hear others laugh and would rely on colleagues to catch up on the drama. This complication affected the number of corporeal interventions from visually-challenged spectators. However, at the same time, visually-challenged students could relate and respond to most scenarios without necessarily seeing every visual image. This could therefore suggest the need to expand the notion of corporeality to include the multi-sensory aspects of performance that include both audio and visual communication (Chivandikwa). One strategy that we intend to implement in future performances is to allow participants to stop the performance and engage the protagonist or antagonist without necessarily getting into the performance space so that there is no specifically designated performance space. This will make it easier for participants whose disability might restrict their movements and gestures.

Another controversy arose from a female nurse who intervened at a public performance at a disability festival held on 7 April 2011 at the University of Zimbabwe. At this performance, there were many stakeholders, who included university executives. The scene in which Cliff fails to open a condom was a source of worry to the Dean of students, under which the Health Services Department falls. He perceived that the scenario meant that the disabled students were not receiving sufficient sexual education and quietly instructed the nurse in charge of the university clinic to intervene. However, since she had come a bit late, she had not been apprised of the 'rules' of forum theatre. She therefore made a 'speech' in which she remarked that: 'Disabled students are the most users (sic) of condoms at the university'. The implications of that remark were largely negative. The implied message was that disabled students were excessively sexual, which is another negative construction. In a conservative society like Zimbabwe,

the notion that one uses condoms a lot has serious connotations of promiscuity. About three weeks after the public performance, a meeting was held between the students participating in the forum theatre and the nurse. The students then explained to the nurse that, in fact, the Disability Resource Centre is centrally situated so that all students find it as a convenient place from which to collect condoms. This meeting was fruitful because the controversy was incorporated into subsequent performances as discussed in previous sections. Nevertheless, the point still remains that many people who attended the public performance in question got the 'wrong' impression about the use of condoms by disabled students.

The final controversy relates to personal convictions and democratic engagement within a forum theatre context. When the students had agreed to incorporate the aspects of the controversy discussed above, they decided to add a scenario which depicts a health officer who is demonstrating the use of a condom, using real condoms and a stick to resemble the penis. The student who played the role of the health officer flatly refused to use the above aids on personal grounds. A heated debate ensued in which other students accused the former of hypocrisy. Although we managed to intervene and move the process forward, what clearly emerged was that issues relating to sexuality are deeply emotional and are inflected by political, cultural, religious and psychological factors. These variables can limit the extent to which one can use a public medium such as forum theatre to deeply engage sexual corporeality.

Outcomes of the Project

This section briefly outlines some of the major outcomes of the project. First, the project managed to foreground the disappearing bodies of disabled students from the public sphere (Kuppers, 'The Wheel Chairs Rhetoric' 84). For example, after several performances, both public and private media houses started to write stories about the group using the performance to discuss HIV and AIDS, sexuality and disability (Chivandikwa). The Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) interviewed students who participated in the project and went on to formulate a television programme on disability and sexuality under the weekly programme Youth Forum. The second major outcome is the production by an Art and Design student from Chinhoyi University of Technology

of HIV and AIDS and sexuality information in braille for the benefit of visually challenged students (Chivandikwa). The third outcome is a cordial relationship between the Health Services Department at the University of Zimbabwe and students from the Disability Resource Centre. The Health Services Department now incorporates the needs of disabled students in their workshops on sexual and reproductive health. These outcomes become significant when one considers that sexuality is a taboo subject in Africa and Zimbabwe.

Conclusion

The article has shown how discussions from forum theatre inspired the implementation of beneficial programmes which were sensitive to the needs and challenges relating to the sexuality of disabled students. In future, we hope to explore some of the contradictions that emerged during the course of the project. For example, the politics of gender and sexuality among disabled students deserves further interrogation. The article has revealed that the presence of disabled performers in the performance space can simultaneously reveal and complicate 'hidden' knowledge about the sexuality of disabled bodies in ways that are pleasurable, thought-provoking and challenging to normative discourses on sexuality and corporeality. Within the context of action research, this 'revealed' knowledge can be immediately applied for the benefit of the oppressed groups. This has shown that forum theatre offers a productive and pragmatic space in which the private and public dimensions of the politics of sexuality and corporeality in the disability discourse can be challenged and negotiated to empower the marginalised.

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'Try to follow the sound of my footsteps…': Walking and the Theatricality of Imaginative Geographies in Janet Cardiff's *The Missing Voice (Case Study B)*

By Jane Frances Dunlop

Abstract
This paper interrogates the theatricality of walking and its contributions to the construction of imaginative geographies, defined by Derek Gregory as 'accumulations of time, sedimentations of successive histories [… but] also *performances of space*' (18, original emphasis). Focusing on the kinesthetic sensation of moving in the city, Janet Cardiff's *The Missing Voice (Case Study B)* becomes a means to investigate how walking in a city produces new performances while also provoking the reappearance of past narratives. This article positions walking as a temporary and subjective participation in the theatricality of a city's imaginative geographies. I question how the kinesthetic experience of walking in a city contributes to our imaginings of place and the extent to which these understandings are contingent on the physical 'knowing' of a space. I argue that walking is a tactic that enables us to differently perform and construct the imaginative geographies of a city.

The embodied experience of a city offers alternative information towards understanding how space is constructed through presence. Examining these embodied experiences troubles the disembodied narratives that dictate how spaces are imagined. Every kind of urban movement – walking, cycling, taking cabs, taking buses, taking the tube, skateboarding – is organized by the physical spaces of a city. Through my own walking of Janet Cardiff's *The Missing Voice (Case Study B)*, I will examine how the kinesthetic experience of moving affects how we might understand place. I take kinesthetic experience to mean the sensation of movement as analogous with other sensory experiences; as Carrie Noland posits in *Agency and Embodiment*, 'the body is a source of sensory feedback that intervenes between the external world and the internal world either

to filter out or focus on certain elements' (63). Noland suggests that the sensory feedback of a body in space is integral to how we imagine and construct meaningful geographies. I argue that it is difficult to separate our bodies' movements from our knowledge of the city; the embodied experiences of space expose the construction of our imaginings of place through physical presence. Using *The Missing Voice*, I will examine how the corporeal experience of walking participates in and performs a city. *The Missing Voice* is an audio walk created by Cardiff as an ArtAngel commission in 1999. The walk moves through a corner of East London that begins in the Whitechapel Library (now the Whitechapel Gallery) and the areas surrounding Brick Lane and Spitalfields before ending at Liverpool Street Station.

