

Book Of Abstracts

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Properties of Consciousness: Performing the Thing in Contemporary Theatre

Cohen Ambrose

MA & MFA Candidate - University of Montana, Missoula

In *A Sense of Things*, Bill Brown writes, “Thoughts are no less physical than objects; thinking is no less physical than acting” (162). The first part of my research enquiry asks whether the actor can better connect the thoughts and actions of the character via early rehearsal work with stage properties. If, as Mark Johnson suggests, meaning and value are grounded in the bodily dimensions of human life, how can actors use stage properties as interlocutors between the character’s thoughts and actions? Using my recent production of Lanford Wilson’s *Book of Days* for the University of Montana’s School of Theatre & Dance as a practice-based case study, I hypothesize that the early rehearsal exercises with hand properties/objects helped give the actors a point of mediated access to the world of their characters. Borrowing elements from thing theory (2003) and Vittorio Gallese and Hannah Wojciehowski’s methodological framework of *Feeling of Body* (2011), I explore potential phenomenological and neurobiological explanations of the things that help the actor illuminate the character’s human and social context within the word of the performance. I will play silent video footage of relevant rehearsals and performances of *Book of Days* underneath the reading of this ten-minute paper.

Bio

Cohen Ambrose is an MA theatre studies and MFA directing candidate at the University of Montana, Missoula where he studies under mentor Dr. Bernadette Sweeney.

Cognitive Citations and (Re)citations in Jennifer Johnston's Monodrama

Tim Barrett

PhD Candidate - Trinity College Dublin

Single-character monodrama, with its emphasis on subjectivity and psychic interiority, is a theatrical genre that would appear to be well suited to revealing cognitive processes and their relationship with the speaking body in which they are embedded. Unlike conventional, illusionist, interactional drama, the protagonist in monodrama constitutes the drama through narrative and bodily gesture, refuting objective reality in favour of subjective narratives. Spectators are co-opted in the theatre-making project through the visual construction of the spoken narratives. What do narratives reveal about the cognitive processes underpinning them? How does the speaking body converge and diverge with the narratives it utters and how can this reveal the thinking body?

In this paper, I will apply Judith Butler's theories of performativity to three monologue plays by Jennifer Johnston: *Christine* (1989), *Twinkletoes* (1993) and *Moonlight and Music* (2000). The first two monologues feature women in the North of Ireland during the Troubles; the third monologue is set in Dublin on the eve of the Millennium. All three speak of their isolation, and the patriarchal structures in which they struggle, or whose legacies they cannot escape. The narrators may bear the illusion that they are self-determining subjects controlling their own narratives but Butler's theories hold that they are invoking narratives that "precede, constrain and exceed" them. The reiteration of norms, however, opens a space in which resignification of hegemonic norms is possible. The objective of the paper will thus be to examine how the cognitive patterns of the women, revealed through narrative, have been shaped by patriarchal hegemonic norms, and to what degree they are conscious of these patterns. It will also seek to identify performative moments in which those norms may be challenged and even reversed.

Bio

Tim Barrett is a PhD candidate in the School of Drama, Film and Music at Trinity College Dublin, working on the thesis 'Monodrama in Ireland from 1964 – 2012: Form and Performativity' under the supervision of Professor Stephen Wilmer. He has presented research at the Irish Society for Theatre Research conference and at Trinity's School of Drama, Film and Music Research Seminar. He is a graduate of Birmingham University's MPhil in Playwriting Studies (2005) and holds an M.A. in Anglo-Irish Literature and Drama (1999) and a B.A. in Celtic Studies (1997) from University College Dublin.

The Art of 'Consciousing': (Re)perceiving mind/body unity through The Feldenkrais Method & Alba Emoting

Dr Jessica Beck

Canterbury Christ Church

“We have no basis for thinking of the duality except the habit of thought.”

– Moshe Feldenkrais

Carl Ginsburg, a respected Feldenkrais practitioner, points out that we describe consciousness as a 'thing'. While other activities of the conscious mind are expressed as verbs – sleeping, dreaming, observing – we turn the active process of consciousing into a noun, a state. Feldenkrais believed that 'wakeful consciousness' is composed of four elements: moving, sensing (as in sensation), feeling (as in emotion) and thinking. Moving and sensing are easily considered to be functions of the central nervous system. Feeling and thinking, however, are viewed as mental processes. The Feldenkrais Method, as well as Dr Susana Bloch's Alba Emoting Method, illustrate actively that thinking and feeling are indeed functions of the central nervous system. For many of us, the duality of mind and body is a daily experience. How many times have you been so absorbed in a task – reading, playing a game on your phone, checking your email – only to discover that your lower back is in pain, or your foot fell asleep? Even when theatre practitioners strive for a 'psychophysical' approach to acting, we are still hampered with 'outside-in' and 'inside-out' language revealing that the perception of mind/body duality is a common experience – or perhaps an embedded and hard-to-shake 'habit of thinking'. How can we enable performers to overcome this entrenched habit? How can we cultivate a meaningful 'psychophysical' process in actor training? I propose that somatic education – specifically Feldenkrais and Alba Emoting - offers performers a new experience of consciousing, and a more accurate perception of themselves.

Bio

Dr Jessica Beck is a theatre director and somatic practitioner. Completed a PhD on the Challenge of Emotion in Western Performance under the supervision of Phillip Zarrilli (University of Exeter). Beck is a certified instructor of Awareness Through Movement, and will complete the Feldenkrais Professional Training Programme in 2015. Beck is also a certified practitioner of the Alba Emoting Method – a somatic approach to triggering emotion - and teaches directing at Canterbury Christ Church University and Royal Holloway, University of London.

Pauline Maguire – An Abbey Playwright

Dr. Fiona Brennan

Independent Researcher

Twenty years after her death in 1994, Abbey playwright, short story writer and arts critic, Pauline Maguire remains one of the many writers whose work has virtually been written out of Irish theatre history.

Initially, Maguire was encouraged to write for the theatre by writer Maurice Walsh: he read her novel *Cross Winds* (1954) and advised her to rewrite it as a play, which she duly did.

Maguire's first and only Abbey success came in October 1955 when her comedy, *The Last Move*, premiered on the Queen's stage. At the time, she made headlines in the *Irish Times* for her prowess in balancing her writing life with tending house, rearing children and helping her publican husband run the Anchor Bar, in Caherciveen town.

Maguire had two more plays, *Rogha Eibhlin Ruadh* (1956) and *The Green Dust* (1957), accepted by the Abbey. Although neither was ever produced by the national theatre, the latter was eventually released to amateur groups. It premiered at the 1959 Kerry Drama Festival in the Town Hall, Killarney where it competed against John B. Keane's *Sive*.

A close friend of Sigerson Clifford's and Seamus de Faoite's – two fellow Kerry playwrights whose work suffers similar neglect to her own – Maguire was a formidable figure in the County Kerry arts' scene for close on thirty years. Her work proved very popular on the national amateur circuit until the 1970s.

Pauline Maguire's plays were never published but my recent discovery of her archive of work, although incomplete, encourages the process of recovery. This paper will discuss the merits of Maguire's dramatic themes; her contribution to Irish theatre and the importance of the amateur dramatic movement in the production of her work in terms of an ever-evolving Irish theatre historiography.

Bio

Fiona Brennan completed her PhD at the Drama and Theatre Department, University College Cork in 2011 and is author of *George Fitzmaurice "Wild in His Own Way": Biography of an Abbey Playwright* published by Carysfort Press, 2005. She is the 2014 recipient of the Stephen Joseph Award, presented by the Society for British Theatre Research. Fiona is currently researching Co. Kerry's theatre history and her walking tour, based on Cork City's Theatre History, features in this year's Cork Midsummer Festival Programme.

Memory – A Spark Ignition for Performance.

A starting point for a discussion on the use of memory in performance.

Haley Bueno & Annalisa Porfilio

PG Dip & PhD Candidates - University College Cork

This paper explores the possible uses of memory, man's primary instrument for the formation of consciousness (McGaugh, 1989), in the devising process and in the production of performances in general.

Traditionally understood solely as a method for recollecting things or as a container of information to be retrieved through association, memory is now regarded by neuroscientists as a unified mental pattern of the mind and the body, bringing together the object and the Self (Damasio, 2000). This conceptualisation challenges us to investigate further the functions of memory and understand how these can be utilised in the devising of a piece in other terms than as a performance of recollected personal events or as a tool for the building up of a character. In light of these considerations, this paper will discuss a number of performances where memory plays the role of a spark to ignite creative processes bringing innovatively together memory formation and performance.

Bio

Haley Jovi Cazarini Bueno

PG Dip. in Drama and Theatre Studies (Spring Conferring 2014) UCC.

Member of the ISTR

Member of the RIAI

PG Cert in Digital Analysis and Energy Retrofit

MA in Conservation of Historic Towns and Building

MSc. Architecture and Urban Design

Annalisa Porfilio

PhD Candidate, School of Sociology and Philosophy, University College Cork.

What do we see when we watch puppet theatre?

