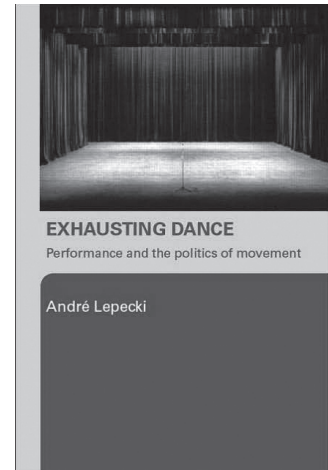


Books

Exhausting Dance: Performance and the Politics of Movement. By André Lepecki. London: Routledge, 2006; 160 pp. \$35.95 paper.

What can philosophy do for dance? In broad strokes, Western philosophy seeks to universalize experience, to encourage rumination from one author's perspective that might offer insights of use to many. Dance, though, hopes to explore the particular gesture, the particular release of energy, the particular moment of possibility without desire for broad appeal. Odd bedfellows, philosophy and dance have spawned a tiny literature concerned with aspects of Western theatrical dance, explored in large part by men (Sparshott 1988 and 1995; Fancher and Myers 1981) and phenomenological approaches to body knowledge, largely offered up by women (Foster et al. 2005; Fraleigh 1996 and 2004; Sheets-Johnston 1966). Although a palpable line of gender divides the discussion, this constant emerges: Philosophy tends to push conversations around dance away from physical movement toward a space of contemplation, where bodies can become interchangeable, and, in many ways, irrelevant.

Theorist André Lepecki's project, crystallized in *Exhausting Dance: Performance and the Politics of Movement* and extended in recent *TDR* articles,¹ involves centering current European philosophical trends on analyses of Europeanist dance theatre artistry. Here, as in previous philosophical explorations of dance, readers will immediately note the dominant Europeanist tendency to universalize "the politics of movement" through a blankly heterosexualized masculine whiteness. Politics, in this volume, involves the recovery of poststructuralist analysis for the field of dance, such that the individuated spectator's position may be privileged above other possibilities, which might include group communion, spiritual wellness, holistic expression, or social justice, to name a few politically progressive lenses of analysis and practices absent from this study. Here, readers will encounter an enthusiastic embrace of the current cadre of philosophers writ large for performance studies scholars concerned with bodies as texts—Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan. Be warned: Lepecki offers no summary overviews of these various writers or their methodologies, and if you haven't read their work recently, you will not find your way through this volume. Following the lead set by most English-language translations of Martin Heidegger, the book trades in an aggressive resistance to literary clarity, one that requires several careful perusals in order to comprehend the perspective at hand. Simultaneously intriguing and confounding, this small book predicts the rise of Europeanist ideologies for dance studies in the United States, a bourgeois retreat into travel to dance festivals and art



1. See *TDR* 50:4 (T192) Winter 2006, Dance and Philosophy section, guest editor André Lepecki, with articles by Peter Sloterdijk, José Gil, and Jenn Joy. Here, Lepecki hopes to introduce to the "vastly U.S.-dominated field of dance studies other voices and theoretical perspectives on dance—voices and perspectives coming from countries and traditions with little or no exposure in the U.S. (or in the Anglophone world)—and particularly with little or no exposure in the current canon of dance studies in the U.S. (or Anglophone) academy" (17). But surely Lepecki understands that Anglophone does not set limits for Europeanist ideologies, which cohere through Western philosophical traditions no matter the language being voiced.

galleries as a standard of dance research,² and a displacement of progressive minoritarian performance practices for the sake of a new canon of (unmarked) white dance artistry.³

The book intrigues in its historical analysis of the terms of motion within modernity. An introductory chapter proposes that Western conceptions of choreography emerged as “a peculiar invention of early modernity, as a technology that creates a body disciplined to move according to the commands of writing” (6). Lepecki then rethinks how stillness in dance offers a way to foreground being in performance, a way to resist contemporary proclivities for constant motion effectively bound up with concepts of subjection and self-imprisonment. A goal in these analyses, then, might be to reopen a space for the consideration of modernity’s ends; to consider how a body onstage in stillness could enable unexpected subjectivities in an open field of the future where bodies do something beside engage the melancholic.