To walk *The Missing Voice* is to actively participate in the imagining of geographies of East London. When I walk, my experience builds on the concrete reality of the space as it folds into the iterations that Cardiff imagines and those that I know and remember. The 'sensory feedback' of the present city is refracted through Cardiff. The physical reality of my movement intensifies as I account for the differences and for the similarities. East London has historically been thought of as deprived in contrast to the affluence and influence of West London. Whitechapel, where Cardiff's walk takes place, has a history that includes Jack the Ripper, the opium dens of Dorian Gray and the infamous Kray twins. The demographics that make up this space, the politics – global and local – that govern it have shifted and changed how this space is imagined. Near the beginning of *The Missing Voice*, Cardiff says, 'I want you to walk with me. There are some things I need to show you' (*The Missing Voice*). Throughout the piece the instructions given expose the process of constructing the city, while reminding me that I am participating in Cardiff's reconstruction of the subjective experience of walking in this place.

1. '…there's something I want to show you': *The Missing Voice (Case Study B)*

Using Cardiff's *The Missing Voice*, I want to consider how the physical sensation of moving through the city becomes generative of a particular knowledge of that space. To this end, I will focus on how walking makes tangible the theatricality of imaginative

geographies – that is, how corporeal presence in the city exposes and participates in the construction of its places. My own experience of walking *The Missing Voice* will be the corporeal example I use to interrogate how performance can provoke an awareness of the – my – embodied engagement as it performs and participates in the imagining of a city. *The Missing Voice* sends the walker from the Whitechapel Gallery to Liverpool Street Station by way of Brick Lane. Cardiff gives voice to various characters or personae, from whom the walker hears about tactics for walking home at night, memories of these locations days or weeks ago, histories of years gone by, longing for other places, musings about all of these things, a story of the missing red-haired woman and the man trying to follow her (*The Missing Voice*). The kinesthetic sensation of actually moving through the city – of thinking about the spaces, reacting to the cars that drive by or watching the other people who move around me – is tangible as *The Missing Voice* guides me through its version of the city. Cardiff's walk is twelve years old and differences between the 'original' city and the spaces I walk through are evident. The multitude of changes that I encounter as I walk reveals the mutability of a city that underlines an understanding of place.

Cardiff's walk starts in the old Whitechapel Library, which is now represented by a shelf on the first floor of the Whitechapel Gallery. As I stand in front of the four books piled on the small shelf to the right of the gallery coat check, I can watch art students drop off their large portfolios before they enter the galleries. As Cardiff describes a man taking a book off the shelf and putting it back, the difference between the imagined library and the small shelf in front of me is palpable (*The Missing Voice*). There are no crappy old paperbacks here; instead there are large gorgeous art books in the pristine shop to my left. It is appropriate to begin *The Missing Voice* in a place that has shifted, where a shelf attempts to anchor the space to the past. As I stand, I wonder about the differences between a library and a gallery. From the shelf, I can see an installation to my right, the white clean walls and openness at odds with the dusty crowded spaces of the library I frequent in Stoke Newington. As Cardiff narrates her movements through the Whitechapel Library, I imagine my library where the air feels heavy with dust and there is the subtle yet inescapable smell of mildew and body odour and I get a vague sense of physical claustrophobia and ennui. Then it

passes, but I am newly aware of how it feels to stand in this gallery instead of that library, of the physical quality of the spaces that I participate in by continuing to imagine. Cardiff instructs me to follow her out of the gallery and I step onto Whitechapel Road.

The kinesthetic experience of walking this performance, like the experience of walking any city, is subjective and specific. Understanding is created not only by the material changes to these places but also by the particular bodies that imagine the importance of these changes. As I moved out of the Whitechapel Gallery, Cardiff tells me to 'Try to follow the sound of my footsteps so we can stay together' (*The Missing Voice*). Later, as instructions are given to turn or continue along the sidewalk, I realise I have. Or, more importantly, I have tried to: the rhythm Cardiff's footsteps creates is mirrored in my own, the shifting cityscape keeps us syncopated. As a young, white woman who studies the politics of bodies in performance, I am hyper-aware of the unmarked privilege and mobility my body allows, offset by the risk of sexual violence that accrues to any female body in certain public spaces. London is still new for me, still filled with surprise and wonder. Like Cardiff, I am a Canadian woman in London navigating the mythology of this city. Unlike Cardiff,* I have moved to London from Toronto, the urban centre I grew up in and so perhaps I am more prepared for the movement of a big city. *The Missing Voice* plays at overlapping spaces, times and bodies, which make it necessary to think about difference and similarity as I walk. I follow the sound of Cardiff's footsteps. Cardiff is followed by a man looking for a woman in a red wig. Suddenly, there are the sounds of gunfire and helicopters, which just as quickly become the sound of a car alarm. Walking with this multiplicity makes me acutely aware of how I am articulating *my* self in *my* present. My footsteps fall in line with Cardiff's, but they are still my footsteps – my cold feet in the March sun. The sound of a man following me produces a familiar tightening of my stomach, before I can acknowledge that it is an imagined body behind me. Still I consider

* 'Normally I live in a small town in Canada, so the London experience enhanced the paranoia that I think is quite common to a lot of people, especially women, as they adjust to a strange city' (Cardiff, 'Stranger in a Strange City').

the speed with which my body tenses and the slight adrenaline that even the suggestion of danger produced. My current present and her past present rub shoulders. I become aware of the sensation of moving through these places. I am attentive to the difference in how one moves through these spaces and how one understands how one is meant to move through these spaces. Walking with *The Missing Voice* this particularity resonates through my kinesthetic experience of this corner of East London. Noland argues that 'if moving bodies perform in innovative ways, it is not because they managed to move without acquired gestural routines but because they gain knowledge *as a result of performing them*' (7, original emphasis). This kinesthetic particularity, imagined through place and thus through its changes, intertwines with mobility to create and perform the imaginative geographies of East London.