Leslie Burton

Independent Researcher - Postgrad DTS – UCC

Of course we see the animated objects themselves, from the gentle to the eerie, but a highly visible shift has occurred in mainstream Western puppetry in the past few decades: more and more we see the puppeteers themselves (as in *The Lion King* and *War Horse*). When staging puppet theatre, the only options available are to hide, reveal, or incorporate the puppeteer(s) into the action. Each option is fraught with its own technical and practical difficulties for a performer, but is also elegantly capable of its own style of uncanny illusion for the viewer. It is this illusion that will be of interest to me in this paper.

The mind adds images and concepts together, as Bruce McConachie describes it, like a painter mixes color, merging “three mental concepts — identity, actor, and character — to create a fourth: an actor/character” (“Falsifiable Theories for Theatre and Performance Studies” 2013). To watch *Hamlet*, then, is to watch an actor blend into and shift out of a character, with varying intensity, for the duration.

If we apply this line of thought to puppetry, we are confronted with a similar set of mental concepts to blend together. Rather than identity, actor, and character, we blend awareness of the physical object, the human operator, and the semiotic signs and sounds of the character presented. A potential mystery here is, which of these three elements corresponds with “identity” in McConachie's triad of “identity, actor, and character”? Calling on insights from cognitive studies, examples from current productions and antique traditions, and experiences as a puppeteer, I want to explore the idea that puppetry can facilitate a suspension of identity for performers as well as viewers, creating a collective, and discuss how the presence or absence of the puppeteer effects the experience of what is seen.

Please see back page for Bio.

What is *Life in a Day*?

The (Bio)Politics of Self-Expression

Dr Gabriella Calchi-Novati

Lecturer - Trinity College Dublin

Only human beings want to [...] seize hold of their own appearance and of their own being manifest. Language is this appropriation, which transforms nature into face. This is why appearance becomes a problem for human beings: it becomes the location for a struggle for truth.
-Giorgio Agamben

Nowadays, according to Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben, ‘identity is without the persona’ since it is no longer ‘a function of the social “persona” and its recognition by others but rather a function of biological data, which could bear no relation to it’.² For digital natives and digital immigrants³ alike, however, identity more than being vacant of the persona is an identity saturated by too many personae, for it is an identity that is fragmented throughout the kaleidoscopic performances of the self that the Internet enables, which paradoxically allows for the advent of “personae without the person”. The reductionist ethos of technologies such as the web 2.0 has been addressed even by one of the major pioneers and sustainers of such a “democratically” interactive and user-generated technology, philosopher and computer scientist Jaron Lanier. In his 2010 *You Are Not a Gadget. A Manifesto*, Lanier claims that in the twenty-first century ‘lifeless world of pure information’ where ‘the widespread practice of fragmentary, impersonal communication has demeaned interpersonal interactions’, the philosophical belief ‘that computers can presently represent human thought or human relationship’ is a mistake which turns ‘life into a database’ and ‘persons’ into ‘rarities’.⁴ Agamben seems to respond to Lanier’s preoccupations by stating that ‘the historical experience of our time is that of [...] a sending that has no message.’⁶ I claim that what happens on the web is a series of performances that have nothing to perform and yet keep being performed. By proposing a conceptual dialogue between Agamben’s theories and the film *Life in a Day* (2011) directed by Kevin Macdonald, a patchwork of selected videos filmed by thousands of people around the world and uploaded to YouTube to take part in a cinematic experiment meant to create the first documentary ever made about a single day on earth, in this paper I will attempt to tackle the issues outlined above by critically analysing *Life in a Day* as a paradigm of what life is in the 21st century. However, these seemingly innocuous performances of self-expression can also be seen as an eerie collective-expression of contemporary biopolitical performances of control. And if, on the one hand, such performances are proof that on-line freedom of expression might exist, on the other, they expose the hollowness that these very same performances hide at their core, showing in the end that freedom, like democracy, is nothing but an ‘empty signifier’.⁶

Bio

Dr. Calchi-Novati received a B.A. magna cum laude in Letters & Philosophy, an M.A. (honors) in Public Relations from Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (Milan) and an

M.Phil. (first) in Irish Drama & Film from Trinity College Dublin. Her work has appeared in *Performance Research*, *Performance Paradigm*, *About Performance*, and *Cinema: Journal of Philosophy & the Moving Image*; and in edited collections. She holds a Ph.D. awarded with distinction for her thesis *Performativities of Intimacy in the Age of Biopolitics*. She lectures in Performance Studies and Critical Theory in the Drama Department, Trinity College Dublin.

¹ Giorgio Agamben, *Means Without End. Notes on Politics*, trans. Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000; 1996), 91 (*emphasis* in the original)

² Giorgio Agamben, *Nudities*, trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011; 2009), 50.

³ Marc Prensky, "Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants. Part 1," *On The Horizon* 9, no. 5 (2001), 1-6. & "Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants. Part 2: Do They Think Differently?," *On The Horizon* 9, no. 6 (2011), 1-6.

⁴ Jaron Lanier, *You Are Not a Gadget. A Manifesto*, (London: Penguin Books 2010), 4; 69; ix.

⁵ Giorgio Agamben, *Potentialities. Collected Essays in Philosophy*, ed. Daniel Heller-Roazen, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 112 (*emphasis* in the original)

⁶ Wendy Brown, "We Are All Democrats Now..." in Giorgio Agamben and others, *Democracy in What State?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 44-57

Michael Chekhov, Consciousness, and Anthroposophy

Franc Chamberlain

University of Huddersfield

In an article published in *Toronto Slavic Quarterly* a decade ago, I claimed that it was unnecessary for students training in the work of Michael Chekhov to know anything about the theories and practices of Rudolf Steiner and Anthroposophy. A few years later, whilst giving a presentation at the Gaiety Theatre in Dublin, it was put to me, by Paul Brennan, that, whilst it may not be necessary for the students, it was surely necessary for the teacher to have such a knowledge. More recently, in 2011, Neil Anderson argued against my initial claim, arguing that "if a technique is to be kept alive, it must be informed by theory" (2011 p.147). This paper will offer a short investigation of these questions by looking at the theory of consciousness and cognition in Chekhov's work, its relationship to Steiner, and the possibility of offering an approach that translates the Chekhov/Steiner model into a contemporary perspective on consciousness.

Please see back page for Bio.

Performing Irish-American Heritage

Dr Christopher Collins

Trinity College Dublin

This paper will consider the performance of heritage in relation to the socio-economic commodification of Irish and Irish-American tenement museums in Dublin and New York in the summer of 2013. In Dublin and New York, the tenement is iconographic. Supported by the Irish Heritage Trust, in the summer of 2013, No. 14 Henrietta Street was opened to the public in order to promote a 'tangible and intangible heritage as well as encouraging re-branding, tourism and social and economic regeneration through community participation'. New York hosts the largest population of Irish immigrants in the United States and the tenement museum at 97 Orchard Street claimed to forge 'emotional connections between visitors and immigrants past and present; and enhances appreciation for the role of immigration has played and continues to play in shaping America's national identity'. From the perspective of performing heritage, our work interrogates the stratification of historic iconography in relation to geopolitical and biopolitical collective memory on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

Both tenement museums are contested sites of historiographical research; performances of the archive embodied as memory and packaged as authentic heritage. In both tenement museums, the past is stratified through the present as a performative installation of 'real' meaning. Located at the interface of history and memory, in these museums heritage becomes pluralised as both Irish and Irish-American heritage becomes a collective memory and a diaspora history; that is, a history that is created in a home away from home: the tenement museum. This paper will excavate the dialogue betwixt these sacrosanct sites and reveal how heritage is not only engendered but how it emigrates, informs, and evolves. Essential to our understanding of the evolution of heritage is the consciousness of heritage as cognitive dissonance. In these tenement museums, the phenomenology of heritage affects memory in the present tense through processes that can be variously considered as emotional recall.

This paper is part of our current research project that explores how the performance of Irish- American heritage has been variously reimagined along the trajectory from modernity to postmodernity.

Bio

Christopher Collins teaches at the Samuel Beckett Centre at Trinity College Dublin and The Lir: The National Academy of Dramatic Art. A Trinity College Dublin Gold Medalist and recipient of the Irish Society for Theatre Research's (ISTR) New Scholar's Award (2012), he has published widely on heritage, history, memory and forgetting, particularly in relation to J.M. Synge's Collected Works. With Mary P. Caulfield, he co-edited *Ireland, Memory and Performing the Historical Imagination*, which is forthcoming from Palgrave Macmillan in 2014. He is Communications Officer for IFTR/FIRT and is on the Executive Committee of ISTR. He also works professionally as a dramaturg and a director.

“... this step, and this step, and this step...”: Mindfulness and Performing the Theatre of Samuel Beckett’

Bernadette Cronin

University College Cork

The theatre of Samuel Beckett is more about staging states of consciousness than stories, or if it is about stories, then stories that are lived rather than ones that can be told. Stories or fragments of stories are to be heard, but the central problem is often that the narratives cannot be constructed. Stories are comforting; we construct them and use them to make meaning of our experience. As Ben Okri writes, “when we have made an experience or a chaos into a story we have transformed it, made sense of it, transmuted experience, domesticated the chaos”. Beckett never allows us the comfort of meaning; rather he affords us an experience of a state of consciousness, for example, of the abject May/Amy in *Footfalls* who paces endlessly revolving some indeterminate “it all” in her “poor mind”. The challenge to the actor is how – in the absence of meaning and story and character – to inhabit such a state of consciousness in the moment of performance, moving inward to subtle realms of experience and feeling and outward towards the audience. This paper discusses the work of the performer and how engaging in psychophysical actor-training approaches and embodied philosophies can help train the actor’s *bodymind* to meet the challenges of this kind of performance.

