

Panel 1

MISFITS: INVERTED CONCEPTS, INVERTED THEORIES// NEPRILAGODENI: IZOKRENUTI KONCEPTI, IZOKRENUTE TEORIJE, chairs: P.A. Skantze and Edward Scheer

Ana Vujanović

A lexicon of inverted notions: *Parallel Slalom*, by East Dance Academy

In the essay I will analytically and polemically present the East Dance Academy Lexicon of poetic terms “Parallel Slalom” as well as the term “Second-hand Knowledge” (written by me) as a paradigmatic example of employing the lexicon strategy.

The lexicon responds to the need for conceiving new and existing, but re-invested terms employed in self-definition of the artistic and cultural (notably performing arts) scenes of former Yugoslavia. Many of the self-determinative terms are usually and “naturally” used in a negative sense, such as: second-hand knowledge, amateurism, dilettantism, always being too late, etc. However, the lexicon strategy departs from an idea of re-visiting the terms, through analysis of the social and conceptual platforms on which they are based, and which render them negative as well. Such a gesture of breaking the common sense creates unexpected and annoying results; contesting the “natural” weakness and negativity of the concepts it faces the readers with social, political and economic mechanisms of regulation of knowledge and identities production and circulation at the artistic and cultural scenes (both of the past and of today).

Bojana Kunst

Affection, disempowerment and proximity of theory: giving chance to performance

In the text I would like to reflect upon the practice of thinking, a practice which has to work without any alibi, however not without any affection. How this practice can be described? How to approach its continuous labour which has to be put close to performance that it can mislead, falsify and translate? What do we exactly do today when we write, discuss, develop concepts, reflect, what kind of material consequences for performance do we produce?

Jon McKenzie

Misperformance and the Posthuman

Within performance studies, performance and a certain humanism have a long, intimate relationship. Historically, the study of ritual and theatre supported American performance

scholars' critiques of liberal humanist individualism and their accompanying valorization of the social, a critique and valorization that define what can be called "critical humanism," with its stress on such critical social forces as race, class, and gender. With the emergence of solo performance art as an analytical site in the 1980s and 1990s, this critical humanist perspective likewise focused on identity's social construction. However, more recent studies of animal performance, digital performance, and environmental performance all test the limits of critical humanism in profound ways and connect up with a certain posthumanism found in the works of Deleuze, Wolfe, and Badiou. Just as individualism was critically resituated in terms of the social, the social is itself being reinscribed within larger performative systems. At the same time, avian and swine flus, electronic trading glitches, and massive volcano clouds have helped bring attention to the fact that both performances and performative misfirings may be irreducible to human agency or human error, giving new and urgent impetus to the study of what this paper will outline as *posthuman misperformance*.

Alan Read

The Emaciated Spectator & The Witness of the Powerless

The figure of the 'emancipated spectator' imagined by Jacques Rancière for the Frankfurt SommerAkademie in 2004 follows a century-long European interest in the incremental empowerment of the observer. From Eisenstein's early work in a gas factory in the 1920s, through the peripatetic urban occupations of UK groups such as Punchdrunk and SHUNT Theatre Cooperative, to the French propensity to scaled-up interactive street mayhem with Royal Deluxe and Generik Vapeur, the eruption of the audience, the mobilisation of 'the artist formerly known as onlooker' has followed a largely uninterrupted logic of accumulating force.

This communitarian dynamic has been paralleled by a philosophical interest in the gains to be made from a *theatrical* model whose modestly dissembling boundaries might appear to invite the rethinking of the public realm as a site for engagements and interventions from those 'lay' attendees once disavowed by the professional policing of performance. The critical work of a group of European men: Paolo Virno, Jean-Luc Nancy, Jean-François Lyotard, Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou and Jacques Rancière has, in a variety of ways, paid an unusual degree of interest to the theatrical model in general, and this audience/actor/auditoria relationship in particular. Where a 'public' is to be figured, it would appear that, for these philosophers at least, the theatre is not yet quite the bankrupt arena some performance theorists would like us to believe. The problem is that the term 'theatre' in each of these writers' 'theatrocracy' announces a set of rhetorical conventions that have been superseded ever since Eisenstein set foot in that factory.

A sleight of hand would appear to have been played out with a vastly reduced repertoire of shapes of democratic inclusivity substituted by an ateliolated contract in which the originary actor-audience/stage-auditoria binary pair is celebrated at the very point of its contradiction, in its continuous interruption by the self-referential mechanisms of theatre

itself. At the same time the experience of site specific, peripatetic and ‘participatory’ performance that energetically distances itself precisely from these rhetorical ‘rules’ induces an experience that is all too often summarized as: ‘never enough immersion’, ‘not quite enough inclusion’. The simultaneous emergence of the ubiquitous ‘relational aesthetic’ in the work of a plethora of installation artists, from Cattelan to Holler has complicated a bifurcated scene where the long histories of an unfashionable community engagement in theatre have been superceded by a theatre-blind devotion to the contemporary appeal of the curated rather than the staged.