2. 'The city is infinite…': Imaginative Geographies & Theatricality

I use the term 'imaginative geographies' – or 'imaginaries' – to refer to the constructed understandings of place. The corporeal experience of walking *The Missing Voice* makes the theatricality of these constructions palpable. As I walk, the geography that Cardiff imagines cuts into the geography I imagine and I can feel the difference between the spaces we move in. Or I am aware of how it feels to move in London in 2011 because it is different to how Cardiff performs moving in London in 1999. 'Imaginative geographies' is a term Derek Gregory theorises in *The Colonial Present*, where he offers the following definition: 'Imaginative geographies are not only accumulations of time, sedimentations of successive histories; they are also *performances of space*' (18, original emphasis). I draw on Gregory's definition for a number of reasons: most significantly for his understanding of – and emphasis on – imaginative geographies as '*performances of space*', since my specific concern is with how Cardiff's piece uses the kinesthetic experience of walking to engage with the theatricality of the city. But it is also important to note that in *The Colonial Present*, which focuses on the post 9/11 Middle East, Gregory is writing about how imaginative geographies link the vast geopolitical landscape of the contemporary west to the daily reality of life in Afghanistan, Palestine and Iraq. Although Cardiff's walk has a less overt political agenda, the relationship

between the movements of our bodies, the spaces we inhibit and the histories of those spaces are always political. Although I will not focus on the 'sedimentations of successive histories' at play in East London, the use of Gregory's succinct definition gestures to both the importance of concepts travelling between disciplines (see Bal and Marx-MacDonald) as well as to inescapable links between global geopolitics and daily movement on the street. As Gregory argues, these imaginaries matter because 'representations are not mere mirrors of the world, they enter directly into its fabrication' (121). His understanding that imaginaries as 'performances of space' are social, cultural and political realities, is a reminder that these constructions – despite their supposed fixity or ephemerality – are lived experiences and possess the potential for reimagining. Our imaginations and performances are the means through which we create, for better or worse, the world we live in.

Following this, my critical kinesthetic engagement with the particular geography of London enables me to engage with the construction of imaginaries and their weight as performed realities. I argue that an awareness of our kinesthetic interaction challenges a totalising view of the city by offering a way to account for a creation of place through multiple, corporeally contingent imaginaries. The construction of space through performance provides a means for interrogating how a kinesthetic presence is implicated in geographical imaginings. By participating in performances such as Cardiff's, it is possible to court a theatricality that illustrates how space performs itself and how we engage corporeally with, and assist in, that performance.

I sit outside a church near Liverpool St Station as Cardiff talks about a man on the other side of the Atlantic who asks her if it is true there is a blue sky over London today. I am overwhelmed by the sensation of being on the other side of the world – I experience the moment of feeling the physical distance between myself and someone I love on the other side of the Atlantic. Cardiff continues to talk. She walks naked across a floor. She dreams she is a solider. Cardiff and I sit in the churchyard park, a decade apart, daydreaming. I think about my cold body, underdressed for London's winter, and wondering if she did better. Something feels predictable about sitting in a churchyard park daydreaming. *The Missing Voice*, by staging its performance in the streets of London,

makes the daily space of the city the subject of this scrutiny. Josette Feral, in 'Performance and Theatricality: the Subject Demystified', posits that performance 'rejects the symbolic organization dominating theatre and exposes the conditions of theatricality as they are. Theatricality is made up of (…) the position of the subject in process within an imaginary constructive space' (177; see also Fischer-Lichte; Davis). Theatricality is a mode of representation in which the structures that create meaning are rendered visible and the spectator's role in the construction of this meaning is exposed.

Half way through *The Missing Voice*, Cardiff points out a banana peel on the ground (*The Missing Voice*). It is not there in my walk, but I look and prepare to shift to avoid it while still walking in sync with footsteps that underlie the whole piece. The construction of London's imaginative geography is not only visible but physically tangible as the performance is walked, the actual street and the imagined street exposing each other's construction. I am in London where Cardiff was in London, reacting to my own concrete space as well as Cardiff's, both narratives colluding in the imaginative geography of this place. For this performance, the audience is one person who becomes increasingly aware of how her aural and kinesthetic experiences contribute to the imagining of the city. Within the highly performative context of the city, where the meanings and values of a space are 'generated' through interactions with and in that place, theatricality extends and challenges performativity's citational 'doing' of an imaginary. A body as 'sensory feedback' becomes the product of the tension between citationality and spectatorial awareness. Moving *within* these iterations, one comes to see the processes that construct and characterise these performances. The kinesthetic experience of participating in the physical space of the city creates knowledge through interaction with the (often self-authored) encountered.

4. 'I want you to walk with me': East London and *The Missing Voice*

The difficulty of isolating 'meaning' within a city is what makes the embodied experience of walking through the city so important. Steve Pile, in 'The Problem of London', emphasises invisibility and disappearance as constants in any engagement with the city. Understanding that London is known through 'these experiences

[that] appear to be wholly absent, secret, invisible […] sharpest at the point of disappearance' (Pile 203), requires an approach to knowing the city that acknowledges a complicity in precariousness. Walking then becomes a way to unearth this precariousness: a body creates knowledge as it walks. It is through the corporeal experience of the city I move in that I imagine and perform it. Its theatricality – the self-reflexive awareness of these performances – makes walking a tactic of engagement: it becomes a critical spatial practice in Jane Rendell's sense, insofar as 'walking proposes a design method that enables one to imagine beyond the present condition without freezing possibility into form' (*Art and Architecture* 188). Instability becomes an aspect of, not detractive from, the structure of an engagement with space and, in doing so, allows the possibilities of alternative imaginative geographies of the city to reveal themselves. At one point Cardiff asks: 'How can we just walk over their footsteps and not remember?' (*The Missing Voice*). The weight of moving in the city, on top of the accumulated histories, becomes overwhelming. Already aware of the attempt to follow Cardiff's footsteps, the question makes me alive to the kinesthetic reality of being in a place layered with the moods and experiences of others.