Bio

Dr. Bernadette Cronin is a theatre practitioner-researcher, founder member of Gaitkrash Theatre Company www.gaitkrash.com and lecturer for Drama & Theatre Studies, UCC. Her research areas include postdramatic dramaturgies and representing trauma, adaptation, and practice-as-research in the context of her work with Gaitkrash. She is co-founder of Art|Works UCC, a platform for exchange between professionals in the creative arts and industries and students.

Performance versus trauma: the 'Theatre of the Absurd' and 'Butoh' as a response to trauma-like experiences in the macro-social context.

Stefanie Dinkelbach

Liverpool Hope University

This paper explores the potential of the performing arts to give expression to the experience of trauma and trauma-like events looking at the 'Theatre of the Absurd' and 'Butoh' as examples.

The understanding of trauma that is hereby applied is based on an interdisciplinary perspective in which neurobiological studies (Kandel 2006, LeDoux 1996) and sociological research (Collins 2004, Scheff 2006) are combined to observe a loss of a sense of interrelatedness as the effect of trauma, thereby making a comparison between individual psychology and the micro- and macro-social contexts possible. The 'Theatre of the Absurd' and 'Butoh' are viewed in their social and cultural contexts, the first as reflecting the state of human consciousness affected by the two World Wars (Esslin 1961), the latter as a response to the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Orlando 2001). The ability of the performances to publicly claim the experience as traumatic and to raise collective awareness to such an extent that the sense of lost interconnectivity can be revised (Alexander 2004), is assessed in this context.

The destruction of previously existing conventional structures, an approach that is used in both cases, is valued as both effective and appropriate as it reflects the fractured nature of trauma memory while giving the audience opportunities for emotional processing and active mental engagement.

Bio

Graduated with a PhD in Film (practice-based) from NUI Galway in 2013

Resistant Suicide and Anxiety Management: the self-deaths of female protagonists in the plays of Marina Carr and Emma Dante

Brenda Donohue

Trinity College Dublin

This paper scrutinises the suicides of female protagonists in the works of Irish playwright, Marina Carr, and Italian author and director, Emma Dante. It proposes the concept of “resistant suicide” as a reading through which some represented self-deaths, instead of a necessarily negative signifier, could be seen as a moment of agency, authority and resistance.

There is a clear tendency for feminist critics to interpret literary representations of female suicide in negative terms, variously as a sign that the woman is being punished by the society she rebelled against, as a signifier for her defeat and resignation, or as an expression of the female writer’s own desire to die. While acknowledging the validity of these readings, this paper argues that another, additional interpretation is possible. It proposes the concept of “resistant suicide” as a reading through which some represented self-deaths could instead be seen as a moment of agency, authority and resistance on behalf of the female protagonist. Using theories formulated by Margaret Higonnet and Elisabeth Bronfen, the deaths of Emma Dante’s Nina in her play, *Carnezzeria*, and Marina Carr’s *Woman in Woman* and *Scarecrow* are interpreted as resistant deaths; as acts that are marked by choice and agency.

The paper concludes by investigating the possibility that the same deaths can be read as mirrors for the playwrights’ own anxieties. In killing off their suicidal characters, specifically their female protagonists, Carr and Dante engage in a process with transformative and liberatory potential that attempts to kill off the author’s anxieties regarding the precarious and unstable nature of their artistic and professional position.

Please see back page for Bio.

Listening to the Space Between Us

Tracy Evans

Aberystwyth University

In a move away from the accustomed (Feminist) political program, or agenda for the future, Kozel suggests that Irigaray's texts 'resist the temptation to be prescriptive, believing this would be a recapitulation to the normative and prescriptive rhetoric of the structures she seeks to undermine. Instead she opens a space for the new which sometimes feels uncomfortably like a void' (Kozel 1997).

Why is the void uncomfortable?

What exists in the space in between?

This performance encounter invites an audience to witness two people who sit at either edge of what might be a void. An empty space. A caesura. Nothing appears to be happening.

They cannot speak, cannot see, cannot move. These are the rules. And yet they attempt to reach each other from a distance.

The space between them is amplified.

An audible pause.

Bio

This performative presentation is part of my PhD research on narrative and caesura in the performance of birth stories. The project is supported by an AHRC grant.

The Performance of Grief in Early Twentieth Century Irish Plays

Fiona Fearon

Dundalk IT

Since the late nineteenth century across the Western world the treatment of death has become increasingly 'cellular, private, curtained, individualised and obscured.' (Buchan et.al., 2011, 4) However in Ireland, death and the cultural practices surrounding funerals have a very public and performative character. Cultural traditions which emerged from the religious observations of mainly Catholic funeral services allow for clearly marked stages of grieving which are frequently public and often gendered, in particular the practice of keening. The obvious importance of these cultural practices is reinforced by the number of representations of grief in Irish theatre and performance. Starting with a number of important plays of the early twentieth century, there is a recurrent interest in representations of women in the process of grieving in plays like *Riders to the Sea* (1904), *The Gaol Gate* (1906), *Juno and the Paycock* (1924), and *The Plough and the Stars* (1926). These plays not only display grief for public consumption, to an audience that was frequently moved by these representations, but also they use the pathos of this gendered grief to interrogate the causes of death in this society. Women's grief reinforces the pointlessness of the deaths grieved for – young men lost to the sea, to violence or the punishment of the state.

The psychological importance of the grieving process is well understood by modern psychiatry and psychology; however there is little work on the link between the artistic performance of grief and its affect on the audience. This paper will analyse the performance of grief in a number of early twentieth century Irish plays, in particular *Riders to the Sea* (1904), *The Gaol Gate* (1906), *Juno and the Paycock* (1924), and *The Plough and the Stars* (1926) and discuss their representations of gender as well as the reception of these artistic expressions of grief. Using initial critical reviews and personal responses to the production of these plays, I will interrogate the links between public representation of grief and the empathy for grief in the audience. This is part of a larger piece of work on the changing nature of the performance of grief, both real and artistic, in contemporary Ireland.

Bio

Dr. Fiona Fearon is a Lecturer in Theatre Studies at Dundalk Institute of Technology, Ireland. Her principal areas of interest are audience and performance studies, and she has published on audience ethnography and the performance of grief in contemporary society, and in particular the intersection between audience, performance and new media. She is now working on expanding this work to encompass the changing nature of the performance of grief, both real and artistic, in contemporary Ireland. Fiona is a member of the executive committee of the Irish Society for Theatre Research. She completed her PhD in December 2007 at the University of Sheffield on *The Selection, Production and Reception of European Plays at the National Theatre of Great Britain, 1963-1997*.

“Feeling coming back’: producing Not I”

Dr Ger FitzGibbon, Adjunct Lecturer in Drama & Theatre Studies, UCC and Guest Director of Not I at the Crawford Art Gallery.

Regina Crowley, Lecturer in Theatre at the Cork School of Music.

Mick O’Shea, sound artist.

University College Cork

Over the years, a hard carapace of performance traditions has formed around certain theatre texts of Samuel Beckett. As a result, it can be very difficult to break open what those pieces originally held, how they breathed on stage and lived for their audiences. Beckett’s own notebooks and correspondence - originally part of a dialogue with actors and directors, in specific times and for real spaces – have often been separated out, and elevated into a definitive performance recipe, the authorised way of doing things. It is worth remembering that their publication was, in some cases, diametrically opposed to Beckett’s own wishes – perhaps because he anticipated such a process of calcification.

What is also striking is that a corresponding petrification has developed around audiences’ expectations and reception of Beckett: a quasi-religious respectfulness, an anticipated pleasurable boredom that may lead us towards a mildly meditative, masochistic melancholia.

(I hadn’t intended all those m’s – they just came along.)

This paper is a commentary on the processes which fed into the recent Gaitkrash production of Not I at the Crawford Art Gallery, outlining both the process of textual exploration and the conceptualization and realization of the final event and the audience response to it. It does not aim to present an alternative recipe but to rediscover the liveness of live performance and to open up some questions about the theatrical Beckett.

Bio

Ger FitzGibbon is former Head of Drama & Theatre Studies. He helped to establish the Board of Drama & Theatre Studies, initiated the introduction of Drama & Theatre Studies to U.C.C. at both postgraduate and undergraduate levels and negotiated the partnership with the Music Department to form the School of Music and Theatre. His MA and PhD were both in the field of Seventeenth Century English Theatre. His main areas of teaching included text analysis, dramaturgy, theatre history, Renaissance Theatre and contemporary Irish and British theatre. He was Irish editor of the Cambridge Guide to Theatre, and co-editor of Theatre Talk: Conversations with Irish Theatre Practitioners (Carysfort Press, Dublin 2001). He has published work on a range of contemporary Irish playwrights, including Brian Friel, Sebastian Barry and Tom Murphy.