To re-orientate this circular discussion this essay will seek to short circuit the fantasy of a logic of ‘incremental empowerment’ and reconsider the terms of engagement from a quite distinct paradigmatic direction offered by the Italian philosopher Roberto Esposito: that of: *immunisation*. Moving away from the enticing but perhaps willful image of emancipation through saturation this talk will set out from a degree zero of the disempowered witness, the utter impotential that arises in emaciation and then engage with the immunizing logic that arises from what the English call, somehow without offence intended, ‘a thin audience’.

The image is anything but an abstract one, nor a euphemistic one. At the heart of the century remains an instance of deeply troubling ‘looking on’ inscribed by Primo Levi, a stark reminder, well beyond, while also materially *within* the theatre, of the limits to action that witness might inaugurate. Each of the philosophers interested in the theatre mentioned above has attended to this group of incarcerated interns, with no power to act, spectating the movements of those with only a closing distance on their side from the same fate. But this brutal interruption to the ‘merely cultural’ has not been asked to speak back to those theatrical promises whose ersatz revolutions mock the inevitable return of the powerless in ever-new yet peculiarly familiar forms.

Starting out in the obscurity of Miroslav Balka’s Tate Modern installation *How It Is* and emerging on the far side through Primo Levi’s one rendition of a theatre act in *The Truce* this essay will act as a sober reminder of the limits of spectatorial ‘freedom’ and seek to ponder the continuing problem of fashioning anything as charged as a theory of political engagement from a rhetorical arrangement called theatre. That theatre, despite our best-held democratic desires, remains infra-thin, a glazed veneer, as resistant as it has always been to the equally immune condition of its audience.

Panel 2

MIS(SING)-AESTHETICS, ETHICS, POLITICS// **NEDOSTATAK ESTETIKE, ETIKE, POLITIKE**, chairs: Heike Roms and Marin Blažević

Carol Becker

The Space Between What Is and What Wants to Be: The Abandoned Practice of Utopian Thinking

“The essential function of utopia,” says Ernst Bloch to Theodor Adorno, “is a critique of what is present.”

To a large extent the complex practices of postmodernity, as well as the demise of many systems of societal organization, have left artists, theorists, and intellectuals adrift with no imaginary organization of society to aspire to, other than capitalism. Why is there such a dearth of positive thinking about the future? Where does one look for such images? Why are such imaginings so rare, so feared, and why has the term *utopia* been so debunked?

Responding to such queries this essay is framed in relationship to the thinking underlying Alan Read’s study of Abandoned Practices as well as the new performative work of *Every House Has a Door*. Hence this essay takes as its point of reference utopia, as both a good place--*utopos*, as well as a non-place—*outopos*. It encompasses the debates by Einstein and Freud around the question of “Why War,” as well as the speculative theories of Wilhelm Reich’s Orgonomy, and the simultaneously retro and radical promise of “hope” articulated by Barack Obama during his campaign. Can one imagine utopia starting not from the fantasy of where we have been, or where we might go, but rather from the place where we actually are? How do we recognize such spatial and conceptual opportunities when we encounter them in life, art, and in preparation for an as-yet-to-be imagined future?

Branislav Jakovljević

Forensics of Performance: ...Let us speak of them never. Let us face them now.

This essay is a further development of the composed response I gave in PSi15 shift “Abandoned Practices.” Whereas the response focused on the shift topic – that of performance and abandoned practices – in this paper I am developing further the notion of the forensics of performance that emerged from my comments on the work in progress *Let us think of these things always. Let us speak of them never*. In this performance, Matthew Goulish, Lin Hixson and their company engage in a series of practices that defy the conventional notions of performance making such as the staging of a text or the devising of a performance. Instead, they are continuing by the means of performance a set of practices that were already at work in the source materials they are using. In his essay “On Makavejev on Bergman” Stanley Cavell is reconstructing the montage procedure that the film director Dusan Makavejev used in making the experimental film sequence culled from Ingmar Bergman’s films and in his feature film *Sweet Movie*. At the center of Makavejev’s film is the documentary footage of the excavation of the victims of the mass crime in the Katyn forest. The film itself repeats the forensic operation of conjoining the scattered body parts. Ultimately, the goal of this paper is to retrace and describe a series of reflections and projections, fragmentations and connections that constitute the forensics of performance.