Walking, as an individual in motion, is well suited to this kind of resistance and yet has a lasting effect that is remembered through its kinesthetic impact, its corporeal existence in muscles. The possibilities of walking as a challenge to normative uses of space is present in a range of works; Cardiff walks to expose the tension between the past geographies and the present in an urban space, other artists achieve 'critical exposure' of the normative in other ways. The walker is co-independent of the city, operating with autonomies that necessarily co-exist and allow the distance that creates theatricality. Lottie Child, for instance, performs a tactical engagement with urban architecture through works such as Street Training and ClimbingClub, which imagine new ways of moving. Wrights & Sites have created various guides, both site-specific and site-generic, for walks that provoke new engagement with space. These artists, like Cardiff, emphasise the kinesthetic complicity of an individual within a city by reorienting the purpose of walking. Destination gives way to mobility. I am given space to be attentive both to the experience of moving now and the 'sedimentations of successive histories' the present is comprised of. Early on, Cardiff

listens to a recording of her voice and remarks, 'She describes things I don't remember seeing' (*The Missing Voice*). This is what it feels like to walk with Cardiff but also alone. The differences between her presence and my present, the changeable city, are obvious. Less apparent, but still present, is my own knowledge of London and the reoccurring feeling of lost and found I have as I orient myself and then find I am lost again. I am reminded of how physical a feeling it is to know where you are, how tangible the sensation of being located and dislocated is. My walking re-orders my surroundings with each step, re-activates the knowledge generated in movements and thus re-engages with the sites I move through. In doing so, it is possible to contribute to the imagining of these actual geographies as temporary gestures and lasting movements. The space is re-made through these dynamic interactions and a continual process of creation becomes the emphasis.

Cardiff's instructions foreground the isolation of an urban walker; at the end of the first section, I have to cross Commercial Street and Cardiff tells me: 'Wait for the cars to stop and then cross over when you can. I'll meet you on the other side' (*The Missing Voice*). Temporarily abandoned to make my own way across the road, I felt the isolation of the city and experienced the strange sensations of both missing someone as well as the knowledge that I continued to follow/be followed. It is a kind of intermission to the piece, all of the information that is being performed is temporarily suspended and the audience – me alone – reflects on what is happening and how that imaginary world is coming to bear on the actual one. I cross when there are no cars coming, not when the light changes, and I feel the familiar tension, even after eight months in London, as I hope I have looked the right way in my distraction. Later in the walk, Cardiff expresses similar sentiments when she remarks on the necessity of marking 'LOOK RIGHT' or 'LOOK LEFT' across London roads (*The Missing Voice*). Walking across the street, I feel my own footsteps trying to catch up with, and echo in, Cardiff's. These moments expose the planning and control of *The Missing Voice* and, in doing so, allow the walker to contemplate how she is engaged with the city and wonder if participating in another's story is altering that engagement.

The Missing Voice declares repeatedly that it is guiding me, attempting to provoke a specific, or at least self-reflexive, kinesthetic

experience by drawing my attention to the details of the city that affect my movement. The writing on the road, the sound of the car or being left to cross Commercial Street alone, all underlie the particularity of my experience through the corporeality of the experience. Yet, at the same time, participation in Cardiff's performance emphasises how firmly imbricated in the reality of the city my corporeality is. I walk alone and yet I walk with Cardiff. *The Missing Voice* reminds me that my present is not the only presence. Petra Kuppers opens her article 'Moving in the Cityspace', in which she argues that the *flâneur*'s walking of a city can be used to resist the metaphorical body that dominates contemporary theory, with the reminder that 'Cities are not just made out of concrete, glass and bricks, but live in the bodies, habits, and movements of their inhabitants' (308). This is what *The Missing Voice* reveals, by repeatedly drawing attention back to the relationship between a body that walks through the city, the concrete spaces of that city and the histories that accumulate. By participating in *The Missing Voice*, I allow my experience of moving through the city to be affected by Cardiff's and, as a result, I recall the other ways the city affects me. I am reminded that to be in the city is intensely physical, that I know the city through my body as it tenses, as it slides between the crowds, as I walk quickly and purposefully through the onslaught of other urban bodies. The kinesthetic experience of walking, the physical feedback between my self and my surroundings is essential to the potential of presence:

> [T]he body […] reasserts itself as always already there – not as something 'brute' or 'hindering' or 'essential', but as something that takes part in the act of watching, essential to the participation in culture. This physicality, the inertia, the being in time and space, can be an insertion point for resistances and re-inscriptions. (316)

Both Kupper's article and Cardiff's walk underline that movement is not any one thing and to move in the city is not simple. It is through presence that a person re-does – re-asserts, re-imagines, re-performs, resists and re-inscribes – the possibilities of a place. To be present in the city is to participate in it and to move in the city is to

perform it. *The Missing Voice* relies on the always already presence of the subject who, in walking, inserts herself into the imaginative geographies of East London and who, in that participation, sees the construction of and re-constructs that performance.

5. 'I have to leave now…'

The Missing Voice ends with Cardiff abandoning me in Liverpool Street Station with the statement: 'I have to leave now. I wanted to walk you back to the library, but there is not enough time' (*The Missing Voice*). There is no longer a library to make one's way back to, which simply underscores the disappearance and change that characterises the city and Cardiff's piece. In the walk back to the Whitechapel Gallery, the effect of the performed walk becomes clear. I am hyper-aware, as I walk through the city, of sensing the pavement and stones that I step on: aware of the men in suits I could choose to follow as Cardiff suggests, or who could be following me. I hear music in shops, I wait for lights to change, I move away from Liverpool Street Station into the gentrified Spitalfields Market and back towards Whitechapel Road. This hyper-awareness means I think I can sense the shifts as I move; I wonder what the other walkers of the city think and feel as they perform their own versions of this stretch of Commercial Street. I think of Cardiff again – 'The city is infinite. No one has ever found an end to the pattern of streets' (*The Missing Voice*) – as I cut a straightforward path back to the Whitechapel Gallery, briefly crossing Cardiff's surreptitious tour of East London, but not re-tracing it.

