

ABSTRACTS

Katalin Ágnes Bartha

■ ***Lili Poór and the Performances of New Types of Theatrical Body after 1945***

Keywords: *actor's body, performativity, socialist realist theatre aesthetics, bourgeois theatre of illusion, cultural practice, embodied practice*

The present paper attempts to explore the terrain of new body performativity in the case of the actress Lili Poór (1890-1962) in the context of the emerging socialist realist theatre aesthetics. According to its hypothesis, the main field of transformation in the Hungarian State Theatre of Cluj consists in the ideological-textual preparation sessions (Stanislavsky seminars, ideological meetings and rehearsals, as well as, with more sporadic occurrences, the practical field of possibilities for concrete encounters with workers and peasants); all these theoretical and professional practices, however, are more difficult and more gradual to transfer into the bodily repertoires than the institutions created and their leaders declare to be feasible and realized at a stroke. In order to investigate the new types of embodied performances on stage, I rely mainly on documents belonging to the internal, intimate public sphere of the Hungarian State Theatre of Cluj from 1945 to 1951, and I also make use of collegial review and press material. I focus the analysis on the aspects of the actress's embodied repertoire of knowledge in the context of her earlier career before 1945.

Erzsébet Bob Fülöp

■ ***"The Leaping Away of the Present": An Examination of the Mechanisms of Actor Mnemonics Based on Two Case Studies***

Keywords: *acting, forgetting, Heidegger, Husserl, mnemonics*

This study examines the encoding-retrieval-forgetting mechanism operative within an actor's performance

score based on two case studies, focusing primarily on forgetting as the failure of retrieval. The duration of creating theatrical performances roughly corresponds to a one-month interval, which can be interpreted as a targeted memorization act in the encoding-retrieval process. During this period, the performance score becomes ingrained in the actor's memory through specific contextual cues. This research investigates the mechanisms underlying actor mnemonic processes in performances played over several years, exploring the cognitive processes leading to score forgetting after precise recollection for the performance and associated memory consolidation have occurred and persisted for years. How is it possible that the role score encoded in the actor's memory, which has been successfully recalled for years without information loss, suddenly gets erased for a few seconds through sudden forgetting or memory loss? What cognitive effect could have hindered, disrupted, or suddenly wiped out what was already established? Can we attribute it to chance? Or rather interference? Or is it about Schachter's "short circuit" in the memory system? If we were to examine forgetting from the perspective of Heidegger's Dasein, the being-there, then the explanation lies in the "leaping away of the present" (Heidegger). I discuss my forgetting of the scores created in two performances at the National Theatre of Târgu-Mureş – *The Devil's Trial* and *Rats* – and through the microanalysis of forgetting, I attempt to map out the operation of actor mnemonic processes.

Dezső Bonczidai

■ ***Characteristics of Hungarian Dynastic Puppet Theater in the 19th and 20th Centuries***

Keywords: *dynastic puppet theater, Hincz-Hársfai family, Korngut-Kemény dynasty, Czech folk marionette players*

In the territory of historical Hungary, foreign itinerant puppet players appeared in the second half of the 18th

century. In the first half of the 19th century, they mostly performed at folk festivals and fairs. In the second half of the century, parallel to the emergence of showman colonies, we find archival records of several puppet players. These documents are usually seasonal play permits, which do not allow us to reconstruct their puppeteering activities. Understanding the practices of the era requires an examination of dynastic puppet theater. In this study, I discuss the characteristics of Hungarian dynastic puppet theater in the 19th and 20th centuries, with a look into the traditions of Czech and Slovak folk puppet players.

Csaba Boros

■ ***Applied Music as Artwork: Contributions to the Hermeneutic Interpretation of Applied Music in the Performing Arts***

Keywords: *applied music, theatre*

Is it possible to interpret a previously performed musical piece? If so, what methods are required? Is applied music art? And if so, how does it organize itself along its stages? Despite the scarcity of knowledgeable writings on the enigmatic genre of applied music within the realm of performing arts, it can nonetheless become the subject of hermeneutic exploration across numerous horizons of interpretation, encompassing both form and content. While not the sole phenomenon of its kind, applied music is undeniably unique, and its hermeneutic interpretation can yield a significant amount of socio-cultural, aesthetic, and historiographical insight through comprehensive analysis of historical performances. Its formal structuring operates with a distinctive dramaturgy. Moreover, applied musical pieces serve as miniature allegories adorned with various valid artworks in every aspect. Lastly, these audible phenomena can serve as interdisciplinary conduits between music and theatre studies, shaping the affective perception and atmosphere of the performing arts while constituting

an unexplored realm within scholarly discourse.