In eight case-study analyses, Lepecki deploys divergent conceptual frames. A chapter “Masculinity, Solipsism, Choreography: Bruce Nauman, Juan Dominguez, Xavier Le Roy” explores white male creativity in terms of haunting and the “idiot,” defined by Lepecki as “the isolated, self-contained one fantasizing subjectivity as an autonomously self-moving being” (33). In critiquing idiotic solipsism within the work of these artists, Lepecki reifies it as a valuable source of inspiration for contemporary choreographies: “Through the particular kind of intensely formless solipsism performed by Le Roy the dismantling of modernity’s idiotic body and its replacement by a relational body renews choreography as practice for political potentiality” (44). But as we all choreograph our daily encounters in the era of George W. Bush, who is surely a prime contemporary exponent of masculinist white solipsism, the possibilities for enabling political potentiality through considerations of dance theatre seem detached, ironic, and flaccid.

A chapter on works by Jérôme Bel claims that “paronomastic movement”—choreographed stillness or slowness intensified through repetition—“dissolves the temporal tyranny modernity’s being-toward-movement imposes on subjectivity for it to be constantly on time” (63). Here, and often throughout the book, arguments that might apply to a particular performance are written as if to be of universal insight. Surely “slowness” functions contingently within performance, as any devotee of *butoh* might confirm, but all *butoh* is not equivalently useful in dissolving temporal tyrannies. A mightily overwritten chapter on the gallery performances of Trisha Brown and La Ribot trades in excessively dense poststructuralist jargon, even as it effectively ghettoizes the women as fodder for the theorization of space and especially the “toppling of plane” to “allow for nonphallogocentric [...] spatialities and noncolonialist territorializations” (68). While Lepecki intends to argue from a feminist perspective, he does not explain how this chapter coheres beyond the fact of his having seen these performances, and then considered ways in which these women choreograph space. How do these artists or these particular performances choreograph race, or ability, location or class, gender, velocity, status, age, desire, or family memory? None of these prisms feed Lepecki’s ruminations on the horizontal; thus, they do not appear here. Ultimately, Lepecki considers dance performance

-
2. Lepecki built this project around performances he attended in Berlin, Lisbon, London, New York, Paris, and Philadelphia. While Lepecki wonders aloud at the significance of work “whose spectatorship will always be limited to the few attending European international dance festivals” (112), the volume constructs its hypotheses from these events and effectively limits experiential responses to this work to the handful of dance scholars in the United States who attend the international dance festival circuit.
 3. Lepecki claims a desire “to address the choreographic outside the proper limits of dance” in order to “create new possibilities for thinking relationships between bodies, subjectivities, politics, and movements” (5) but then looks only to a tiny cohort of European and North American performance artists, each of whom proclaims an affinity with Western philosophical traditions. What might have been produced had Lepecki looked beyond the boundaries of individuated Western theatrical dance, to spaces where choreography is not predicated on separations of performers from audiences? How then could a study of the politics of movement actually inspire politicized responses?

only to the degree that it speaks to his philosophical intentions: the performances act as screens upon which he can project his analyses. This may be the Europeanist sensibility writ large: the theorist's point of view matters more than anything else.

Throughout the volume, Lepecki forces unrelated philosophic lines into direct contact with each other. This technique confounds, most troublingly, in a chapter that unconvincingly pairs Martin Heidegger with Frantz Fanon to contend with the crawling performances of William Pope.L. To assert a usefulness to this move, Lepecki must claim that he intends to "agitate the ground of critical theory," to discover "an ontopolitical ground that is not stable or flat, but ceaselessly quivering and grooving" (88). At the end of this chapter, I remained unconvinced that Heidegger helped render Fanon or the significance of Pope.L's crawls as black art offered up by "The Friendliest Black Artist in America." Instead, I wondered at the politics of citation that allow some contemporary theorists to poach from any line of argumentation, no matter its historical context, and hope for intellectual revelation.