No longer led by Cardiff's voice, I wonder if I temporarily suspended my agency as a walker in the city to follow her, or if something different happened. Each body/person who moves through the city encounters its spaces differently, but it is in the myriad corporeal engagements that a city comes to exist as the city it is. My movements contribute to the imaginative geographies I move through; however, the 'thought-filled' walking through the city means that movement is not alienating but instead essential to the construction of a subjecthood that is contingent and dynamic. How we imagine our spaces and how our presence constructs those imaginaries matters because 'representations are not mere mirrors of the world, they enter directly into its fabrication' (Gregory 121). Walking *The Missing Voice* makes clear the degree to which we

are corporeally implicated in the fabrication of our spaces – it is not simply visible construction but an indistinguishably embodied and intellectual presence that makes our spaces. The kinesthetic 'sensory feedback' imagines new places as it understands those already present. London becomes London as we perform it and it is constantly re-constructed through our performances.

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Book Reviews

***Modern British Playwriting: The 1990s* by Aleks Sierz**
London: Methuen Drama, 2012, 277 pp. (softback)
By Louise LePage

1990s British playwriting is best characterised as 'in-yer-face': so suggested Aleks Sierz in his 2001 book, *In-Yer-Face Theatre*, which identified the decade's theatre as aiming to shock or provoke audiences via the depiction of extremes in a form that was experiential and typified by the work of Philip Ridley, Sarah Kane, Anthony Neilson and Mark Ravenhill. In the intervening years, Sierz's narrative has met with sustained critique and alternative accounts have manifested – most notably Ken Urban's 'Cruel Britannia'. However, the association of 1990s new writing with in-yer-face theatrical sensibility has proved tenacious, and it is in response to Sierz's own previous story that his new book positions itself.

Modern British Playwriting: The 1990s attempts to open the door to new frames by which to view the decade's writing in this penultimate volume in Methuen's series, which engages, decade by decade, with British playwriting from the 1950s to the 2000s. The series editors, Richard Boon and Philip Roberts, write that each volume 'focuses on key works' of its decade from the perspective of today while engaging, in detail, with 'the theatrical, social, political and cultural climate of the era' (vii).

Structurally, the book is something of a patchwork: a miscellany of academic scholarship, assorted documents (a monologue, interviews, a lecture) and 1990s history. It opens by offering a lively introductory survey of the decade's context – its education, media, culture, science, technology, industry, economics, funding, politics and so on – in a style that is entertaining, evocative and provocative. Sierz's first chapter goes on to describe 1990s theatre as responding to specific events, modes and structures of funding, working, thinking and living, all peculiar to the times. For all readers interested in the historical context and significant features of 1990s British theatre, this book provides vivid and comprehensive snapshots of the period and a concise introduction to its playwrights, theatre companies, theatres, funding bodies and preoccupations.

Chapter Two, 'Playwrights and Plays', offers four 'new, original, and often surprising perspectives' on four of the 'representative dramatists' and their 'key works' (viii): Sierz writes about Ridley, Catherine Rees about Kane, Trish Reid about Neilson and Graham Saunders about Ravenhill. Remarkably, of course, it is precisely Sierz's in-yer-face account of 1990s new writing that these perspectives work to go beyond, interrupt or oppose. On one level, choosing to focus the reassessments of the decade's new writing on the works of these writers, Sierz takes to task his earlier book. However, on another level, his choice of 'representative' dramatists – Ridley, Kane, Neilson and Ravenhill, the self-same protagonists of his *In-Yer-Face Theatre: British Drama Today* – means that, although Sierz's new book may indeed offer some alternative perspectives, these ultimately remain bound to the grand organising narrative of in-yer-face.

This volume is perhaps as much a reiteration, then, as it is a reassessment of 1990s new writing, although it does work hard to examine the plays of these purportedly in-yer-face dramatists through different optics. Sierz opens Chapter Two with an analysis of Ridley's early plays, identifying his play *The Pitchfork Disney* (1991) as 'an agenda-setting work: the era of in-yer-face theatre in London began with this play' (89), before going on to examine the plays by recourse to 'the gothic, the grotesque and the apocalyptic' (91).

About Kane's work, Rees asserts: '[i]t is time to reassess Kane's role as 'in-yer-face playwright' (113). For Rees, some 'other ways of theorising [Kane's] work' are 'the concepts of postdramatic theatre, trauma theory and theories of bodies, power, violence and institutions' (113). In this section of Chapter 2, Rees also looks to trouble Kane's position as a female playwright and questions how her suicide has affected readings of her plays (113). As a discussion that raises some of the key issues surrounding Kane's work in theatre criticism and scholarship, Rees's piece is useful, particularly, perhaps, for the student who is newly approaching Kane's work. Also, Rees's analysis is frequently insightful. However, her call for 'reassessment' in relation to Kane is, by 2013, a little redundant because the playwright, along with her work, has been assessed outside the frames of in-yer-face theatre and her suicide for a good number of years and articles approaching her plays with an interest in the postdramatic, trauma, bodies, power and violence already proliferate.

Ravenhill's work is reassessed by Graham Saunders, who offers, perhaps, the most original reassessment of arguably the most exemplary of the in-yer-face playwrights. Saunders recognises Ravenhill as 'creating a new type of political theatre' (164), which, though it may be, in some senses, as conventionally 'secretarial' as state-of-the-nation plays, also ushers in the new by its novel treatment of gay sexuality (164). Trish Reid, meanwhile, offers an engaging reassessment of Neilson's work, arguing that he demonstrates 'a consistent, almost demented, preoccupation with subjectivity' (142) and 'privileges an identity politics that transcends narrow or fixed definitions' (162). Reid connects this focus significantly to Neilson's Scottishness and, specifically, 'the imperative to "understand ourselves"' which attached to 'the referendum on devolution in 1997' (141).