As Chair of the Granary Theatre Committee he was instrumental in persuading the university to build the new Granary. His own plays include The Rock Station (premiered by Soho Theatre, London) and Sca, a modern version of Sheridan’s School for Scandal. Apart from Not I (Gaitkrash) in recent years he has directed Brecht’s Fear and Misery in the Third Reich (with Bernadette Cronin), Frank McGuinness’s Mary and Lizzie (with Bernadette Cronin), Martin Crimp’s Attempts on Her Life, Patrick Kavanagh’s The Great

Hunger (for Theatre Makers TC), and Beckett's Krapp's Last Tape. He was script editor and dramaturg on Corcadorca's production of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet (2013) and is on the Steering Committee of the Theatre Development Centre (TDC) in Triskel Arts, Cork.

UNKNOWN KNOWNS: Kinaesthetic Empathy in the making and understanding of Image Theatre

David Grant

Queen's University, Belfast

Using iconic images created by students in Belfast and Sarajevo of their respective cities, this paper will explore how emerging ideas in the field of cognitive science (e.g. Gallagher, 2005) can help explain the making and understanding of stage imagery. There has been growing interest in the intersection between performance and cognitive science (McConachie, 2006), particularly in terms of kinaesthetic empathy (Reynolds and Reason, 2012). Clinical evidence is providing a scientific basis for understanding the embodied practices associated with Augusto Boal's 'Image Theatre' (Boal, 1992). This paper will analyse the ambiguities inherent in stage images of contested cities to explore how these can reveal unconscious insights into the image-makers' perception of their home environments. An image of Sarajevo, for instance, ostensibly about the Winter Olympics, reveals unintended information about the city's internal divisions. An image of Belfast, ostensibly about the Titanic, portrays the limitations of the city's Peace Process. The paper will argue that research into the function of mirror neurons may help explain the close connection between bodily expression and the subliminal imagination.

Please see back page for Bio.

“Gender Discombobulation”:

Articulating the phobia in homophobia.

Bryan Hogan

Queen's University Belfast

On January 11th 2014, Rory O’Neill aka Panti Bliss appeared on The Saturday Night Show, a talk show for the national broadcaster RTE, where he identified opinion columnists and Catholic lobby groups as homophobic. The next day this interview was censored and within the week damages of €85,000 were awarded to those aggrieved by being labeled homophobic. For two weeks the debate raged on social media, while main media outlets stayed silent fearing litigation. This denied the word homophobia to homosexuals. Three weeks later Panti was given a voice on the Abbey theatre stage; Ireland’s National Theatre, as part of its production of *The Risen People* by James Plunkett. Panti delivered a ‘Noble call’ and the oration articulating the different manifestations of homophobia and how it oppresses the LGBTQI community went viral.

Panti’s ‘Noble Call’ is a celebration of difference, highlighting how no one should have to forgo their civil and human rights to be who they are. However accidental Panti’s appearance in drag was, it marked a departure in Irish LGBTQI activism, that assimilation isn’t the only option to gain equality. Drag played an important role in early gay activism, by reinforcing that a culture, a community or one’s individuality does not need to be sacrificed for equality.

This presentation examines how Panti challenges hetero and homo-normativity in Irish society. Reading drag as a Brechtian *Verfremdung* suggests the radical nature of drag. Public commentators argue O’Neill cannot be taken seriously in a dress; this research will question how drag challenges heterosexism. Looking at the work of R.W. Connell and Judith Butler, this paper seeks to interrogate the root of homophobia and assert it is the ‘queerness’ or non conformity of prescribed gender roles that is the crux of this phobia.

Bio

I am a graduate of Dublin Institute of Technology and University College Dublin, where I earned my BA and MA respectively. I am pursuing my PhD at Queen's University Belfast. I currently provide teaching assistance for the performance analysis module. I presented papers at the Performing Gender conference Belfast 2013, also at the Irish society of Theatre Research at Birkbeck College 2013 and aim to present for The International Federation of Theatre Research at Warwick.

Blaa Head: Red Kettle Theatre Company in a Sociolinguistic Context

Elizabeth Howard

Waterford Institute of Technology

Accents, dialects and language are embodiments of cultural memory. An accent is a mode of pronunciation that is particular to an individual, a region or a nation, and it can be seen to denote levels of identities particular to the speaker. Language, words and phrases used can also hint to a person's cultural and social conformity, the use of which can result in social inclusion or exclusion. Waterford playwright, Jim Nolan, wrote several plays that were produced by Red Kettle of which he was the artistic director for fifteen years. Some of these plays were written for a Waterford audience with the intention of celebrating the locality, and the characters were formed using the local vernacular. A wide range of plays were produced by the company that had never been seen on a Waterford stage before, and were performed by local actors with local accents, raising the level of representation and recognition felt by a Waterford audience in relation to these productions. Using a sociolinguistic approach, this paper examines how Red Kettle Theatre Company performed and represented the cultural memory and identity of the Waterford people in order to root its place firmly within the community as an influential entity.

Consideration of different social contexts lies at the core of sociolinguistic investigations. Director Annie Kilmartin said of Red Kettle that the company's knowledge of their audience gave them a very clear context for their work, which, in her view, gave the company its strength. Red Kettle understood that there were different communities to play for in Waterford, and made its production choices based on this relationship, selecting plays that were entertaining, relevant and had something to say to its various audiences. Taking the view that politics begins with the self and that language and dialect are a political expression, this paper maintains that Red Kettle responded to the cultural moment by encouraging the people of Waterford to recognise the social structures in which they lived through the political language of the cultural activity that Red Kettle performed. The level of social knowledge and context that the audiences needed to possess in order to be fully competent cultural readers of the plays is also explored, along with the question of the company's ideological positioning.

Primary sources for this research will include material from the Red Kettle archive, and four plays staged by Red Kettle – *The Black Pool* and *The Gods are Angry* Miss Kerr both written by Jim Nolan, *Agamemnon* by Aeschylus', and *Franca Rame and Darion Fo's Female Parts*.

Little is known about how Red Kettle contributed to the expression of regional identity, and this paper will add to knowledge in that area. The paper will also contribute to expanding research into how narratives of regional theatre companies contribute to the development of theatre nationally. Consequently the paper will be of interest to national and international scholars of Irish theatre studies and culture.

Bio

Elizabeth was awarded a PhD scholarship in Theatre Studies, by WIT, and began her research on Red Kettle Theatre Company, the plays of Jim Nolan, and Waterford cultural identity in October 2013. Previously, Elizabeth completed an MA in Performance Making

at Goldsmiths College, University of London, and gained a double first class BA (Hons.) degree in Drama and Theatre Studies with Counselling Skills from the University of Chester. Elizabeth has extensive theatre industry experience as an artist and producer, and she will assume a teaching post on the theatre studies programme

Eternal figures in the work of Marina Carr

Monica Insinga

University College Dublin

- The best of ourselves want to be as good as possibly can to everyone we meet, however fleetingly. But then all the other impulses are also there. There's a bit of shark in us, there's the reptilian brain, there's the gorilla, there's the snake – we all of this in us from out of the mists of time. But I think we also have the divine in us and it's one of the most difficult questions to resolve here on earth: how do you explain dark matter?¹

Duality and the eternal conflict between the divine and darkness is an ever-present issue in the work of contemporary Irish playwright, Marina Carr. Carr, who believes in multiple parallel dimensions to the one we inhabit, has often used liminal figures like changelings and ghosts to embody contrasting aspects of human nature.

In particular this paper will focus on *Scarecrow* from *Woman and Scarecrow* (2006) and *The Black Monk* in *16 Possible Glimpses* (2011) and their relationship with the respective protagonists of the two plays, *Woman* and *Chekhov*. *Scarecrow* and *The Black Monk* are two enigmatic figures who appear to come 'out of the mists of time', carrying the weight of eternity on their ethereal shoulders and forcing *Woman* and *Chekhov* to reflect on their fleeting life about to end.

Through the use of various psychoanalytical theories, including Lacan's mature theories on the mirror stage whereby the 'phenomenon [...] illustrates the conflictual nature of the dual relationship',² I will argue that both *Scarecrow* and *The Black Monk* are parts of the protagonists' souls and imagination, that act like conscience-type figures. Consequently I will explore the significance of having passion and happiness in one's life (no matter whether you are an anonymous *Woman* or one of the masters of Russian literature) as pointed out by *Scarecrow*—in Kristevan terms, *Woman*'s 'ideal Other'³—and *The Black Monk* to the people they are trying to watch over.

Bio

Monica Insinga is a newly-elected member of the Executive Committee of ISTR and has been Web Co-administrator of the Society with Chris Collins for four years. Monica is currently completing a PhD on 'Alternative Identities, Spaces and Fates in the Theatre of Luigi Pirandello and Marina Carr' in UCD under the Graduate Research and Education Programme in 'Gender, Culture and Identity' funded by IRCHSS. She is co-editor of the collection entitled *The European Avant-Garde: Text and Image* with Selena Daly, published by CSP in 2012.