The strong final chapter, subtitled "Vera Mantero summoning Josephine Baker," refers to Sigmund Freud's conception of "the uncanny" to construct a prescient formulation: "The animation of whiteness by black soul and black motions participates entirely and symmetrically of narratives that equate dance with the uncanny infusion of life in the corpse" (109). In my reading, this possibility is enabled by this section of the text, when (white Brazilian) author Lepecki hits a politically cogent stride in conversations around race, gender, and colonialism: "What we have with Mantero's use of makeup in her blackening of her body is precisely the marking of both whiteness and blackness as forces of tension for the mutual construction of women's identities across the color line—and particularly the construction of a white woman's sexuality as already in dialogue with blackness" (114). Here, musings on loss and rage, colonialist pasts, ghostly knockings, and white melancholia offer the reader productive strategies for responding to performances "in the melancholic field of the European postcolonial" (122). Here, in describing the "claiming of a movement that is not for the eye to behold" (122), Lepecki seems to suggest that we might dance in order to enable political action. Philosophy might lead us back to dance, in the studio, the club, the stage, the street, the ground.

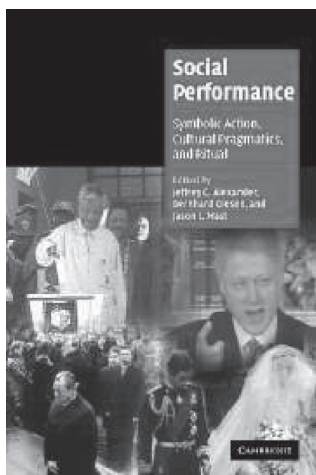
—Thomas F. DeFrantz

References

- Fancher, Gordon, and Gerald Myers
1981 *Philosophical Essays on Dance*. Brooklyn: Dance Horizons.
- Foster, Susan, Coleen Dunagan, and Philipa Rothfield, guest eds.
2005 "Philosophy and Dance." Special issue. *Topoi* 24, 1 (January).
- Fraleigh, Sondra Horton
1996 *Dance and the Lived Body: A Descriptive Aesthetics*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- 2004 *Dancing Identity: Metaphysics in Motion*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press
- Lepecki, André
2006 "Mutant Enunciations." Introduction to special section on Dance and Philosophy, guest edited by André Lepecki. *TDR* 50, 4:16–51.
- Sheets-Johnstone, Maxine
1966 *The Phenomenology of Dance*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Sparshott, Francis
1988 *Off the Ground: First Steps to a Philosophical Consideration of the Dance*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- 1995 *Measured Pace: Toward a Philosophical Understanding of the Arts of Dance*. Darby, PA: Diane Publishing Company.

Thomas F. DeFrantz is Professor of Music and Theater Arts at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, co-convenor of the Choreography and Corporeality Working Group of the FIRT, and co-convenor of the Black Performance Theory Working Group. His books include *Dancing Revelations: Alvin Ailey's Embodiment of African American Culture* (Oxford University Press, 2004; de la Torre Bueno Prize). His current performance projects include *Queer Theory! An Academic Travesty*, co-commissioned by the Theater Offensive of Boston and the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts of Burlington, Vermont. He organizes the dance theory and history curriculum for the Hollins University/American Dance Festival MFA program.

TDR: *The Drama Review* 51:3 (T195) Fall 2007. ©2007
New York University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Social Performance: Symbolic Action, Cultural Pragmatics, and Ritual. Edited by Jeffrey C. Alexander, Bernhard Giesen, and Jason L. Mast. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006; 374 pp. \$80.00 cloth; \$35.00 paper.

The “performative turn,” which has revolutionized modern anthropology, has long lacked a significant parallel in the field of sociology; until very recently, sociology has remained dominated by practical pragmatics and, of late, by structuralist analyses that consider social actions primarily as texts. The newly developed field of “cultural pragmatics,” of which this collection of essays provides significant pioneering examples, seeks to perform a similar turn in that discipline. Born of colloquia at the University of Konstanz in 2002 through 2004 and at Yale University in 2003, cultural pragmatics aims to move beyond these earlier methodologies and enable a richer and more nuanced approach to social action, based not on the materiality of practice but on the operations of performances.