The most intriguing and original part of the book is Sierz's 'Afterword', where he proposes some 'different optic[s]' (231) by which to consider 1990s theatre. Here, Sierz contemplates, for example, an alternative frame to in-yer-face as 'euro-modernism', and with it an alternative tradition deriving from continental modernism as opposed to British naturalism and 'dirty realism', taking in the work of Churchill, Barker, Crimp, Greig, Ravenhill, Phyllis Nagy, and David Harrower (232). Another suggested optic is 'older and darker, not younger' (233) and a shift from the cult of youth to one of age and experience, for, writes Sierz, 'in reality the most influential playwrights of the 1990s were older hands: Harold Pinter, Edward Bond, Churchill, Steven Berkoff and Crimp' (233). Perhaps the most provocative of Sierz's proposals concerns the '*unpredictable real-life tragedy*' (233) of Jamie Bulger, the murdered toddler whose story is recounted by Ravenhill in the 'Documents' section of this book and considered by Sierz to constitute a determining factor of a certain form of drama in the 1990s. Of the Bulger case, Sierz writes:

> When in November 1993 the judge in the trial of the perpetrators explained the murder by speculating that the boys had been exposed to a violent video, *Child's Play 3*, this created a media storm which is the cultural context for British arts in the crucial time of the mid-1990s. The Bulger murder resulted

> in calls for […] censorship […]. So it's possible to conclude that without this killing, […] the theatre history of the 1990s might have been very different. (234)

This is a fascinating and compelling proposition. Of course, ironically, Sierz hereby brings us back via a circuitous path to a defense of in-yer-face theatre with its impulse to shock and provoke. However, en route, readers will have negotiated a volume that is built upon wide-ranging knowledge and excellent research, is full of original ideas, and enthusiastically engages with Britain's theatre history and culture through the 1990s and in so doing comprises an important introduction to 1990s theatre history and criticism.

***Modern British Playwriting: The 1970s* by Chris Megson**
London: Methuen Drama, 2012, 299 pp. (softback)
By Christopher O'Shaughnessy

Chris Megson's *Modern British Playwriting: The 1970s* is a compelling addition to the growing volume of books surveying and examining late twentieth-century British playwriting. Unlike some more general previous accounts (Innes, *Modern British Drama 1890-1990*; Billington, *State of the Nation*; Lane, *Contemporary British Drama*) this sharply focused yet panoramic reassessment takes its place among those studies (Itzin, *Stages in the Revolution*; Bull, *New British Political Dramatists*; Wandor, *Carry On, Understudies*) which concentrate on a chosen decade. The book is part of a series of six volumes seeking to 'characterise the nature of modern British playwriting from the 1950s to the end of the first decade of this new century' (ix).

Although the title has three sub-headings – *Voices, Documents, New Interpretations* – the book falls thematically into two sections: a detailed and evocative overview of life and theatre during the chosen period together with a critical engagement of the work of four representative authors (Caryl Churchill, David Hare, Howard Brenton and David Edgar) and a section documenting interviews with and responses from theatre practitioners. This second section amounts to a book in itself and is reminiscent,

in style, of Delgado and Heritage's *In Contact with the Gods: Directors Talk Theatre*.

Megson situates the phenomenon of playwriting within the ethos of the period and shows how the authorial voices in the plays interact with or are provoked by that ethos into dynamic creative activity for the stage. Looking at the period 'from the perspective of the twenty-first century' (ix), a declared aim of the series, facilitates interesting and unusual evaluations and, indeed, new interpretations of what has come to be seen as seminal work. The seventies is evoked as a decade of 'transformations [...] that bestowed an egalitarian legacy' (84) in the theatre and not merely an interim period of stasis and recovery from the exuberant sixties, or what Francis Wheen calls 'a long Sunday evening in winter' (84). It was a decade 'when British theatre artists sought to actualise, through the struggle of making and presenting new kinds of performance, a more equitable way of doing life' (84). The seventies is seen to overspill back into the sixties (178) and forward into the eighties (84), with repercussions which we can still observe and acknowledge today (see Youde, 'Politics is Making a Comeback').

The book, like Dan Rebellato's *1956 and All That*, offers a critique and mapping of the shifting political perspectives at work in the theatre of the period – and the ongoing reframing of those perspectives through a developing critical consciousness. The account, like other previous studies, is suffused with a transparent liberal leftist perspective, emphasising the radical politicisation of theatre.

This transparency is observable in the four essays on the selected playwrights: Caryl Churchill by Paola Botham, David Hare by Chris Megson, Howard Brenton by Richard Boon and David Edgar by Janelle Reinelt (99-203). These essays form a substantial part of the first section of the book (104 out of 203 pages) and are possibly what many theatre students will scour the book for.

Paola Botham, in reclaiming Caryl Churchill as a socialist-feminist playwright whose seventies work still resonates with us today, shows, surprisingly, a non-critical acceptance of Judith Butler's 'anti-essentialist' theory of gender in making her (persuasive) case (117-18). Paradoxically, in her study of *Owners, Vinegar Tom and Cloud Nine*, Botham reveals Churchill's own ongoing and unafraid critical awareness of 'received' feminist and socialist assumptions (122).

Chris Megson's admiration for David Hare's work seeps into his analysis of *Slag*, *Fanshen* and *Plenty*, 'arguably the quintessential "state of the nation" play of the 1970s' (144). He carefully maps how Hare's work evolved from 'crudity to style' (145) and, illuminatingly, demonstrates how a contingent critical consciousness of socialist attitudes informed the writing of the plays.

Richard Boon, to some extent rehabilitating Howard Brenton as a source of academic interest, in his discursive, chatty essay, negotiates the plays through an interrogation of contemporary theatre reviews and, writing 'as a friend', points out how Brenton's multi-faceted talent survived eighties rejection only to be reclaimed now as prefiguring nineties 'in-yer-face theatre' with 'its rawness, its violence and its visceral, often disturbing, theatricality' (177).

Janelle Reinelt focuses on three pivotal plays of David Edgar: *Destiny, The Jail Diary of Albie Sachs* and *Mary Barnes*, responses to what Edgar perceived as the coalescing 'racism, xenophobia and fascism' of the period (182). In showing how Edgar's playwriting reflects the mercurial nature of seventies ethos, an underlying theme emerges of how the playwriting voice shape-shifts or adapts in rapid-response to quicksilver social change.