1 Marina Carr & Nancy Finn, "Theater in Eleven Dimensions: A Conversation with Marina Carr," *World Literature Today* 86.4 (July-Aug. 2012), 42-46 (p.45).

2

Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire. Livre IV*. Qtd. in Dylan Evans, *An Introductory Dictionary of Lacanian Psychoanalysis* (London & NY: Routledge, 1996), p. 115.

3

Julia Kristeva, 'Freud and Love: Treatment and its Discontents,' in *Tales of Love*, trans. by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia UP, 1987), p. 33.

The Self-Consciousness of Money

Eamonn Jordan

University College Dublin

From the late 1940s forward Irish society negotiated with varied circumstances, including political conservatism and social stultification, mass emigration, high levels of poverty and unemployment. These issues were countered by an impetus towards change and a rhetoric of opportunity. It was a nation discovering and dealing with the implications, responsibilities, challenges and impacts of political autonomy. As wealth, money and resources were in short supply, how Irish playwrights handled dramaturgically these matters is of real significance.

Irish playwrights have a general tendency to fetishize poverty and frequently calibrate the poor and marginalised as both decent and generous, whilst conveying a passive acceptance of their lot. Secondly, characters who are wealthy are almost always old, whose traditions and standings are invariably in decline; their siblings tend to be decrepit and/or infertile or fail to procreate – and while this is not the case on every occasion, there is a consistency of practice. Thirdly, there is also the tendency to frame material aspirations in terms of gombeenism, desperation, evil or a fundamental lack of sorts: these characters are mean-spirited and press others exploitatively. In Tom Murphy's *Conversations on a Homecoming* (1985), Tom exclaims to Liam: "... You're only a fuckin' bunch of keys."⁴ While countering Liam's materialism, Murphy's play exemplifies the pejorative framing of wealth and aspiration, and also accommodates begrudgery, without necessarily pointing towards alternatives. Murphy's *Famine* (1968) captures distinctions across class and also the ineffectiveness of his play's elites to intervene appropriately or to think through the starvation and destruction that is happening around them.

In some ways, this negative and obfuscatory framing or dispositioning of money is only one aspect of perception, attribution and prejudice, because, here was a post-colonial or neo-colonial, society that generally preferred to leave wealth as an unsaid, a repressed or shadow aspect, but also as its ultimate fantasy, in terms of independence and self-sufficiency. Effectively, with great regularity wealth's status as a grand narrative was socially, politically and dramaturgically obscured. This of course prompts the larger question, what motivates such clouding of awarenesses, and prompts such perceptions, misperceptions and deceptions?

Bio

Eamonn Jordan, University College Dublin Senior Lecturer in Drama Studies, is the author of numerous critical essays on Irish dramatists, such as Marie Jones, Martin McDonagh, Conor McPherson, and Enda Walsh. He edited *Theatre Stuff: Critical Essays on Contemporary Irish Theatre* in 2000. He co-edited with Lilian Chambers *The Theatre of Martin McDonagh: A World of Savage Stories* (2006) and *The Theatre of Conor McPherson: 'Right beside the Beyond'* (2012). He has written three monographs

The Feast of Famine: Plays of Frank McGuinness(1997), Dissident Dramaturgies: Contemporary Irish Theatre(2010) and From Leenane to LA: The Theatre and Cinema of Martin McDonagh(2014).

River Casting: Consciousness, and Cognition in Olwen Fouéré's *riverrun*

Marie Kelly

University College Cork

As 'an actor, writer and theatre artist' Olwen Fouéré describes her work as 'the primary creation of image, text and personae'. To this effect she 'navigates the performance contexts of mainstream theatre, the visual arts, music, dance theatre and literature.' I am interested in Olwen Fouéré's career because of the many diverse ways in which she has been cast as an actor by others and the way in which she has cast herself through her acting, writing and performing. In this paper I pinpoint highlights of this diverse career and look closely at Fouéré's casting of herself as the river in *riverrun*, a monologue/solo performance using an extract from the text of James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake*. My thesis is that the casting of Fouéré across a broad spectrum of work supports the view that all casting is a casting of consciousness, depending on how the term consciousness is understood. Drawing on contemporary theories from cognitive science (Daniel Dennett and others) my paper culminates in the assertion that Fouéré's casting of herself as the river in this most recent work represents an attempt to enter into the fullest possible expression of what it is to be conscious in the world, to reconcile the mind/body split and, without subordinating either or any of these realms, to materially ground mind in voice, mind in body, and mind in every aspect of our interaction with all of the elements of our physical environment. In line with the conference theme, finally, the findings of this paper highlights the usefulness of such theories in the analysis of theatre practice and performance.

Bio

Marie Kelly lectures in Drama and Theatre Studies at the School of Music and Theatre, University College Cork. She worked at the Abbey Theatre between 1993 and 2006, firstly as an Executive Assistant and subsequently as Casting Director. Marie has an MA in Modern Drama and Performance (2005) and a PhD in Drama Studies (2011), both from the School of English, Drama and Film at University College Dublin. Her book *The Theatre of Tom Mac Intyre: strays from the ether* was co-edited with Dr. Bernadette Sweeney (University of Montana) and is published by Carysfort Press in 2010.

Irish History on the Hungarian Stage: A Physical Theatre Performance of Helen Edmundson's *The Clearing*

Mária Kurdi

University of Pécs

The English playwright Helen Edmundson's play *The Clearing* (1993) is set in 1652, the time when Cromwellian politics instigated a massive campaign of retaliation against Irish Catholics and also Protestants who supported the deposed king and fought in the royalist army. The play won awards after its première, but not much has been heard about its production history since then. Reading the text of the drama today, from the vantage point of familiarity with the radically experimental theatre of the later 1990s and beyond, one can see it a largely conventional work, even dated regarding its dramaturgy. However, Szkéné Theatre Budapest, which has mainly university student actors, saw a potential in the play and staged it in January this year. The production is unique with its stylized props and costuming as well as its focus on expressive body movements and utilization of physical theatre. Beside analyzing the dramaturgical innovations and general features of the performance, my paper aims to discuss the ways in which the characters are shown experiencing and living their British and Irish ambitions, identity conflicts and divided loyalties physically. Images from the production will be shown in my presentation.

Bio

Professor Mária Kurdi teaches in the Institute of English Studies at the University of Pécs, Hungary. Her main fields of research are modern Irish literature and English-speaking drama. Her books include a survey of contemporary Irish drama in Hungarian (1999), a volume of essays entitled *Codes and Masks: Aspects of Identity in Contemporary Irish Plays in an Intercultural Context* (Peter Lang, 2000), a collection of interviews made with Irish playwrights (2004), and *Representations of Gender and Female Subjectivity in Contemporary Irish Drama by Women*, published by Edwin Mellen Press in 2010. With Donald E. Morse and Csilla Bertha she co-edited the book *Brian Friel's Dramatic Artistry: "The Work Has Value"*, published by Carysfort Press, Dublin, in 2006. In 2009 also Carysfort Press brought out her edited volume *Literary and Cultural Relations: Ireland, Hungary, and Central and Eastern Europe*. In 2011 she published a book about the literary representation of immigrants from Hungary and Eastern Europe in Ireland, in Hungarian, and edited a *Festschrift* for Csilla Bertha and Donald E. Morse with Marianna Gula and István Rácz. Currently she is co-editing (with Miriam Haughton) the collection *Radical Contemporary Theatre Practices by Women in Ireland* to be published with Carysfort Press in late 2014, and the 2014 issue of *Irish Theatre International*. Mária Kurdi is also the author of several articles on Irish drama and theatre, which appeared in journals and scholarly volumes.

Pina Bausch's *Orpheus und Eurydike*: the musicality of the moving body

Joanna Maryam Lally

Trinity College Dublin

If, as Antonio Damasio remarks in *The Feeling of What Happens*, the term 'psyche' originally meant 'of blood and of breath', then Pina Bausch's dance-theatre surely encompasses the root of human psychology and its mechanisms to their fullest. Bausch draws on the body of her performers to bring their individual experience onto the realm of the stage, and locates emotion within moments of visceral corporeality.

In a radical reconstruction of Gluck's *Orfeo e Eurydice*, Bausch transforms this 18th century opera into a piece of Tanztheater, in which she divides the stage and the subjectivities of the two tragic protagonists between singers and dancers. The original production (by Bausch) took place in 1975, coinciding with her infamous rendering of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* of the same year, a pivotal moment in Bausch's career as a choreographer. This paper looks at the interaction between music, movement and emotion that Bausch visualizes on the operatic stage, drawing on the performance of this work recorded at the Paris National Opera in 2009. I argue that her interpretative choice to juxtapose singers and dancers onstage amplifies the music's emotional content through its doubling of bodies and voices, and suggest that the nature of musical embodiment in this piece is also countered, paradoxically, by its disembodiment. Moreover, I intend to adopt a practice-based research approach to this analysis; firstly in order to interpret the musical quality of the moving body in Bausch's choreography, and, more specifically, the formation and repetition of habitual movement, through the lens of Laban's Effort-Shape schema.