The two essays that frame this collection also provide a rich and challenging theoretical justification and framework for this new orientation. Jeffrey C. Alexander, whose centrality to the new field is suggested by multiple references to his work in every essay in the volume, provides an excellent opening essay, “Cultural Pragmatics: Social Performance between Ritual and Strategy,” situating and explaining this new sociology, which is somewhat reminiscent of the ground-breaking early essays of Richard Schechner in establishing the new field of performance studies. Alexander stresses the necessity of all social organizations, democratic or totalitarian, to sustain collective belief, and that much more fundamental to this operation than rational thought are ritual-like processes. As societies become more complex, the formally fused elements of widely accepted social performance become “de-fused.” This does not, however, result in a society without social performance but rather one in which there is a constant competition among competing performance models seeking to “re-fuse” elements into social performances that can gain general acceptance.

In his concluding essay, “Performing the Sacred: A Durkheimian Perspective on the Performative Turn in the Social Sciences,” Bernhard Giesen provides a stimulating supplement to and variation upon Alexander’s introduction. Building upon Durkheim’s distinctions between the sacred and the profane, Giesen suggests that the power of social performance lies in the fact that, like ritual, it provides its audience access to a collective authentic reality that stands beyond reason or social structure and that serves as the grounding element of that community.

These two framing essays provide a powerful theoretical case for the continuing importance of ritual actions and social performance as basic organizing operations in human society. The remaining essays are for the most part case studies, suggesting how the principles of cultural

pragmatics can be used for the analysis and understanding of a wide variety of cultural and social manifestations. The essay that draws most directly upon the work of Alexander and Giesen is Valentin Rauer's "Symbols in Action: Willy Brandt's Kneefall at the Warsaw Memorial." This study of an epiphanic moment in modern German history demonstrates powerfully the usefulness of both Giesen's concepts of political ritual and the sacred and Alexander's idea of political ritual as social fusion. For American or English readers, who may be familiar with this famous event primarily through its re-theatricalization in Michael Frayne's play *Democracy*, two other essays will probably provide a more direct personal connection: Alexander's "From the Depths of Despair: Performance, Counterperformance and 'September 11,'" and Jason L. Mast's "The Cultural Pragmatics of Event-ness: The Clinton/Lewinsky Affair." These two essays revisit two events in recent American history—each of which has been the subject of innumerable previous writings—and bring to both a fresh perspective by viewing them from the perspective of cultural pragmatics. Their analysis of these events and their aftermaths as matrices for a wide range of meaning-laden symbolic performances enacted with particular goals and audiences in mind provide convincing examples of how such analyses enable us to understand in a more nuanced way how the contemporary social consciousness is constructed and negotiated.

The other essay on a specific manifestation of a social symbolic action considers one of the most striking and important examples of this process in modern times, the hearings of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Tanya Goodman's "Performing a 'New' Nation: The Role of the TRC in South Africa" convincingly applies performative analysis to the success of this Commission in simultaneously creating a clear break with the past and re-fusing a divided social structure, a dynamic in fact quite similar to the more specific case of the Willy Brandt kneefall.

Another group of essays consider more abstract or general questions though they are on the whole equally successful and stimulating. Two of these are of the same general type as the framing essays and serve as useful supplements to them. David Apter's "Politics as Theatre: An Alternative View of the Rationalities of Power" looks to the same performative processes explored by Alexander and Giesen, but with a more critical eye, suggesting how political "actor-agents" in power use performance to support and solidify their positions, an operation all too familiar in contemporary culture. Ron Eyerman's essay "Performing Opposition or, How Social Movements Move" provides a more hopeful analysis of praxis for those concerned by the somewhat Hobbesian view of political performance suggested by Apter. Eyerman suggests how performance can provide a critical analytical tool for examining how oppositional minority social movements can effectively pursue their strategic goals. Poised between these essays is Kay Junge's "The Promise of Performance and the Problem of Order," which specifically evokes Hobbes, as well as Hume, Rousseau, and Spencer, to suggest how performance analysis can provide new insight into their concerns with political power and authority.