The four essays share the view that, throughout the decade, the playwrights' visions were constantly remade and reframed, sometimes with a clairvoyant aspect as in the case of Howard Brenton's prefiguring of nineties' dramaturgy.

The fascinating interviews in the *Documents* section (205-60) flesh-out as personal-witness accounts themes such as the experience of working in physical theatre and the challenge made to 'the content and formal conventions of established theatre' (84).

A title like *Modern British Playwriting: The 1970s* precludes an evaluation of the many revivals in the seventies of earlier British playwrights like Noel Coward (*Private Lives* (1972), Queens Theatre), Somerset Maugham (*For Services Rendered* (1979), Royal National Theatre) and Bernard Shaw (*The Millionaires* (1978), Haymarket) and a consequent concomitant estimation of how these revivals may have characterised or reflected the political values and searchings of contemporary work. As David Edgar observed and is quoted by Megson in the book: there evolved a 'subtle privatisation of concern [...] as the "we" decade turned intothe "me" decade' (84).

The emphasis here is on original home-grown writing which evolved during the period and not on revivals of earlier work which might have channelled such an observation.

Chris Megson's *Modern British Playwriting: The 1970s* is an outstanding example of its genre, giving an account of a remarkably self-critiquing period in British theatre history and which, with its own searching dynamic, offers with intellectual honesty a clear and thought-provoking interrogation of those times. The end Notes, Select Bibliography and the Index are a model of their kind.

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***An Introduction to Theatre Design* by Stephen Di Benedetto**
Abingdon: Routledge, 2012, 222 pp. (softback)
By Mark Swetz

The intended audience for *An Introduction to Theatre Design* by Stephen Di Benedetto is an undergraduate or someone wanting a general introduction to the topic. Although there are many books on the individual aspects of stage design, there are few that survey scenery, lighting, costume and sound under one cover (see below for examples). Di Benedetto's book is handsome. Its pages are filled with a diversity of images covering a broad range of stage design. The book includes history, context, numerous examples and quotes from a wide range of practitioners.

The case studies, which punctuate every chapter, include introductory excerpts of script analysis or other contextual detail framing design choices. For example, the story of King Admète is outlined before discussing Robert Wilson's use of horizontal and vertical lines in *Alceste* (65). The challenge of a loud ventilation system for sound design is explained in the example of *Wicked* (174). Di Benedetto succeeds in highlighting the complexity of designer's analysis and considerations and invites readers to be reflective, critical and inquisitive about the elements they may see or hear in the theatre. In each chapter, there is a discussion of how the designers in each discipline collaborate with their peers and then a final chapter on 'The Collaborative Process' that summarises these dynamics and examples.

While the photos and images are excellent and frequently illustrate points that are made in the text, there are some omissions, particularly in the early chapters. Examples of productions are prominently cited in the text that might have benefited from corresponding illustration (acknowledging spatial limitations) and there are a few times where the author arguably presumes too much knowledge from a neophyte readership; references to Brook's *Midsummer Night's Dream* (20) or how a traditional Mielziner set would be inappropriate for an arena stage (15) expect a level of familiarity that would be unusual from someone new to theatre or design studies. There are also names referred to throughout the text that would benefit from a little more context. Appia and Craig are mentioned significantly on page five, but there is no explanation of

who they are until page thirty-six. Citations prominently featured in brown text throughout the book may have been better accompanied with dates; dates would help identify if the person is living and in which period they worked. It would also help to identify the profession or contextual perspective of these speakers, many of whom were unfamiliar to this reader. While these names can be found in the index, props or properties receive no index citation (or consideration as a separate design area), nor does opera, make-up, hair, wigs or CAD; while these areas are mentioned in passing within the text, it would have been valuable to see them explored with some focus and clearly indicated in the index.

Although the book uses excellent up-to-date examples and is handsomely illustrated with contemporary shows like *Red*, *Shrek* and *Warhorse*, the overall approach to the subject seems conventional. The tone is set in the first chapter, when the author outlines a 'hierarchy of designers' (5) from set design at the top, followed by costumes, lights and sound. Di Benedetto makes the point that this is the order in which elements are usually added or considered in production, but it would have been valuable to see this hierarchy of designers questioned. In this reader's experience as a practitioner, every performance project brings different design priorities that challenge the idea of a formulaic order. From a book on design in 2012, I also expected more about the evolution of theatre technology and was surprised to find only passing references to design software, moving lights and projections. For example, projection design is starting to be taught as a distinct subject in training programmes and is becoming a much more frequent feature of theatrical design. In this book, it is mentioned anecdotally and it would have been useful to see some more analysis of this emerging art form. Sound is also framed, by implication, as a poor cousin to the other design elements in this book. The chapter on sound is an excellent technical overview of the designer's process and tools, but there is no discussion on the affective qualities of sound, which is surprising given Di Benedetto's background in sensorial studies and the earlier chapter in this book on 'Visual Thinking'.

Di Benedetto's most recent competitors in introductory theatre design are J. Michael Gillette's *Theatrical Design and Production* (seventh edition, 2012) and Karen Brewster and Melissa Shafer's *Fundamentals of Theatrical Design* (2011). Gillette's

offering is much more comprehensive, but also an expensive and heavy (640 pages, hardback only) textbook perhaps best suited to libraries or bookshelves, rather than a student's rucksack. Brewster and Shafer's book does not include consideration of theatre sound (a major omission) and is more US-centric. Having said this, the structure and content of Brewster and Shafer's book is easier to navigate and, for my tastes, more logical and more practical. For someone looking towards design as a profession, they include a chapter on a design career and some very useful appendices – résumés, cover letters, union information and various design tools. It is a comparable size and price, so it should be seriously considered against Di Benedetto's text.

Overall, *An Introduction to Theatre Design* is a generously illustrated text that covers a large territory in just over two hundred pages. Its strength is in explaining the process and considerations of set, costume, lighting and sound design to a reader encountering these areas for the first time. The case studies, photos, quotes and thorough glossary all contribute to supporting the material and encouraging the reader to engage with these topics more critically.

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***Good Luck Everybody: Lone Twin – Journeys, Performances, Conversations* by David Williams and Carl Lavery**

Aberystwyth: Performance Research Books, 2011, 363 pp. (softback)

By Anna Sereni

Good Luck Everybody is as unifying, collaborative and hopeful as its title suggests (1). David Williams and Carl Lavery produce an impressive accruement on the performance genius of Lone Twin: Greg Whelan and Gary Winters. From the outset the book contextualises the duo's work in the field of Theatre and

Performance as relational, societal and in line with current research that focuses on the affective potentials of performance making.

The collection aims, as the introduction states, to 'engage creatively and critically with Lone Twin's evolving concerns and diverse modes of practice, conceiving a range of theoretical and interdisciplinary perspectives' (5). Calling on a rich vista of sources including scholars, artists, photographs, video frames of objects and notebooks, the book tells the reader a story. A story is the mediation for the 'telling' of an event. To tell is a complex paradox because it is both central and peripheral, as well as absent and present in the consciousness of a story.

It is through this diverse mediation that we understand the text's aim: to reveal the affective potentials of the everyday through language, images and encounters that exist in Lone Twin's performances and journeys. In her polemic, 'Crisis of the Republic', Hannah Arendt concludes that 'action is of course the very stuff politics are made of' (6). Arendt's suggestion that interaction between individuals leads to debate and creates interest and activity is posited at the heart of Lone Twin and the text succeeds in amplifying this with a variety of examples, whether it be extracts from the performance text of *Nine Years* (2006), conversations with Whelan and Winters, or the analysis of grammar and modes of public address in *On Everest* (1997).

The book begins with a conversation where Lone Twin are championed as the bastions of relationality with a claim by Alan Read. He argues that in contemporary culture and performance there is no longer a desire or 'language to express kindness anymore' (11). In spite of this, according to Read, Lone Twin have found a way. For Read, the concept of relationality, or 'kindness', makes any thing possible (7). Furthermore, the work of Lone Twin captures this kindness through their exploration of storytelling, language, traces, speech and their encounters of everyday life. *Good Luck Everybody* appraises these categories both individually and collectively in order to demonstrate the importance of affective possibilities in everyday life (1).

The book is organized into five themed categories that explore the 'intellectual, aesthetic and social contexts' (14) that underpin the duo's commitment to participatory art. In conjunction with scholars and artists, conversations with Whelan and Winters

follow each section allowing the reader a rollercoaster type adventure through its pages.

Part two, 'Travel Logs: Places, Journeys, Walking' offers a rousing exploration of the relationship between journeys, narratives and traces in Lone Twin's work, in particular *Totem* (1998) and *Spiral* (2007). Here, Esther Pilkington describes Lone Twin's excursions as odyssean journeys, because they bring back stories that recount their experiences and their encounters along the way. These encounters are turned into narratives and they then tell their stories. However, they also tell other people's stories because 'Other people's stories are Lone Twin's travel stories; their travel stories are other peoples' stories' (68). Taking influence from Italian philosopher Adriana Cavarero, who recognises the relationality of storytelling, Lone Twin are presented as negotiators between 'event, memory, documentation, and narration' (67). Emma Brodzinski discusses how Lone Twin's journeys have a distinct relationship to place. She reminds the reader that walking is storytelling: as the traveler is moving from one place to another, 'making room for a void', he is both central in the current place he occupies and peripheral to the one he is about to move into. It is here that encounters can occur and this begins to reveal the relationship between storytelling, place and narration.

Part three, 'Labours of Love: How One thing Becomes Another', concentrates on places and people, starting with Augusto Corrier who provides a critical reflection on his experience of performing Lone Twin's *Ghost Dance* (2005). Corrier explains the engagement required in performing a piece 'that [although it] goes nowhere', produces unexpected encounters that work on banality and not spectacle (146). For him, this causes the spectator to join in, making a 'joyful and hopeful achievement' and affirming the affective potential the text seeks to claim (147).

Categories collapse in part four, 'Language, Writing, Reading, Speeching', where John Hall closely examines the performative function of these elements in Lone Twin's work. Words and their sociality are continuously reappraised through the script of *Sledge Hammer Songs* (2003). Hall employs complex diagrams to help endorse Whelan and Winters' inherent commitment to sociality through their use of both private and public language.

Part five sees a continuation of this topic, but brings us

back to the book's primary concern of storytelling and the ethics surrounding it. The idea of affective potential that is at the core of the book's message is fully realised through a story because, as Richard Kearney's *On Stories* (2002) attests, 'narrative is an open-ended invitation to ethical and political responsiveness' (156).

The range and scope of Lavery and Williams' book is impressive. Its approach to the topic is also deliberatively affective imploring readers to navigate its pages as they see fit, highlighting the varying potentials with such freedom. However, such a structure does, at times, conflate the information the text tries to compartmentalise.

Each section convincingly sets out how the affective potentials in Lone Twin's work are realised. Dense, critical discussions of place, language, space, storytelling and encounters offer strong academic insight into the role of applied theatre in performance studies. Although it is surprising not to see reference to the theories of affective performance and relational art from scholars such as James Thompson and Claire Bishop, this is merely a point of alignment for an otherwise abundance of critical and theoretical analysis. Lavery and Williams' attention to details resonates loudly with Thompson's *Performance Affects*, doing precisely what Thompson calls out for. It does not focus solely on effects, social outcomes, messages or impacts; instead it captures the essence of Lone Twin: the 'radical potential of the freedom to enjoy beautiful radiant things' (Thompson 6). This is something the text recognises and emphasises throughout, but it could be celebrated more. It communicates Lone Twin's work as a successful disruption between the visible, the sayable and the thinkable. Recognising the power of affect in this disruption in bodily responses, sensations and aesthetic pleasures, *Good Luck Everybody* defends the chance in encounters and the potentials at stake in our everyday lives. It kills us with kindness, however uncomfortable that may be.

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