Bio

Joanna Maryam Lally is currently studying for the M. Phil in Theatre and Performance at Trinity College Dublin

Zazen Practitioner

Padraig MacSuibhne

University College Cork

Padraig MacSuibhne is originally from the U.S. but has been living in various countries in Europe for the past forty years and for the last twenty in Ireland. He completed his undergraduate studies in Philosophy at the State University of New York, where he became interested in eastern philosophies, especially Buddhism and Zen. Twelve years ago he began practising Zen at the Cork Zen Centre – following in the line of Sunryu Suzuki Roshi – and has continued ever since.

Grotowski and the Song

Gemma Linda McGill

Trinity College Dublin

Throughout his investigations into theatre laboratory research, Jerzy Grotowski used song as a vital tool for exploring the work of the performer: it was a way of advancing their movement towards total presence, vitality, and authenticity. As his laboratories evolved, the idea that song could facilitate and encounter between the performer and their essential self became the primary focus of the work. During his later periods he explored the potentiality of song as the doorway to a third presence, the key to accessing trans-generational memory, making contact with first singers and our progenitors. He was a practitioner who firmly believed that performers should treat the act of singing holistically - that it must be rooted in physical action, with personal associations and memories being allowed to permeate the action as it progressed. The belief that song has the potential to be both physically affecting, and psychologically transcendent is one that is still prominent in Grotowski laboratories today. But what is total presence? Why is it important?

Many practitioners who have trained with Grotowski and his successors have written about the significance of singing in the laboratory, and using my work in Nervousystem's theatre laboratory and in Katharina Seyferth's International Centre for Theatrical Research and Training at Las Teouleres in France as a guide, I propose to discuss and demonstrate some of the singing techniques explored over the years. I plan to argue for the importance of embodied singing within the realm of actor training, for its value to the actor as an engagement with song as a total act. Singing has the ability to access the essential within the performer and to allow for a meaningful exchange between the actor and audience; I intend to argue for the need for this style of exploration within an Irish theatre setting.

Bio

Gemma McGill is a first year PhD student studying at the Beckett Centre at TCD. Her main area of interest is the concept of authenticity and organic presence in the work of Jerzy Grotowski. She holds a BA in Drama and Theatre Studies from TCD and an MA in English specialising in Drama and Theatre Studies from NUI Galway. She has been an associate artist with Nervousystem Theatre Laboratory since 2009, performing in the critically acclaimed *Weaving the Cry* based on JM Synge's *Riders to the Sea*. She currently leads a Grotowski based singing laboratory in the Fringe Lab in Dublin.

Beckett's Better Consciousness: a Schopenhauerian Reading of *Eleutheria*

Anthony McGrath

Trinity College Dublin

Contrary to millennia of religious and philosophical teachings, Schopenhauer insists that reason is a mere instrument of our desires as corporeal beings and is thereby powerless to exert a presiding influence over human affairs. The tenets of mind-body dualism, as evinced in Cartesian discourse, informed Beckett's early creative practices, yet his depiction of the interplay of mental faculties and their relationship to bodily experience can be more pertinently related to his passionate immersion in the writings of Schopenhauer. Schopenhauer's astringent portrayal of the unbridgeable divisions of human identity is expressed in terms of perpetual conflict. Accordingly, in Schopenhauerian terms, the inherently fractious nature of selfhood precludes any integration of the diffuse desires of body and mind. Descartes' relatively simplistic approach to such issues was opposed by Schopenhauer in ways which proved creatively fruitful for Beckett's work. This paper will identify a number of intertextual relationships between Beckett's *Eleutheria* and those aspects of Schopenhauer's philosophy which describe emancipatory states of consciousness within which intellectual and conative activities cease. I will contend that Beckett's enigmatic depiction of the intricate nature of subjectivity experienced by Victor – the central character of *Eleutheria* – can illuminate our understanding of the more inexplicable thematic elements of the play. More generally, I propose to show how Schopenhauer's seminal arguments regarding the inextricable links between volition and embodiment can be related to Beckett's remarkable ability to use developments in the history of ideas in the service of purely aesthetic ends.

Bio

Anthony McGrath studied English and Philosophy at University College Cork, gaining a First Class degree in 2004. He went on to receive an M.Phil. (with Distinction) in Anglo-Irish Literature from Trinity College Dublin in 2010. As an M.Phil. student, Anthony completed a thesis on Beckett and Low Church Christianity under the supervision of Professor Terence Brown. Since 2010 he has worked as a tutor in the School of English at TCD. Now in the final year of his Ph.D. studies at TCD, Anthony is researching the intertextual links between the philosophy of Schopenhauer and the critical and creative writings of Samuel Beckett under the supervision of Professor Sam Slote.

A dose of reality: choreographies of affective adjacency.

Dr Aoife McGrath

Queen's University Belfast

This paper will examine instances in dance performance when the choreographed intrusion of a moment of distressing “reality” allows for an experience of a “space of affective adjacency”; a space that allows for the creation and experience of affects that go against the grain of their surroundings, allowing for alternative realities to be glimpsed.

I will examine these moments of an intruding “reality” into dance performance from two perspectives. I will first explore how these moments might serve to highlight the spatial and affective interconnectedness of spectator and performer, and how these instances of a heightened awareness of co-existence in a shared space point to the fragility and vulnerability of social connections in everyday life. I will also look at these moments of “reality” as attempts to provide a sort of inoculation (a small dose of something dangerous) to immunise against the chaotic and precarious socio-political and cultural contexts out of which the dance works examined emerged.

Please see back page for Bio.

Making Visible the Invisible: The Process of Playwriting

Donard MacKenzie

Artistic Director, Origins Theatre Projects/UBC PhD Candidate, Vancouver, B.C., Canada

The process of writing a research based play has rarely been fully examined by a practicing playwright while immersed in the process of writing. I document my process as a playwright while writing from research-based sources, which include in-person work at source archives in London, UK and Los Angeles, CA., USA. Through the methods I outline, I hold the meaning of the process of art making before its elusive understanding disappears.

The subject (and object) of my study moves through the charged creative dynamics of the 1962 biographical film, *Freud* (Huston). The resulting full-length play is called, *The Freudian Palimpsest of Monty and John*, and was staged as a reading for an invited audience as part of the research. With reference to different playwrights, and to Sigmund Freud's theories of creativity and the unconscious, I use the education arts based research method of A/R/Tography (Irwin et al, n. d.) which allows for the changing identities of artist/researcher/teacher. I ask what the making of art may teach if only as a/r/tographers we are able to accept and engage with the offering. I closely examine the source of a creative idea, its continued influences, and trace its evolving nature through the interstitial spaces, especially as it pertains to what I term "father/author/ity".

I make what Peter Brook has called the "invisible visible" (1972, p. 48). I use prose poem inquiry; and, auto/biographic narrative reflections on the source idea(s). The concepts of the palimpsest and underwriting, and Freud's magic slate are examined. To place my work into my community of practice, I have interviewed local professional playwrights.

Please see back page for Bio.

Loving Objects: Consciousness and Materiality in *I Am My Own Wife*

Trish McTighe

University of Reading

First produced in New York in 2003 and recently presented by Belfast's Prime Cut (2012), Doug Wright's *I Am My Own Wife* attempts to stage the life of a unique trans woman, Charlotte von Mahlsdorf, who survived both the Nazi occupation of her home city of Berlin, and the subsequent communist regime, all the while building and maintaining her beloved collection of antiques. Wright set out to create a queer icon, an emblem of trans survival and evidence of an as yet unwritten queer history; a role that Charlotte did not quite fit. Charlotte's complicity with the Stasi (possibly under duress), revealed while Wright was composing the play, complicated his project significantly. This failure to idealise Charlotte ultimately became the true subject of the play. This paper will suggest however that Charlotte's queerness might be found not only in her trans status, but also in her remarkable relationship with the objects of her collection, which she recounts in her interviews with Wright and in her autobiography. The play succeeds at bringing us closer to the materiality of Charlotte's life and hints at the power of performance to make us see the material world anew. Read in relation to the turn to materialism or 'object-oriented ontology' in certain strands of contemporary thought, Charlotte's privileging of the objects in her life seems to disrupt ontological hierarchies at the same time as she disrupts gender categories. Emerging out of the so-called speculative turn in contemporary European thought, object-oriented ontology seeks to challenge the pre-eminence of the conscious mind and to think of 'mind' and 'object' as belonging to a single ontological category. This radically non-anthropocentric shift in neuroscience, philosophy and art is made visible via Charlotte's performance, manifesting, as this paper argues, a queer ecology of human and material objects.

Bio:

Trish McTighe is currently a post-doctoral researcher on the AHRC sponsored Staging Beckett Project at the University of Reading, UK. Her book, *The Haptic Aesthetic in Samuel Beckett's Drama*, was published with Palgrave in June 2013 and she has published in several international journals on haptics, corporeality and technology in performance.

The Power of Centering to generate Energy in Performance

Mary Moynihan

Lecturer on the BA in Drama (Performance) with Honors, DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama

According to the theatre practitioner Michael Chekhov, centering is a concentration of psychophysical energies in order to generate a sense of balance and control, or grounding. The actor's centre is a powerful source of energy and a primary tool in the development of an actor's physical awareness, assisting with connecting and presence in training and in performance. This paper explores the relationship between the mind and body in relation to focusing on centres of energy and working consciously through the body to develop body memory and non-doing for creative performance. The working center is in the abdomen or hara as defined in Japanese theatre and according to the theatre practitioner David Zinder, working through the centre involves an act of the imagination and the conscious use of breath as the performer learns to concentrate performative energies before going into a scene. A center is an endless source of primal energy as the actor creates work that radiates far beyond the body into space.

Bio

Mary Moynihan is a creative artist and theatre maker working in professional theatre and film. She is a writer, director, actor and lecturer. Mary lectures in drama and theatre studies for the BA in Drama (Performance) with Honours at the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama, where she directs and teaches the Stanislavski system of actor training, Augusto Boal and Michael Chekhov techniques, movement and drama facilitation and directs final year performances. Mary is a founding member and current Artistic Director of Smashing Times Theatre Company, which is involved in professional performance, training and participation. The work of the company is underpinned by a rights-based approach and a commitment to artistic excellence and social engagement. Mary originally trained as an actor and director at Focus Theatre under the direction of Deirdre O'Connell, her friend and mentor and today continues her involvement as an associate director/artist. Mary has an honours MA in Film Production from the Dublin Institute of Technology and an honours BA in Drama and Theatre Studies from the University of Dublin Trinity College.

I find myself (in two minds)

Irene Murphy

Independent Researcher

Starting from the premise of brain function being a dual process that uses both Intuitive and rational thinking I propose to explore the idea that we apprehend the world in two radically opposed ways and by experimenting with two different modes of thought: one fast the other slow I will present a 20 minute performative screening with moving and still images and words under the title:

I find myself (in two minds)

Bio

Irene Murphy is a visual artists based in Cork city.

She has exhibited and performed in the UK, Holland, Sweden, Tasmania, Poland, Germany, Lithuania, Belgium, Finland, Japan the USA and is active in ongoing collaborative projects such as Strange Attractor (2011) sonic and visual improvisation and The Domestic Godless (2004) absurdist culinary adventures.

She is a founder member and director of the Cork Artists Collective from 1985 -2008 and founder and active member of The Guesthouse www.theguesthouse.ie (2009) artists residency space.

She has received awards from the Arts council of Ireland, Culture Ireland, E.U. Japan fest, Cork European Capital of Culture, Cork City Council and the Cork Film Center.

Mobile Technologies and Embodied Performance

Máiréad Ní Chróinín

National University of Ireland, Galway

Companies such as Blast Theory, Circumstance, and most recently, ANU, have used mobile technologies in the creation and delivery of performances that cast the audience in the role of participant/performer.

In this paper I argue that mobile technologies enable embodied performance, whereby the meaning of the performance is generated for each audience/participant through a three-way dialogue between their body, their environment and the mobile technology.

Applying the writings of Brian Massumi on affect and movement, I show how movement and mobility are at the core of how we make meaning, and how our consciousness is shaped, at its most fundamental level, by the continuous movement and change in both our body and in our environment.

I argue that mobile technologies possess the capability to intervene in our consciousness at this fundamental level by responding to both our body's internal movement and the external movement of our environment.

Using case studies from ANU and other companies, I suggest that theatre practitioners who use mobile technologies are finding new approaches to the generation of meaning in their performances which draw on the audience's own embodied interaction with their environment and the mobile technology.

Please see back page for Bio.

Queering the 'Punishment Paradox' of AIDS in Irish Realist Theatre.

Cormac O'Brien

University College Dublin - Humanities Institute, Dublin.

This paper discusses how queer dramaturgical strategies expose the 'good gays/bad queers' binary that undergirds HIV/AIDS characters in Irish realist dramas as being bound up in queer and class shaming. To frame my argument, I identify the 'punishment paradox' of AIDS in several Irish realist dramas whereby HIV/AIDS characters are vaguely suggested as victims of society, yet paradoxically punished with AIDS for being 'bad queers' who operate outside the paradigms of what several queer theorists identify as 'homonormativity'. Meanwhile, the 'good gays', those homonormative bodies who fit in with the neoliberal commodification of gay life and living as an apolitical, hyper-consumerist, and media-friendly suburban norm, are handsomely rewarded with assimilation into mainstream culture.

Through a performance analysis of BrokenTalkers' 2008 song-cycle *Silver Stars*, I interrogate how an experiential, labile, multi-media dramaturgy disrupts AIDS-as-punishment metaphors. *Silver Stars* presents individuated, non-binarised HIV-figures who perform – through songs that transition imperceptibly from poignant solo-voice to rousing, multi-vocal choruses – as ever-forming subjectivities, thus confounding the fixity of stereotyped 'bad queers'. *Silver Stars*' fluid song-sequences, video footage, and non-hierarchical dialogues, in which AIDS histories and narratives float into, around, and through each other, foreground the malleable boundaries between the personal and the political, particularly in terms of conservative HIV/AIDS discourses and the queer activism that resists them.

Thus *Silver Stars* dramaturgically disrupts the 'good gays/bad queers' binary by presenting several narratives that capture the complexities of a global pandemic, while performing quotidian experience within that pandemic, situating the spectator simultaneously in both the global and the local.

Bio

Cormac recently completed an IRC funded PhD, entitled *Acting the Man: Performing Masculinities in Contemporary Irish Theatre*, at UCD which is currently under proposal to Palgrave Macmillan for monograph publication. Cormac has published several book chapters and peer-reviewed essays in journals such as *Theatre Research International* and the *Irish University Review*. Cormac's research interests are contemporary Irish and British theatre and performance; queer theatre, queer cultures, and their historiographies; HIV and AIDS in theory, culture, and performance; and the global histories and biopolitics of the AIDS pandemic. Cormac has presented at several major international conferences in Japan, Canada, and the USA as well as around Europe. He teaches in the school of English, Drama, and Film at UCD.

The Project Arts Centre and the Development of Ireland's Scenographic Consciousness

Dr Siobhan O’Gorman

IRC Postdoctoral Fellow, Trinity College Dublin

This paper contextualises the advent of Dublin’s Project Arts Centre within a period in which visual culture reached an elevated position, particularly as part of the modernising and internationalising of Ireland. It traces the progress and influences of the Project through the 1960s and 1970s. The research is part of a larger, two-year monograph project entitled ‘A Stage of Re-Vision: Scenography in Irish Theatre, 1950-1990’, which is funded by the Irish Research Council. Drawing on archive-based source material, as well as interviews with key players in Project ’67 and the ongoing, interdisciplinary artistic co-operative that emerged as a result, it argues that the Project played a significant role in the development of what I call Ireland’s scenographic consciousness: a heightened awareness of the efficacy of visual culture and design within a continuum between cultural capital and intervention. From the first theatrical triple bill that Project ’67 staged at the Gate theatre in 1966, the initiative was underpinned by a visual arts philosophy, fostering collaboration and productive cross-pollination between different arts practices, and – importantly – between Irish culture and its European and international counterparts. The Project arguably offered scenographic interventions that can be located within a wider movement of design reform in Ireland. Moreover, much of the Project’s work was in keeping with the spirit of the age internationally. The centre’s policies and activities led to not only innovations in Irish stage design, but to a greater professionalization of the scenographic crafts in Ireland. A case study of the Project Arts Centre, examined through the lens of scenography, helps us to locate Irish theatre within international visual culture, and to recover more holistic histories obscured by the cultural and academic prominence of Irish theatre’s literary traditions.

Bio

Siobhán O’Gorman is an IRC postdoctoral researcher at the School of Drama, Film and Music, Trinity College Dublin. She taught at the English Department, NUI, Galway from 2008 to 2013, where she received a PhD for her thesis ‘Negotiating Genders from the Page to the Stage’. She co-organised ISTR’s 2012 conference and she is on the organising committee for ‘Pushing Form: Innovation and Interconnection in Contemporary European Performance’, a conference taking place at the Moore Institute, NUI, Galway in April 2014. She is also co-convenor of TaPRA’s scenography working group. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in such publications as *Irish Theatre International*, *Scene*, *Irish Studies Review*, *Precarious Parenthood: Doing Family in Literature and Film*, *Verbal*, *Platform and Women*, *Collective Creation and Devised Theatre*. She was a critic for *Irish Theatre Magazine* from 2008 to 2013 and is co-editor of Carysfort’s forthcoming essay collection *Devised Performance in Irish Theatre: Histories and Contemporary Practices*.