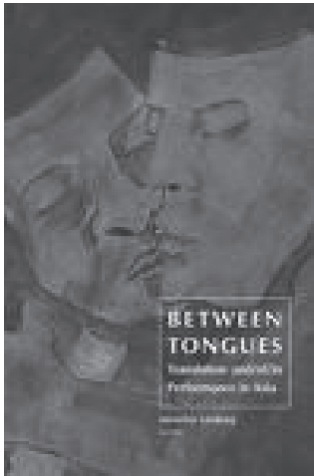
The remaining two essays do not fit exactly into either the category of general theory or that of case studies, but look in somewhat different directions. One of the most interesting essays in the collection, especially for those interested in modern anthropology, is Isaac Reed's "Social Dramas, Shipwrecks, and Cockfights: Conflict and Complicity in Social Performance," which revisits three classics of modern anthropology—by Turner, Sahlin, and Geertz—to view them in fascinating new ways through a cultural pragmatic lens. The remaining essay, "Performance Art," again by Giesen, is the only disappointing contribution to this volume. The subject is only vaguely related to the clear social orientation of the other essays, and the insights offered, that performance art works against convention, troubles boundaries, encourages self-consciousness, offer nothing that is not already widely available in the field.

This minor defect aside, however, *Social Performance* is truly a groundbreaking work, and is absolutely essential reading for anyone interested in the understanding of modern social and political action.

—Marvin Carlson

Marvin Carlson is the Sidney E. Cohn Professor of Theatre and Comparative Literature at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He is the author of 13 books and over 100 articles in the areas of theatre history, theatre theory, and dramatic literature, and the founding editor of *Western European Stages*. His work has been translated into 14 languages. His book, *The Haunted Stage* (Michigan, 2001) received the Joseph Calloway Prize. His most recent book is *Speaking in Tongues* (Michigan, 2006). In 2005 he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Athens.

TDR: *The Drama Review* 51:3 (T195) Fall 2007. ©2007
New York University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Between Tongues: Translation and/of/in Performance in Asia. Edited by Jennifer Lindsay. Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2006; 320 pp.; 34 illustrations. \$28.00 paper.

Between Tongues: Translation and/of/in Performance in Asia is the result of a workshop on “performance translation” Jennifer Lindsay organized at the National University of Singapore in 2003. The workshop’s participants included dancers, puppet masters, academics, and translators.

Lindsay’s concern is with what she calls “language-based performance forms” (xi) and the types of translation that occur between performers onstage, between performers and audiences, and with translation processes central to performance itself. Her use of the term “language-based” links diverse art forms such as different multilingual performances and devised theatre to Javanese and Balinese *wayang kulit* (shadow puppet performance). As she sees it, “translation studies and [even] performance studies still treat translation as something adjunct to performance, [...] done in the preparation of a text *for* the performance process” (5). As such, both

approaches do not apply well to less directly scripted performances. This is the “gap” in thinking the book wants to address.

Lindsay also indicates that she is concerned with how “national and international frames [of performance] such as arts festivals” (xi) marginalize language-based performances in favor of performances stressing the visual and the physical. Language-based performances, of course, need translation if they are to be intelligible to audiences. In the process, though, effective audience outreach through translation should still acknowledge heterogeneity, and not become transformed into now-clichéd forms of metropolitan hybridity that would effectively function as a form of cultural homogenization acceptable to cosmopolitan audiences (31–32).

Between Tongues is organized into three sections: translation *and* performance, *of* performance, and *in* performance. It is mixed in its format: there are scholarly chapters, reflections by playwrights and a translator, and selected quotations from workshop participants. Lindsay notes that this type of unevenness is deliberate: “This variety is [...] intended to reflect both the different approaches to questions of language, performance and translation of those working ‘from within’ as performers [...] and those] from the outside, [such as...] commentators” (xiv).

The resultant individual chapters are diverse. They include: an analysis by theatre director and arts administrator Anmol Vellani on why there is virtually no effort to translate the different regional language plays for larger national reception in India, and only limited theatrical engagement with the multilingual practices that occur on the ground; a nuanced reflection by Malaysian playwright Leow Puay Tin on the difficulties of representing various Chinese languages, bazaar Malay, and English in her plays, and of evoking densely embodied linguistic

memories of “Malaysia”; and intercultural director Ong Keng Sen’s thoughts on the challenges he experienced navigating “the register of high language/low language, traditional and contemporary forms” (191) in his highly visible trans-East/Southeast Asian *Lear* (1997). Save for one chapter on India, the book focuses on performances originating from Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand.