Joe Kelleher

Infinite Misattention

The paper, which follows up some reflections I made on theatrical hallucination at PSi#15, takes its departure from Rei Terada's recent *Looking Away: Phenomenality and Dissatisfaction, Kant to Adorno* (Harvard UP, 2009). Terada's book is about 'phenomenophilia', an attachment to ephemeral and uncertain appearances that stand in the way - momentarily - of the obligation to accept, and value, the world 'as is'. Her examples are drawn from certain modes of 'conversational' writing found in Romantic poetry and later philosophical aphorism, which rehearse ambivalent negotiations between a world shared with other people (the given world as such) and the cultivation of a 'secret self' that feeds - however guiltily - on misattention: conjuring images of freedom in the face of appearances, if not in defiance of the 'facts' of life. Towards the end of her book, Terada meditates on the temporality of distraction, evoking what we might think of as a sort of infinite misattention that would find the time and the patience to attend, not merely to one's own dissatisfaction, but the happiness - and freedom - of all: an 'impossible task', she admits, but one worth advocating in the framework of a 'queer' praxis that looks for significance in the 'pointless' and lasting value in what 'appears to appear'. In the paper I shall address some of the ways in which such a task might be conceived in relation to performance, theatrical and otherwise. One approach will be to consider structures of theatrical coercion: the demand, however minimal or well-intentioned it might be, to come on, as it were, and fulfill the potential of a given situation, and the sort of 'mis-performances' that emerge - on the part of actors and spectators alike - from a refusal, or incapacity, to do just that.

Peter Eckersall

Misperforming bodies and activist misbehaviour: reading student protests in 1960s Japan and radicalised everyday

This essay discusses protest-performances captured on film in Keiichi Ouchida's *Underground Plaza* [*Chikatetsu Hiroba*] (1970) and Tsuchimoto Noriaki's *Prehistory of the Partisan Party* [*Paruchizan zenshi*] (1969). In an era of revolutionary politics and avant-garde performing arts, both films document unruly mass political actions and highlight subjective participatory experiences of arts-activism. Counterculture politics blend with carnival-like displays of public performance that are both celebratory and disruptive in these rare films of the Japanese underground cinema. It is argued that these events can productively be read as misperformances; both in their staging of confrontational dramas and in their misbehaving carnival-like energies of dissent. At another level, they are part of an historical moment marking the end of the 1960s era. These films show how activists, despite their strong sense of commitment to change, hopelessly misperform and ultimately exhaust the transformative moment.

Chikatetsu Hiroba documents the appearance of 'folk guerrillas'—anti-Vietnam war folk singers and student protestors who began gathering at the underground plaza linking the

west and east exits of the vast Shinjuku train station in February 1969. The paper analyses these protests by highlighting their apparent search for a new praxis, a pure ideological spirit, while instead often showing complicated broken threads and disconnections between politics and action. It will give a sense of the space of Shinjuku and suggest how the film captures an exploration of the dialectics of that space where activists were hoping to connect with utopian ideas of the polis. Through occupying and restoring other uses of the space, protestors hoped to remake the city as a forum for ideological confrontation and revolutionary aesthetics. This too is not realised for as the film unfolds it is clear that we are watching the end of the possibility of a collective-utopian polis, the final moments of the Shinjuku-Paris commune.

Paruchizan zenshi documents the efforts of the 'partisan five' in their efforts to occupy the University of Kyoto. It cuts between images of lengthy revolutionary training sessions, ideological debates and chaotic auto-destructive actions. The film culminates with a battle for the Kyoto University Tower, significantly the public symbol of the university. The final defeat of the protestors invokes iconic performative images spanning medieval samurai sieges and the battle for Iwo Jima in the Pacific War. Although neither of these images was intended, both interrupt the status-quo-counter-cultural dialectic.

The paper explores the great intensity and violence of the protestor actions marked in these films. How to understand the meaning of this violence is an important question that reflects on both the existence of alternatives in late 1960s Japan and gives a critical shape to the idea of performance in and as forms of counterculture activity more broadly. In an age when public protest in capitalist democracies is largely prescribed and tolerated only to the degree that it is strikingly ineffective, perhaps we can learn from the attempts of those in an earlier time.

Edward Scheer

Myra's Olympic Snafu and other subversions of sentimental nationalism

In *The Anthropology of Performance*, Victor Turner reminds us that 'Community is constituted by a set of practices, a series of "performances," through which claims are made about collective and inter-subjective identities.' But what happens when the performance of community misfires? What is the effect on the community? Is the misfire efficacious in ways which JL Austin did not foresee? This paper looks at the Olympic rituals of national performance and cases where this 'sentimental nationalism' of the modern Games backfires. It considers the uncomfortable journeys of the image of Myra Hindley by British artist Marcus Harvey from the *Sensations* exhibition of Young British Art (YBA) at the Royal Academy (1997) to its surprising appearance at 'an official party to celebrate the handover of the Games to London' after the closing ceremony at the Beijing Olympics in August 2008.

Maaike Bleeker

Some reflections on “On *Three Posters*. Reflection on a video-performance” by Rabih Mroué

In 2004, Rabih Mroué created a video lecture in which he reflects on a video-performance created by himself (in collaboration with Elias Khoury) four years earlier. This performance (titled *Three Posters*) itself also engaged with a specific type of video performance, namely the video messages created by Lebanese fighters before they left for a suicide operation. Starting point for *Three Posters* were the uncut rushes of the video testimony of Sana Yusuf Muhaydli. These rushes show how he repeated his testimony three times before the camera. The public was supposed to see only one of these versions as an uncontested and unequivocal presentation. The rushes however reveal moments of hesitation, mistakes, mis-performance.

Mroué and Khoury used these tapes for a performance in which they reflect upon media, politics and the problem of representation. With *Three Posters*, Mroué and Khoury demonstrate the potential of theatrical performance as a critical vision machine; an apparatus of vision that may be used to complicate and renegotiate the relationship between seers and what they think they see. Crucial to this potential is how they play out the live situation with the audience here and now against the performativity of the staged media message. We witness how Sana' Yusuf Muhaydli performs what he is not yet (the martyr Sana' Yusuf Muhaydli), thus producing a document of what has not yet happened and could never have documented after it happened. His moments of mis-performance appear as symptom of the pressure to ‘perform or else’, while at the same time these moments of disruption open up space for reflection.

In the video lecture “On Three Posters”, Mroué himself reflects on how and why this performance was created, and also on how, according to him, it mis-performed. Crucial to this mis-performance is again the relationship between the performativity of the media messages and the audience in the here and now.

In my presentation I will show parts of Mroué’s video lecture about *Three Posters* and respond to his observations on *Three Posters* as a case of mis-performance as well as to his performance in this video lecture.

Panel 3

SHIFTING FORMATS// **PROMJENJIVI FORMATI**, chairs: Maaike Bleeker and Peter Eckersall

P. A. Skantze

Shift Epistemologies: Inter-medial, Inter-discipline, Inter-taining

“Shift yourselves” the British say, which means get a move on, engage your body, alter your position. To shift is not to rupture or sunder but to adjust, to become by motion aware of what was just out of range of vision, of hearing, of sensing. As we shift, the contours of the landscape offer new patterns; just tilt your head a bit down and to the left and suddenly the hill is at an intriguing angle to what looked like solid ground. Since curating *Shifting Shift* and working subsequently with Matthew Fink on artists’ pages for *Performance Research* about shifting, I have become more and more convinced that the notion of the shift created by the organizers of PSi15 gave embodiment, gave shape (changing, shifting shape) to a form of thinking, of making, of thinking in making and making in thinking already alive in the practice as research work underway for many performance artists/scholars and theatre makers. Not unlike the shift (and I believe that is the word in the English translation) Foucault suggests happens that allows space to show between the grid of cultural assumptions and the possibility of something new, so with the creation of shifts as ideas posited in the new spaces opened up by the move. Using Fred Moten’s term ‘oscillation’ as well, this paper will explore how curating a shift, being in a shift, seeing other shifts and applying shift knowledge to my teaching has developed a way of thinking that might be thought of as a shift epistemology that includes work across media, across performance forms and across discipline.

Sophie Nield

Past Imperfect, Future Tense; On History as Discarded Practice

This essay responds to the invitation to think through the shifting formats and mis-performances current in our discipline by addressing the issues of an increasingly absent theatre history, and making a case for the re-finding of the potential political efficacy of a historicized performance analysis.

There are, for me, two problems in place within this question. Firstly, I would note the increasing absence, in the present, of the past (understood as complex, situated, detailed and contextual), and its replacement with signs of ‘pastness’: ghosts, sites, haunting, nostalgia, absence, ephemerality, loss, mourning. This trend is, in part, a symptom of the diminution of theatre history courses on many undergraduate programmes in our field. But it also throws up other concerns.

I find myself troubled by the sense of melancholy, of haunting, of loss, which permeates a lot of contemporary spaces and works – especially where a set of post-industrial references is in play. What performance seems able to produce is an affective absence: an encounter with, or staging of, the ‘missing-ness’ of various pasts, which the performance does not retrieve, but rather invokes through replacement and representation. The past becomes a marker for the melancholy of its own passing – a somehow tragic and inevitable loss.

I have frequently queried theatre history’s insistence on its own more-ephemeral-than-thou credentials. Performance is fleeting, we say. The theatre is already fugitive, already

gone, already missing in action. I agree, but it is worth noting that you can't exactly visit the French Revolution either. Pasts are all provisional – the theatre's no more nor less than any other. But, the question that arises is an important one: if the past is empty, is built only of nostalgia and absence, where then is the political: where is the potential for political interpretation, understanding, and action?

The second question for me arises in relation to a present practice. I think there are potentially interesting resonances around the theatrical present's new obsession with its own status as a future past, evidenced in the drive to document absolutely everything – to produce, in the very manifestation of the work, the legacy of that work; to resist, almost to the extent of compromising its own immanence, the possible disappearance of that work. The past may be dead, but the present must live forever. This is not to say that performance's insistence on the moment – the moment of presence, of liveness, of 'now' – has not been important and significant. Of course, it has. But the extension of this into such constructions as retrospectives of the recent present, and archives of the future, indicates a shifted relationship with an understanding of what it is to be past – a mis-historicisation, if you will. It seems to me that the drive to document, to sustain, to never lose anything, not only drags the event and its historicity again and again into a present, and, more explicitly, produces that present as the already past, but finally creates of us in the present our own future ghosts, waiting ahead of ourselves, already looking back, nostalgic for the fugitive now. These are the issues which I propose to explore in this paper.

Marin Blažević

Shifting Dramaturgy

Referring to the concept and format of *shifts*, introduced at the P*Si*#15 conference in Zagreb, and proceeding with the reflection on the *shifting dramaturgy* initially presented in the *MISperformance* issue of *Performance Research*, this essay will mark the next phase in the research and discursive devising of the *shifts* and the dramaturgy of their invention, interrelation and (MIS)performance.

P*Si*#15 found its initial dramaturgical challenge in the inversions of the representational situation of the conference event, experiments with permutations in presentational relations among conference participants (no longer divided into presenters and listeners only), and, consequently, in the reversal of the conference function, when collaborative performative research and exchange of ideas outweighs a mere distribution and marketing of knowledge. That initial challenge led to the introduction of *P*Si*#15 shifts*, a crossover format meant for collaborative and performative experimentation with the functions and protocols of the various intersected forms of performance research, whether in the framework of artistic practice, academic writing and teaching, or social activism. However, in order to shift the *shifts* towards the MISperformance, and incorporate the conference theme in the conference event, a more complex dramaturgical strategy had to be devised and tested.

Shifting dramaturgy is a kind of dramaturgy that is not just constantly observing and questioning the constellation in a particular situation (whether dramatic, representational,

performative, social, political etc.), the changing potential of an act or event, the course and effects of an action, the cause and challenges of a problem. It is a dramaturgical activity that is venturing upon an action that would not be motivated by the need for rightful (and eventually normative) direction, relation and position. The *shifting dramaturgy* is, instead, determined by only two conditions: that positions, relations and directions are there to be recurrently tested, altered, abandoned or transformed, dis- and re-placed, and that every such shift is – as always when it comes to dramaturgy – a result of and/or a matter for reflection. *Shifting dramaturgy* embraces every shift, and in particular those shifts that run the risk of failure.

Ric Allsopp

'Walking Backwards'

'Walking Backwards' will further develop ideas on the production of 'temporary zones and project spaces' that were a part of a contribution to the East Dance Academy shift at PSi#15 (2009). Walking (and running) backwards are strategies that have been used in contemporary performance practices - for example in the work of Bruno Beltrao 'H3', (2008) - and more widely in everyday physical practices such as t'ai chi, qigong or other common forms of rehabilitative or psycho-physical activity. Such strategies are potential forms of mis-performance that disrupt and shift attention, and, in the modernist tradition of critical and resistant art work, contribute to the production of futures through shifts of attention in the present. The spaces of appearance generated through such strategies form 'project spaces', new temporary forms of interaction and participation. The temporary zones of project space no longer form or contain the civil public of theatre, but propose a multiple public, interacting in different ways in project spaces, suggesting multiple, specific and potentially resistant and innovative forms and processes of living and working together.

Panel 4

OFF-REGIONS, "FAILED" CHRONOTOPES// **RUBNE REGIJE, "PROPALI"**
KRONOTOPI, chairs: Lada Čale Feldman and Jon Mckenzie

Reana Senjković

Youth summer work actions: from sheer necessity to mere performativity

Even during the World War II Yugoslav youth has been engaged mass movement of voluntary work. After the war, in 1945, more than 300.000 young women and man,

gathered in youth working units (troops, battalions and brigades), participated in repairing roads, bridges, railroad tracks, schools, hospitals etc. In fact, Yugoslav youth took part in building all the major objects of the first five-year-plan. Besides, these actions have been interpreted as a sort of school of life: 70.000 illiterate learned how to read and write and, as was permanently emphasized, the actions strongly contributed to the development of camaraderie, of working habits among the youth and, especially, of brotherhood and unity between the Yugoslav nations. From 1958 on, foreign youth brigades joined Yugoslav youth in building the Brotherhood and Unity Highway, while Yugoslav youth brigades took part in various working actions in Poland, West and East Germany, Denmark, Great Britain, Austria, Italy, France, Norway, Sweden, Chile and USA. However, the Last Yugoslav Generation more rarely responded to calls to participate in the actions and tasks that have been entrusted to them were less demanding and hardly (if) ever economically justified. It seems that young women and men who participated in Youth work actions in 1970s and 1980s have been merely performing the actions initial idea.

Laurie Beth Clark and Mike Peterson

Asymmetries of Tourism: mis-timed, mis-placed, mis-aligned, mis-informed

Performance relations are by definition asymmetrical. "Asymmetry" incorporates much of the energy of the notion of "mis-performance." However, to note the asymmetries that abound in tourism and tourism studies is to discover not just that the various performances involved sometimes or often "miss," but that those very interactions are structurally mis-shapen. That is, asymmetrical. Obvious examples include the asymmetries in financial and social capital reflected in the stereotypical tourist encounter. In tourism which moves from the rich "West" to the "developing" world, however, *information asymmetry* also becomes a crucial counter-balance to unequal privilege. In this case the locals' exploitation of their knowledge of the objects of tourism can be seen as a "weapon of the weak," while tourist guidebooks and other organizations of tourist knowledges function like economic espionage or even counter-insurgency. In touristic and scholarly encounters, asymmetries result from people out of place, from time out of sync, and from allegiances that are ultimately misalliances. The misinformed tourist, no less than the "naive" local, may appear to be mis-informed when more appropriately their relation can be said to be mis-performed *in an expression of their asymmetry*.

This essay draws on our attempts over a period of three years to creatively confront asymmetries of time and place in our joint research (in 19 different countries) and in presentations and performance works on tourism at multiple conferences. We chart the asymmetries of tourism and tourism studies through two sets of performances: those involved in tourism broadly defined and the specific performances elicited by and for academic conferences. Our argument is that while the inherent asymmetries of these encounters are often unjust, asymmetry itself offers the leverage to re-order and re-arrange them.

Freddie Rokem

Emergency/Urgency: The Form and Pressure of the Time

Aristotle's dictum that "poetry is more akin to philosophy and /.../ one to be taken more seriously than history" maps out the discursive fields and practices that I have examined in my books *Performing History* (2000) and *Philosophers and Thespians* (2010). This dictum will now serve as the point of departure for reflecting on the possibilities of theatre/performance to respond to the 'state of emergency' (W. Benjamin's *Ausnahmezustand*). I will argue that the notion of the public sphere (J. Habermas) has to be defined as a space of contestation and crisis, based on a dialectics of exclusion and inclusion, conceptually related to different modalities of representation: parliamentary representation, legal representation and aesthetic representation. The notion of urgency is the creative modality (the discourse based on aesthetic representation) responding subjectively to the state of emergency in the public sphere.

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* will serve as my main example for exploring the mechanisms regulating the relations between inclusion, exclusion, representation, emergency and urgency.

Nicolas Salazar Sutil

'Set in Poland, that is to say Nowhere'. Placelessness and the abstracting imagination: the case of *Ubu Roi*

This essay explores the penetration of modern mathematical thinking in the work of French author and playwright Alfred Jarry - particularly in the context of his Ubu trilogy and what Jarry called pataphysics, a science of imaginary solutions. I will claim that the work of mathematicians such as Henri Poincaré and Bernhard Riemann explicitly inspired in Jarry a notion of space that did away with place and setting, and which embraced notions such as topology, space curvature, n-dimensionality, and interleaved space, in order to create a theatrical atopia: a play set nowhere, such that Classical theatrical conventions were radically undermined by an abstracting tendency and a sense of the absurd, or indeed the surd (i.e. quantities that are mathematically irrational). I will claim that the impact of these counter-intuitive and outlandish images of the modern mathematical imagination enabled iconoclastic and visionary playwrights like Jarry to rethink the idea of spatialisation in modern theatre.

Heike Roms

Teaching the Avant-garde – (Mis)Performing Pedagogies

Instead of regarding ‘misperformance’ as an ‘inversion’ of the way in which performance studies is commonly done, I wish to propose that misperformance has been at the very heart of the performance studies’ project. Performance studies has long celebrated infelicities, failures and futilities as moments that elude the normative force of reiteration. As Shannon Jackson has argued, the history of the field is ‘framed by the language of the rebel, the renegade, and later, incorporating new schools of critical theory, the subversive and the resistant.’ (Jackson 2004: 8)

With Jon McKenzie (2001), we may trace this privileging of the transgressive and resistant potential of performance back to performance studies’ preoccupation with the history of the avant-garde, which has been read as a series of rebellious, decidedly anti-institutional interventions. I would like to open an additional perspective on this history by attending to those moments in the development of the avant-garde (or, more precisely, the neo-avant-garde of the 1960s) that emerged from a different impulse – the desire to create infrastructures rather than transgressing them, especially within the institutionalized context of a pedagogical practice.

To this end, I will discuss a particular instance of this history from the perspective of one of its little regarded ‘off regions’: the development in post-war Britain of a new modernist approach to art education known as ‘Basic Design’. Inspired by the principles of Bauhaus, artists Victor Pasmore, Harry Thubron, Richard Hamilton and Tom Hudson developed a mode of teaching that aimed at stripping back students’ preconceived ideas about art through exercises in the basics of form, space and colour. These exercises led Hudson in particular to performance. Based since 1964 at Cardiff School of Art, Hudson, himself a sculptor, encouraged students to explore performance as a mode of enquiry into such fundamental artistic properties. Consequently, Cardiff became one of the first art schools in the UK where performance art was included in the syllabus.