Kinga Boros

■ ***Gay Men, Frigid Women: Two Guest Performances on the Stage of the National Theatre of Bucharest***

Keywords: *theatre, National Theatre of Bucharest, Romanian culture, acting*

In the autumn of 2023, the National Theatre of Bucharest indeed seems a welcoming place to visitors from afar. It appears as a place capable of redefining its own role in the post-national condition by questioning concepts such as nation, people, democracy, and enemies, as well as the possibilities of theatre as a gathering place. For if the nation is a politically defined social unit, then the national theatre is inherently a political forum, a workshop for societal critique and experimentation. And if we consider the success of experimentation from the perspective of efficiency and effectiveness as per Schechner's theory and Grotowski's act of transgression, we can assert: the audience member loudly protesting the beauty of the murder of fascists in *Catarina*, or the viewer leaving their seat at the end of *The History of Violence*, or in other words, the audience member disturbed enough to deviate from their spectator identity and the self-regulation of the theatrical code defining it, is indeed the successful experiment itself.

Imola Csizmadia

■ ***Modes of Absence: The Aesthetics of "Non-Making" in Site-Specific Creations***

Keywords: *ready-made, minimal art, site-specific space, spatial absence state, new realism, fiction, reality*

The artistic expressions of our present age, and the thinking behind them, are increasingly characterized by a departure from the traditional notions of aesthetics. The conventional distinction, which asserts that only creations closely linked to the act of making or some principle of construction, i.e., the

usual conditions of the traditional artistic process, can be deemed aesthetically valid, has been challenged. The central focus of this paper revolves around the aesthetic thought and problematic, illuminating the “states of deficiency” that emerge as a specific problematic focus within site- or environment-specific performances. The phenomenological underpinning of these works does not reside in the act of creation, but rather in acts of detachment, highlighting, or “framing”. Consequently, my thesis centers on the fundamental problem of the aesthetics of the reduced mode of existence found in site-specific works.

Gyula Dávid

■ ***The Light of the Story: Thoughts on the Margins of Miklós Csapody's New Book***

Keywords: *Miklós Csapody, Hungarian culture, Romania, Transylvania*

At the recent Marosvásárhely International Book Fair, Miklós Csapody introduced his new book, *A történet fénye*. It is a new book, but it carries with it several decades of history, and reflects the author's interest in Transylvanian Hungarian literature – in a broader sense, the entire Transylvanian Hungarian life. The origins of this interest can be traced back to the mid-1970s, to a time when the “dual attachment – dual responsibility” program adopted by the Hungarian Writers' Association encountered vehement rejection – orchestrated by higher directives – in the Romanian press, and when those who embarked – not only on a spiritual adventure, but also in reality – towards Transylvania began to be treated as dangerous elements by the state security apparatus.

Kata Demeter

■ ***The Praise of Visuality and the Ruins of Culture in the Theatrical World of Silviu Purcărete, Dragoș Buhagiar, and Helmut Stürmer***

Keywords: *theatrical spaces, ruins of culture, scenography, Silviu Purcărete,*

te, Dragoș Buhagiar, Helmut Stürmer

Silviu Purcărete's performances are known for their powerful visuality, and the directorial concept of various productions is inseparable from the spaces in which they come to life. The creation of these distinctive and multifaceted spaces is consistently and recurrently aided by scenographers Dragoș Buhagiar and Helmut Stürmer, and my research focuses on the work of these three collaborators. Purcărete, who handles classical texts with particular attention, aims to contextualize texts within culture rather than adhering strictly to historical accuracy, favoring visual dramaturgy. In the course of my research, I encountered several related theoretical writings describing the space of Purcărete's performances as spaces of culture, as he often represents culture as a space. Thus, he creates spaces that serve as sites for theatrical self-reflection. In these spaces thematizing culture, we often find elements depicted in a ruined, dilapidated state, primarily serving aesthetic functions while also contributing to complex layers of meaning associated with the performance as a whole.