What is distinctive about the book is a general questioning of what “translation” and/of/in performance might mean in multilingual and multicultural societies, within which the “People” cannot be represented as members of a single ethno-linguistic community. Indonesia uses *Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian language) as a lingua franca to link its various islands. Both West Malaysia and Singapore have plural populations—Malays, Chinese, Indians (largely of Tamil descent), “Eurasians” of Portuguese descent, and, also, in West Malaysia, various indigenous peoples.

It emerges, then, that the more “traditional” performance forms that occur in Southeast Asia (such as wayang kulit, which in its Javanese variety navigates high and low forms of Javanese, myths of Indian origin, and comic moments) and postmodern interlingual plays (such as Leow’s, with their problematic of cultural memory under erasure and fractured languages in a modernizing society with a dominant language) jointly confound the idea that, “in translation, the subject of the enunciation and the subject of the enunciated—the speaking I and the I that is signified—are not expected to coincide” (Sakai 2006:74). Such an idea comes about from the premise or assumption that national sovereignty is connected to modernity, and, simplistically, to ethno-linguistic unities. Yet this is hardly the case in Malaysia, where Malay is the national language, but English—the old colonial language—is currently being encouraged, and Mandarin-Chinese is used as a medium of instruction in many schools. Southeast Asian cultures bring into question such assumptions.

Between Tongues, however, does not fully exploit its plentiful and significant material. Though Lindsay champions the anthology’s variety of writing, the overarching idea of “translation” becomes overextended, and the central line of thought weakens. Some of the chapters, for example Hardja Susilo’s insightful personal account, “Simultaneous Translation in Cross-Cultural *Wayang Kulit*,” are too richly detailed, and the profusion of detail sometimes comes at the expense of general lessons that could be gained and applied to other verbal art forms. Some chapters also have too much reportage and not enough analysis.

Nevertheless, the volume’s general intellectual thrust remains invaluable; one hopes that others will take up the threads of “translation” and its complex relationship to culture and cultural difference that are set out in *Between Tongues*.

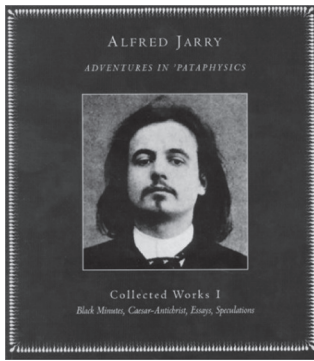
—C.J.W.-L. Wee

Reference

- Sakai, Naoki
2006 “Translation.” *Theory, Culture & Society* 23, 2/3:71–78.

C.J.W.-L. Wee is Associate Professor of English at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. He is the author of *Culture, Empire, and the Question of Being Modern* (Lexington, 2003) and *The Asian Modern: Culture, Capitalist Development, Singapore* (Hong Kong University Press, forthcoming).

TDR: *The Drama Review* 51:3 (T195) Fall 2007. ©2007
New York University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Alfred Jarry: An Imagination in Revolt. By Jill Fell. Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2005; 236 pp.; 56 illustrations. \$65.00 cloth.

At the very outset of her book Jill Fell expresses her impatience for Jarry scholarship that dares not venture to the extra-ubic realms of his oeuvre. In order to explore the underappreciated aspects of the work of the forerunner of French avantgarde theatre, Fell begins by stepping back from Ubu, both thematically and historically, and delving into the short and extraordinarily rich period of Jarry's life that immediately precedes the opening night of *Ubu Roi* at the Théâtre de L'Oeuvre in December 1896. Refreshingly, Fell hardly mentions the event. Instead, she indirectly throws light on it by investigating Jarry's early poetry and art criticism, his coeditorship with Remy de Gourmont of the journal *L'Ymagier* and his short-lived magazine *Perindersion*. In all of these activities she discovers the strong presence of image, whether it is an actual picture, as with his woodcuts, or the metaphorical imagery of his writing. Refusing to subscribe to disciplinary constraints of literary criticism or art history, Fell engages in an archeological excavation of Jarry's imagery. As a result, she does not present him as a writer who also made woodprints, edited literary journals, or fiddled with puppets—all of that when not scribbling, ordering his meals backwards or pulling his gun in public. Instead, she makes her first task the pursuit of Jarry's ideas, regardless of the medium in which they were materialized. "I have followed Jarry's lead," writes Fell in the introduction of her book (16). Many critics say that about their subjects, and very few of them live up to the claim. Fell belongs to the minority who do, and in quite a momentous way.