Taking a cue from this little-known yet influential aspect of British performance art history, this paper will consider more widely the influence of teaching on the development of avant-garde performance practice and ask whether in our attention to misperformance we could risk underplaying or misrecognizing the contribution of infrastructural developments, particularly in the field of pedagogy, to the ways in which we now ‘do performance studies’.

Panel 5

MYSTIFICATIONS, MISIDENTIFICATIONS, MIS-INCORPORATIONS//
MISTIFIKACIJE, KRIVE IDENTIFIKACIJE, KRIVA UTJELOVLJENJA, chairs:
Sophie Nield and Ric Allsopp

MYSTIFICATIONS, MISIDENTIFICATIONS, MIS-INCORPORATIONS:

Ramsay Burt

imitation, corporeal generosity, and the globalised dance market

During a holiday in 1903 in the Adriatic sea side resort of Abbazia, now Opatija, near Rijeka, Isadora Duncan claims she created some movement material for her arms, hands, and fingers after observing how the leaves of a palm tree trembled in the early morning breeze. Her light fluttering movement, she wrote in her autobiography, 'has been much abused by my imitators; for they forget to go to the original source' (1955:109). The market mechanisms that distance Duncan's supposed authenticity from the falseness of her imitators are based on celebrity, virtuosity, and support for particular political regimes. A selective reading of Duncan's views and career has subsequently been used to create a canonical account of (US) modern dance that in effect marginalizes dance work from 'off regions' like the Balkans. Track forward a hundred years to the present, and a group of Slovenian dancers under the direction of Janez Janša have recently performed a work *Fake it!* based on imitations of dance works choreographed by Duncan's successors, the leading stars of today's globalised dance market. This can be seen as a piratical intervention that disrupts this market's stability and self-sufficiency. As with Duncan, imitation can be seen as a mistake and discounted as a sign of an immature state of cultural development compared with the norm of maturity represented by the countries in which the leading stars are based. This paper creates a dialogue between Duncan in 1903 and these twenty-first century Balkan New Wave dance artists. It presents a reading of Duncan's Opatija story that critically reflects on the role Duncan has subsequently played in the development of the modern dance canon which asserts the hegemony of US choreographers in the globalised dance market and makes invisible dance work from off-Regions like the Balkans. It then use this account to characterize and analyse the way *Fake It!* intervenes within processes that regulate the globalised dance market.

Isadora Duncan (1955) *My Life*. New York: Liveright.

Annalisa Sacchi

Mi(s)mesis, or the theatrical way to the stars

1) In every work of art we face something like mimesis.

When we say this, however, we must avoid being misunderstood, for mimesis is something more complex and comprehensive than imitation and representation. The tradition considering mimesis as imitation or representation is only a *part* of the history of this concept in Western culture, although it is the dominant part.

In fact if we turn back to the concept of mimesis before Plato's conceptualization (as Gadamer, among others, did) we see that the word mimesis appears very rarely in

connection with the arts, let alone “philosophy”. The idea of art (in the modern sense) as mimesis, which might have had its roots in popular belief and might have been connected with a special kind of drama (mimos) mentioned by Aristotle, was not raised to the status of a theoretical principle before Plato. Moreover, mimesis as imitation in the liberal arts seems to have been a late development of the concept, if we are to believe Hermann Koller (*Die Mimesis in der Antike*, 1954): originally, mimeisthai had the Pythagorean sense of performance or form of expression and was strictly associated with dance and music, being only later interpreted by Plato as imitation and (mis)applied to poetry, painting and philosophy. Thus the original meaning of mimesis may have been close to what Heidegger and Fink call the “ecstatic play of the world” which is the opposite of imitation, and any discussion of mimesis will also have to imply a discussion of the concept of play in our culture.

In my paper I shall attempt to sketch a brief outline of the concept of mimesis in its non-imitative aspects. At the same time I shall argue that the whole problematic of mimesis can be traced back to an astrological principle which lies at the foundation of Western culture.

Finally, I shall propose to identify some of the main themes of the influence of non-imitative mimesis and locate the “Inferno” directed by Romeo Castellucci in 2008 within this problematic. My point is that, in “Inferno”, Romeo Castellucci tries to produce, against the idea of mimesis as imitation and parodizing it in a certain way, a very literal and archaic form of mimesis *connected with theatre and the stars*.