Emese Egyed

■ ***Dario Fo, Franca Rame: The Originality of Knowledge***

Keywords: *Dario Fo, Franca Rame, theatre, visual culture, acting*

The significant role played by various technological solutions in visual culture and theatre productions, along with the enterprise-like collaboration between humans and machines, understandably shifts the focus away from individual achievements – with the exception of monodramas – which are often short-lived. However, capturing and maintaining the audience's attention, and even sustaining it over a prolonged period, is not only a hallmark of theatrical traditions but also a performance skill that demands specialized knowledge. This form of acting, characterized by its unique use

of verbal communication and gestures, also relies on the performative aspect of interaction, and its dramatic aesthetic value is evident in its collaborative engagement with the audience.

Enikő Györgyakab

■ *My Viewpoints: Actorial and Research Reflection on a Method*

Keywords: *theatre, acting, Hungarian culture, Romania, method*

Once, an important Hungarian director from Transylvania told me that an actor doesn't need a method. I agree with him. But only in the sense that an actor doesn't need to commit to a single method. However, methods, or rather methodologies, are absolutely necessary. Ultimately, every actor works with their own individual method. They personalize the knowledge they acquire. And it's important to obtain knowledge that is organized into well-thought-out systems (why reinvent the wheel every time?). When faced with a stage situation, they try to utilize and adapt these methods to the best of their abilities. Throughout my professional life, the methods I encountered during basic or advanced training were significant. They weren't always necessary, but sometimes they were. Sometimes they were only needed to get started, to take the first step, or sometimes to maintain a healthy distance from my work. In this paper, I would like to share some personal experiences and thoughts about the method called Viewpoints, originating from American theatre culture, and write about how it relates to my professional research and pedagogical activities.

Judit Hary

■ *Love It or Hate It – Can a Musical Be Lovable? On Stephen Sondheim's Musical Into the Woods*

Keywords: *theatre, musical, Stephen Sondheim, Cluj-Napoca*

It so happened that for the end-of-year exam performance with students from the Faculty of Theatre and Film, Babeş-Bolyai University, the preparatory tea-

chers chose a shortened version of Stephen Sondheim's (1930-2021) musical *Into the Woods*, adapted for young people. As a voice coach and accompanist, I felt it was important to establish a deeper friendship with this previously unfamiliar work. Therefore, I first watched the Broadway film adaptation of the piece, then studied the libretto and the music associated with the lyrics. Simultaneously, I began to research Sondheim's musical and lyric-writing activities.

Richard Horváth

■ *The Assassin of Matthias Corvinus: Beatrix of Aragon?*

Keywords: *Matthias Corvinus, death, assassination, Beatrix of Aragon*

In Hungarian historical consciousness, there are numerous theories regarding the death of King Matthias Corvinus (1458-1490). To this day, many believe that the king fell victim to poisoning, while others, especially from the realm of science, argue that he died a natural death. By the end of the 20th century, Hungarian research had largely reached a consensus on the matter, excluding the possibility of poisoning based on convincing arguments. It seemed that the question had been laid to rest. However, in 2012, a book by Dr. László Garamvölgyi reappeared, arguing that the king was indeed the victim of murder. Moreover, according to the author of the book, the perpetrator was Matthias's own wife, Beatrix of Aragon, the princess of Naples. The following text presents this book in an unconventional book review format. It thoroughly examines the author's sources and arguments, revealing its erroneous conclusions, methodological distortions, and incomplete knowledge of manuscript sources. Furthermore, it draws the reader's attention to the need for caution when dealing with similar "sensationalist" books.

Gabriella-Nóra Tar

■ *Felix Berner's Opera Buffa Das böse Weib (The Wicked Wife, 1768):*

A Historical Analysis

Keywords: *Felix Berner*, *opera buffa*, *theatre history*, *German culture*

The study analyzes one of the successful pieces from the repertoire of Felix Berner's 18th-century children's troupe, the opera buffa *Das böse Weib* (The Wicked Wife). Two librettos for the musical piece have survived, with the first one published in 1768 in Buda, at Leopold Franz Landerer's printing press. The second libretto

appeared without a date or place. The author of the study examines Felix Berner's opera buffa at the intersection of two textual traditions: the 17th and 18th-century "malus mulier" texts and the tradition of commedia dell'arte, which dates back to the mid-16th century. By incorporating contemporary newspaper articles and playbills, the study partially outlines the characteristics of Felix Berner's contemporary performances.



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ISSN 1222 8338



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