From an in-depth investigation of Jarry's use of patterns in his graphic works and his encounters with (and contributions to) the emerging aesthetics of primitivism in visual arts, she effortlessly moves to the close reading of his poem "Le Sablier" (The Hourglass) from the collection *Les Minutes de Sable Mémoirel*. It turns out that strikingly similar principles guide Jarry's poetry and visual art. But that is only a modest introduction to what is yet to come. We soon learn, for example, that Jarry's interest in marionette theatre was not limited to his early, adolescent work and his late, financially pressed period, but that concept of the puppet gives gestures to the characters of his novels, and even more, that it outlines the movement of his writing.

In a tour de force of scholarly rigor and imagination, Fell points back to Jarry's early novel *Days and Nights*, and the (probably autobiographic) episode of the protagonist's walk in the woods with his friend. Describing his state as the moment of perfect happiness, the novel's hero declares that he experienced his body as purely material, while "something liquid"—his "astral body"—hovered above, and something even more ethereal—the "soul"—soared even higher. He was afraid that, if touched, the thread between his body and other aspects of his self would be torn, and that he would die. Fell establishes a quick series of connections, from marionette strings to the fishing rod of Jarry's favorite pastime tangled in a decomposing body that floats down the river, to the invisible thread that, like the string of a kite, ties together his body and spirit. The cord attached to the head of a crudely made marionette, in the end, is both a technical device of puppet theatre and the line of thought that drives Jarry's imagination. This kind of reading of Jarry culminates in Fell's discussion of dance in Jarry's work: a subject untouched even by the *College de Pataphysique*, a hermetic group of writers and artists, founded in 1948 and dedicated to continuation and exegesis of Jarry's work. She demonstrates convincingly that Jarry stands at the turning point in the attitudes towards dance in French literature and the arts in general. With *Alfred Jarry: An Imagination in Revolt*, Jarry scholarship in English finally makes a significant contribution to the general knowledge about this author.

Jill Fell's book is a model of rigorous and uncalculating scholarship. It is committed and deeply personal. She is deeply aware of her position as a female scholar writing about a notori-

ously misogynistic author. The extraordinary vigor of this scholarly prose comes from a dynamic negotiation between Fell and Jarry that underlies the entire work. Throughout, there is a sense that the author whose line of thought she is trying to discern might turn against her. She writes that, if the walking companion touches the narrator of *Days and Nights*, “the possibility of keeping the bond intact will vanish just as surely as Orpheus’s hold on Eurydice when he turned to look at her” (161). Had we not been warned that Fell would follow Jarry’s lead, we would have missed the point of this sudden appearance of the Orpheus theme, and the possibility of the reversal of the relationship between the scholar and her subject. What, indeed, would happen if our companion, whose lead we have chosen to follow, turned and looked us straight in the eye? In the last analysis, Fell makes the point that surpasses even her invaluable contribution to Jarry scholarship. She reminds us that what ties the best scholars to their work is not interest (in both senses of that word) but the double bind of love and death.

—Branislav Jakovljevic

Branislav Jakovljevic is Assistant Professor at the Department of Drama at Stanford University. He completed his undergraduate studies in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, and his graduate studies at the Department of Performance Studies, Tisch School of the Arts/NYU, where he also taught in the Drama Department. His articles have been published in the United States (TDR, PAJ, Theater, Art Journal) and abroad in Yugoslavia, Spain, England, and Sweden.

*TDR: The Drama Review 51:3 (T195) Fall 2007. ©2007
New York University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology*