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FROM THE EDITOR

Although this is not a themed issue, certain themes do transcend individual essays: the potency of the silent human body to signify in performance, anxieties about female bodies and the disruptive power of Dionysus, and the historical uses of performance as an arena where cultural anxieties are rehearsed, enacted, and refracted through the optics of temporal, geographic, and kinetic "others." We are also thrilled to be publishing multiple essays in dance studies and Slavic studies, as this expresses our current editorial commitment both to dance and internationalization.

The first article, by Anastasia Kayiatos, focuses on the prominence of pantomime in the post-Stalinist Soviet Union during the mid-1950s. In meditating on the "hidden, rebellious meaning [that] inhered in the movements of soundless bodies," Kayiatos tells us not just of the ways in which silence itself was a speech act, but also the ways silence could be coded simultaneously as both subversive in artistic spheres and defective and lacking agency in the realm of disability. She examines the coincident rise of theatrical pantomime and "defectology," a discipline focused on speech pathology and the condition of "deaf-mutes." Not merely a comparative analysis of these two spheres of silence in the Soviet Union, Kayiatos's essay looks at the connection and overlap between them, as avant-garde acting troupes drew heavily upon and collaborated with the signing techniques of deaf-mute peers. In telling us about the Moscow Theatre of Mimicry and Gesture of the All-Russian Society of the Deaf, Kayiatos not only documents an early professional deaf theatre but also brings to these pages the vibrant and growing field of disability studies—an area that to my knowledge has never before been featured in the fifty-year history of *Theatre Survey*.

Quite serendipitously, we are also publishing another fine Slavic piece, one by Dassia Posner on an earlier period of Russian theatre history. She examines Aleksandr Tairov's 1920 production of *Princess Brambilla, A Capriccio of the Kamerny Theatre*, *after Hoffmann*. Often in the shadow of the more prominent Vsevelod Meyerhold, Tairov's work comes alive in Posner's essay particularly through her imaginative and diligent use of a neglected promptbook. What emerges is a view of the complex mise-en-scène of Tairov's "joyful" theatre, as well as a vision of how he used temporally and geographically distant sources—an 1820 E. T. A. Hoffmann novella, and through it, commedia dell'arte engravings—as a backdrop against which contemporary concerns of a rapidly darkening Soviet Russia were enacted. Posner also shows us how theory is embedded in a theatrical promptbook, and as with Kayiatos's essay, the silent body via dance and pantomime appears with refreshing potency, dense with signification.

A complex refraction of contemporary anxieties through selective appropriations of the past is also evident in Odai Johnson's sly and witty article

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"Dionysus in 1769: Desire and Sublimation in the English Theatre—A Gothic Tale." In examining the eighteenth-century penchant for all things Greek, Johnson focuses on "the unwelcomed and slightly embarrassing arrival of Dionysus as part of the new classical vocabulary, the subsequent exclusion of Dionysus from the theatre's newfound classical heritage, and, finally, inexorably, the return of the suppressed god in spite of his exclusion." At the center of this story is the antiquarian Sir William Hamilton, who both excavates and attempts to rebury the erotic potency of Priapic and Bacchic vase paintings. But as Johnson shows us, "[e]cstatic maenads, randy satyrs, and followers of the god of the grape" are wily and not easily restrained.

Perhaps fears of Dionysus were also at work in ballet when it was introduced to Jacksonian America. Christopher Martin's essay shows us how ballerinas were seen both as controversial "instruments of vice" and as bearers of legitimizing Old World culture. He anchors his analysis in the first two American-born ballerinas, Augusta Maywood and Mary Ann Lee, while also looking at the reception of a wave of European ballerinas who performed in the New World at this time. Just as eighteenth-century England looked to Ancient Greece to establish cultural legitimacy, America looked to Europe as a mirror for its self-fashionings. Audiences debated whether the Romantic ballet, imported from the Old World, should be embraced or rejected as an art form for the new nation. Martin helps us to realize that the evolving critical reception of ballet in Jacksonian America reveals much not only about the understudied female performers of this era, but also about evolving notions of gender, domesticity, and womanhood.

The journal's focus on dance is the fulfillment of a deliberate editorial agenda formulated by *Theatre Survey* last year, with its first expression being the appointment of preeminent dance scholar Susan Leigh Foster to our Editorial Board. With her assistance, we commissioned a *Re:* Sources column for this issue from dance scholar Jill Nunes Jensen. In her piece "Creating a Contemporary Archive," Jensen meditates on the dynamics of a modern dance archive in formation, that of the San Francisco–based company Alonzo King LINES Ballet. Although King's choreography is created in a highly collaborative way with dancers who are distinctive in their hyperflexibility and idiosyncrasy, his company's archives—like those of many dance companies—seem inevitably to spin in the direction of valorizing the choreographer as sole author. This erases the generative role that dancers play in the creative process, a role that is especially prominent in the LINES company as dancers influence and rewrite choreography. Jensen reminds us that the archive of a dancer's body, his or her "blood memory" (to use Jacqueline Shea Murphy's term), is far richer and representative of the art form than usual archival documentation tends to reflect. She challenges us to think about what ethnographic methods might be used to create different kinds of dance archives.