In its original Greek sense, in fact, mimesis is derived from the star-dance of the heavens. The stars represent the pure mathematical regularities and proportions that constitute the heavenly order. In 1933 Walter Benjamin wrote two articles, ‘On the Mimetic Capability’ and ‘Doctrine of the Similar’, which describe the mimetic capacity as an adaptation to the environment. These two pieces consider nature as a realm that produces similarities. This is evident, for example, in the phenomenon of mimicry. Astrology - as constellations of stars at birth - and graphology, the traces of handwriting, interested Benjamin as keys to the personality: in particular, Benjamin regards astrology as an ancient proof of a link between humanity and the position of the stars: the “possibility of human imitation, that is, the mimetic faculty which human beings possess, may have to be regarded, for the time being, as the sole basis for astrology’s experiential character”.

2) During the Renaissance and the Baroque period, the Hermetic tradition has widely used the metaphor of “theatrum mundi”. One of the most influential celestial atlas, published in Venice in 1588, is titled *Theatrum mundi, et temporis*. Its author, Gallucci, composed forty-eight maps of the ptolemaic constellations drawing them as images of mythological figures. I shall analyze briefly the concept of mimesis inscribed in the attempt to find correspondences between stars and characters (mythological figures).

Ten years after the publication of *Theatrum mundi, et temporis* the Globe theatre (literally, another form or translation of *Theatrum mundi*) has been built. As Frances Yates has pointed out, it is known that in this theatre the underside of the covering which projected from the tiring house wall was painted to represent the heavens. In the John Cranford Adams’ reconstruction of the Globe the ceiling of the inner stage cover is

shown as painted with the signs of the zodiac, with some other vaguely arranged stars within the circle of the zodiac. “Naturally – Yates writes - this is a modern attempt to reconstruct the ceiling; no specimen of these painted theatrical heavens has survived. They would certainly not have shown a vaguely decorative sky indiscriminately sprinkled with stars. They would have been representations of the zodiac with its twelve signs of the spheres of the seven planets within it, perhaps fairly simple representations, or perhaps sometimes more elaborate”.

I'm interested in this ceiling since it was under it that Hamlet consumes his drama:

a) from the very beginning of the play, when the ghost appears under a particular star and in an appearance *similar* (mimetic) to the one of the dead king:

BERNARDO: Last night of all,
When yond same star that's westward from the pole
Had made his course to illumine that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one

Enter Ghost.

MARCELLUS Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again!

BERNARDO In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

b) Hamlet, moreover, is the play in which a character questions the basis of the Platonic mimesis, declaring himself not to be able to produce any form of imitation. See, on this account, the famous sentence about Hecuba, or the dialogue with Gertrude, when Hamlet says: "Seems, madam? Nay, it is. I know not 'seems'".

c) My last point about Hamlet concerns Saturn and melancholy. The relation between Hamlet and Melancholy has been widely investigated: according to Panofsky, Saxl, Yates and Wittkower, for example, Hamlet is the most important incarnation of the melancholic character along with the famous Durer's engraving. The Melancholic is traditionally considered as been born “under Saturn”, thus means that a particular planet or “aster” is responsible for his/her personality and destiny. I shall propose to look at Hamlet's disaster as a consequence of his drifting away from his planet, in the tentative to fulfil the Ghost's mandate turning himself into a man of action. Hamlet's destruction is, thus, the result of the impossibility, for him, to be mimetic with the man of action (his father, Laertes, Orestes i.e. the classical hero ect).

3) In “Desire and interpretation of desire in Hamlet” Jacques Lacan points out that the focus of the play is ‘the drama of desire’ that takes place as a result of ‘mourning and its demands’. It is interesting to underline, here, that desire and mourning rites have a common origin, that is strangely removed from the modern and contemporary debate about desire. The etymology of the word desire indeed brings us back to the book *De bello Gallico* by Julius Caesar: the desiderantes were those soldiers who used to wait at night for the return of those who had been fighting during the day. Here is the meaning of the verb desire: to wait under the stars.

A similar condition of waiting under the stars is that experienced by the spectators of “Inferno” when it was first staged at the Cour d’Honneur of the Palais des Papes in Avignon. I shall conclude my paper by analyzing the role of the stars in relation to mimesis, desire and mourning in this work of Castellucci.

Nicholas Ridout

Ekphrasis: The Return of the Mis-Spectator

This essay develops an idea first presented at PSi#15 in Zagreb – mis-spectatorship – and proposes the rhetorical trope of ekphrasis – the verbal description of a work of art – as a crucial device in the tactical misrepresentation of theatre. Starting with a familiar example from Proust – that of Marcel’s first visit to the theatre – and continuing via Miroslav Krleža’s *Behind the Mask*, Richard Yates’s *Revolutionary Road* and Don DeLillo’s *Point Omega*, I suggest that it is the often ironic inclusion of the spectator or the audience within the ekphrasis that constitutes its disruptive potential. The theatrical event, represented as the sum of its flaws and misprisions, most of which might be construed as acts of mis-spectatorship, appears not so much as a work of art, but as the site of a struggle over what might count – as art, as representation, and as a spectator. The paper thus enters into a dialogue with recent writing on theatre aesthetics by Jacques Rancière.

Richard Gough

Leaving the Table: Devouring the Stage