Regular readers of *Theatre Survey* will know that several years ago former Editor Jody Enders instituted a new column called "What Are You Reading?" in which select scholars provide readers with a glimpse of the tomes currently residing on their desks and nightstands. At the suggestion of two board

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members—Susan Foster and Joseph Roach—we are experimenting in this issue with a variation on this column. "What Are You Watching" will take readers on a tour of some contemporary productions. Our first installment is written by Foster herself, who guides us through her experience both watching and ruminating for many months over a site-specific dance performance called *Women and Water* by Alutiiq artist Tanya Lukin Linklater. Foster articulates how this performance, which included a potlatch of its props and ritualistic elements, served as its own iteration of an archive, one in which "the past is sown into the present and grown anew."

Our final contribution, "The Performance and Pedagogy of Neoliberal Affect" by Eng-Beng Lim, Lisa Duggan, and José Esteban Muñoz, is the first "Critical Stages" column to be commissioned by the new incoming editor, Patrick Anderson. Here Anderson opens up *Theatre Survey's* pages to collaborative authorship, a practice quite routine in the sciences but oddly eschewed in the humanities, where sole authorship is fetishized despite the fact that our own field, performance, is collaborative in nature. Lim, Duggan, and Muñoz take us into the critical care unit where the status of higher education in America lays in a compromised and highly vulnerable state at the moment. Under the cloak of a present economic crisis, the forces of privatization are currently accelerating a profound reformulation of the very foundations of the academy.

Located as I am at the University of California, Berkeley, which seems poised on one of the major fault lines of higher education, this issue's "Critical Stages" column has particular resonance. We seem to be at a paradigm-shifting moment in the academy. If neoliberal forces are capable of using a crisis to their advantage, surely we can too. Will theatre and performance studies scholars play a leading role in reimagining what we want our universities to become? I am reminded of Evan Darwin Winet's contribution to the Fall 2009 "State of the Profession" panel at the American Society for Theatre Research conference. After a grueling six-year trek through a series of temporary appointments, Winet ended up leaving our profession and instead pursuing a law degree. As he urged,

> We must never let ourselves become complicit with the neoliberal administrative logic that spins choices like mine of "alternate careers" as evidence of the fungibility of the Ph.D. As evidence, that is, that the system is working fine. A system that leaves perhaps a third of all degree-holders without the jobs they prepared for is not working fine. It is wasteful. It is deceitful.[1]

In the "Critical Stages" column, José Esteban Muñoz frames the overarching question, "What is to be done?" And the three authors point to alternative routes of response: the laugh, the two-faced progressive-leftie, and the "radical undead who rises in contradistinction to the liberal, the conservative, and the newly incorporated neoliberal to haunt the university's uncritical navigation of global routes and the performance of global feelings for profit." To this we might add another: the leader. For when a president of one of the largest, most prestigious public university system's in the world tells the *New York Times* the

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"shine is off education," that it's been "crowded out by other priorities," we are certainly in desperate need of leadership.[2] Given that our field of theatre and performance studies is located precisely at the intersection of theory and practice, ideas and their collaborative realization in three dimensions, we might bring unique and important attributes for answering Berkeley urban studies scholar Ananya Roy's call for visionary leadership: "The struggle for the American public university requires visionary leadership that is able to inspire ordinary Americans as well as our elected representatives to invest in our collective future. . . . It means demonstrating how and why the knowledge produced in such universities serves the public interest. It means sparking and leading a national debate about policy priorities."[3] I invite readers and writers to see *Theatre Survey* as a staging ground and rehearsal space for imagining our discipline's unique role in a national debate and an international movement.

Finally I want to announce several important exits and entrances. After several years of dedicated leadership by Mike Sell, the baton of the "Critical Stages" editorship now passes, as noted earlier, to Patrick Anderson. We also wish to extend our heartfelt thanks to the Editorial Board members who have completed their terms: Martin Harries, Tejumola Olaniyan, Rebecca Schneider, and Claire Sponsler. At the same time we welcome new board members Lowell Fiet of the University of Puerto Rico–Río Piedras, Elizabeth Gunner of the University of Witwatersrand, Sonja Kuftinec from the University of Minnesota, and Daphne Lei of the University of California, Irvine. With the appointments of Lowell and Gunner, we are especially excited to extend our geographic reach beyond North America and Europe to the Caribbean and South Africa.

ENDNOTES

1. Evan Darwin Winet, "ASTR State of the Profession Plenary [no. 8]," delivered 15 November 2009; online at *http://astrconference.org/2009/11/24/astr-state-of-the-profession-plenary-evan-darwin-winet/* (accessed 23 January 2010).

2. Deborah Solomon, "Big Man on Campus: Questions for Mark Yudof," *New York Times*, 24 September 2009 (online edition), at *www.nytimes.com/2009/09/27/magazine/27fob-q4-t.html* (accessed 24 January 2010).

3. Quoted in "Reactions: Are Presidential Salaries Out of Whack?" *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 21 January 2010 (online edition), at *http://chronicle.com/article/Reactions-Are-Presidential/63678/* (accessed 24 January 2010).

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