Panellist Not Attending

Singing p'ansori, Korean theatre of storytelling, in search of narrative interiority

Prof. Chan E. Park

Korean Language, Literature, Performance - The Ohio State University

P'ansori is a storytelling art precariously remaining from the ancient Korea and systematically preserved today. Its narrative structure alternates between spoken passages that move the storytelling forward and singing that slows the narrative flow for impressionistic elaboration or highlighting. The singers today strive to emulate and embody the voices of their predecessors. As our modern and contemporary consciousness progressively becomes distanced from the life of the past, embodiment of old vocal expressions as a way of inheriting the tradition has added challenges, i.e., familiarizing what is no longer familiar. As in any vocal music practice, singers of p'ansori aspire to achieve fluency with which to express the narrative or poetic interiority, i.e., the “meaning” behind the verse. A voice is most convincing when the singer consciousness is one and the same with that of the song. In the powerful domain of pop culture, the consciousness and cognition of singer and listener are more or less in sync with one another. Consider p'ansori at emergence was a popular entertainment and not “national treasure,” and singers had the freedom to create and discard what is now preserved as “cultural asset.” A singer today ideally must stretch imagination and expand knowledge needed to travel between the narrative and our contemporary reality, to enhance communication with the audience. I discuss p'ansori as a deeply mental labor, a cognitive process of familiarizing the matrix of the remote epic reality lining the inherited acoustic details.

Bio

Chan E. Park earned her Ph.D. from the University of Hawaii (1995), and is currently Professor of Korean Language, Literature, and Performance at Ohio State University. Park has published extensively on the Korean performativity and its interdisciplinary implication, including her monograph, *Voices from the Straw Mat: Toward an Ethnography of Korean Story Singing* (University of Hawaii Press 2003) and the ongoing *Songs of Thorns and Flowers: Bilingual Performance and Discourse on Modern Korean Poetry Series* (Foreign Language Publications 2010-). Park is the innovator of “bilingual p'ansori,” and has singly or collaboratively produced the world premieres including: *Centennial P'ansori: In 1903, Pak Hungbo Went to Hawai'i* (2003); *When Tiger Smoked His Pipe* (2003); *Shim Ch'ong: A Korean Folktale* (2003); *Alaskan P'ansori: Klanott and the Land Otter People* (2005); *Pak Hûngbo Went to Almaty* (2007); *Song of Everyday Ch'unhyang* (2008); *Fox Hunt and the Death of a Queen* (2012); *Hare Returns from the Underwater Palace* (2013).

Spell it-invisible words :Improvisation movement/dance based research

Inma Pavon

University College Cork

Spell it-invisible words is an ongoing improvisation dance/movement project developed as a tool to create new creative dance/movement work and methods for teaching purpose.

The idea is based on using the art of writing as a score to work with. By using the practice of hand-writing the dancer can then articulate that experience through her/his movement and therefore make visible the invisible words. This research has also been influenced by life-drawing workshops and Zazen meditation. With this research I wanted to start working from the idea of simplicity, such as the simplicity of hand-writing, and then build up layers from that point. By layers I mean adding sound, music, costume, lighting, among others. Spell it-invisible words also represents the key to access creative movement for people without any previous movement/dance background. During my long years of dancing/teaching I have been working with people without any dance/movement experience. These students wanted to move/dance but they didn't feel they had the confidence to do it. This approach made them become at ease with their body and mind, so therefore they were easily able to create work. This research has been put into practice in different situations in my work in movement/dance workshop for theatre practitioners and dancers in London, Malaga and Cork.

This project has been very interesting in that it has allowed me to work with non dancers in helping them to access their natural physicality in a very easy way and also with older people and people with mental and physical disabilities.

"The Zen way of calligraphy is to write in the most straightforward, simple way as if you are a beginner, not trying to make something skilful or beautiful, but simply writing with full attention as if you were discovering what you were writing for the first time; then your full nature will be in your writing. This is the way of practice moment after moment." (Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind by Shunryu Suzuki)

Bio

Inma Pavon is adjunct lecturer in The Drama and Theatre Studies, UCC. She holds First Class Honour in Ma in Contemporary Dance Performance from the University of Limerick, 2003. She was selected for the ICNWP'07 (IRISH CHOREOGRAPHERS NEW WORK PLATFORM) under the mentor-ship of Wendy Houston. She got a bursary award by Dance Ireland/the Arts Council under its Choreographic Development Initiative 2007/08 mentored by artist Amanda Coogan. Inma was part of Daghda Mentoring Programme 2007/2008. She was guest teacher at the Ma in Contemporary Dance Performance in Limerick University in 2008. In 2009 she received a dance residency "Blank Canvas" in The Firkin Crane, Cork. 2010-2011. Inma worked as a choreographer for the 2011/12 production of the Opera Dido and Aeneas at the Cork Opera House. In November 2014, She received a dance residency, Inquiry, at The Firkin Crane, where she developed and presented work in progress of Spell it-Invisible words as a group piece.

Making Up 2 Minds DIFfERNET

-Towards a Cognitive Scenography

Xristina Penna

University of Leeds (Performance and Cultural Industries Department)

Researchers exploring the relation between cognitive science(s) and performance (such as McConachie, Shaughnessy, Blair, Di Benedetto) are currently in a dynamic dialogue with the insights of cognitive science research (such as conceptual blending/conceptual integration, mirror neurons) but also in a dialogue with themselves, their explorations, and the different views in the field. Main aim is to find common grounds with the research carried out in the cognitive field, build links between Humanities and Science and generate new vocabularies.

Scholars agree that performances are not one-way delivery systems but systems, which invite the audience/participants to make multiple “blends” and meanings.

Through my current performance practice, the aswespeakproject (www.aswespeakproject.org) and my stage-design background, I have developed an interest in making links from structural properties used in cognitive science and the theatre space.

In this paper I will focus on two works developed within the aswespeakproject: “Making Up Two Minds-a scenographic experiment”⁵ and “DIFfERNET-together we will make a search engine”⁶

In the first work my aim was to score, document, archive and analyse the scenographic process by creating a multi-authorial art piece staging collective recordings, transcriptions and visual interpretations of the audiences’ /participants’ responses to a verbatim text.

In the second piece, by taking Internet technology literally I created a human search engine, which generated hand-made data from the audience in the form of drawings contributing to a collective mind-map/mandala.

By reflecting on the above work I will try and answer the question: How can scenography contribute further to creating dynamic performance systems, which invite the audience/participants to make multiple “blends” and meanings?

Bio

Xristina Penna is a designer, performance maker and a researcher at the PCI department of the University of Leeds. Her research aim, through her performance practice, is to experiment and develop processing mechanisms that can be applied to the “stage”. These mechanisms/systems draw inspiration from cognitive science(s) and the theories of systems thinking and complexity. Her work has been presented internationally in various

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Developed and presented at the research event TESTing, World Stage Design Exhibition 2013, September 2013, Cardiff.

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Presented at The Little Leeds Fringe Festival 2014, March 2014, University of Leeds.

festivals and venues such as 'Currents 2013, The Santa Fe International New Media Festival', New Mexico, USA | The Round House, London (2011) | The Benaki Museum, Athens, Greece (2010). She has contributed to scholarly debates and international academic conferences in the field of scenography.

Zazen, Philosophy of Mind and the Practicality of Impermanence

Kevin J. Power

University College Cork

Western analytic theories of consciousness stand as the dominant philosophical modes of understanding the mind. These theories have a major impact not only on the formation of our understanding of mind and its place in everyday life, but also of our understanding of the limits and restrictions of consciousness. Eastern philosophy, and in this case Zen Buddhism in particular, presents approaches to mind quite different - in both strictly philosophical and also 'common sense' ways - from what those in Western philosophical traditions are used to.

I will present an introductory, non-specialist overview of some of the main principles of Zen Buddhist scholarship and practice and highlight how they differ from more familiar Western analytic philosophy. I will then focus on two themes that emerge from Zen practice and scholarship and show their relation to mind and in particular creativity; (i) the self and (ii) impermanence.

(i) Zen Buddhism presents a view of the self far removed from the usually reductionist approach of Western analytic philosophy. I will briefly outline these differences, in particular the idea of the self as a process rather than a thing.

(ii) Buddhist scholarship and practice places an emphasis on a philosophical yet very practical understanding of impermanence. Adopting this notion of impermanence supports and illuminates ideas such as the notion of the self-as-process. I would like to present and focus on one particular incorporation of a philosophical understanding of impermanence; creativity as impermanence. We usually associate creativity with personal inspiration and individual effort; I would like to present the idea that creativity is in fact a type of unification with, and expression of, the very kind of impermanence that Zen Buddhist practice and scholarship teaches us about.

Please see back page for Bio.

Femininity and the 'perfect' doll

Carole Quigley

Trinity College Dublin

This paper is a chapter taken from a dissertation entitled “You stand at the pedestrian crossing and you check yourself.” The performance of Femininity and Sexuality on the contemporary Irish stage.’ The dissertation examines how such issues are being discussed and interrogated in Irish theatre right now, with reference to several performances. This paper focuses on Sorcha Kenny’s Dolls, first performed as part of the 2013 Dublin Fringe Festival. It will look at how women are portrayed in current Western popular culture, and how this is reflected and represented in Dolls. Documentary style theatre has become increasingly popular as a way of addressing social issues, and this show takes this form to react to the pressures placed on the performance of the feminine in the contemporary moment. This paper will chart the successes and limitations of such a performance. If gender is purely performative, then how is Irish theatre, and specifically this show, reacting to external influences such as Raunch Culture and a supposed post-feminist state? What is a show like this doing for a contemporary Irish audience and how will this performance further the field of gender theory as a whole?

Bio

Carole Quigley is a Masters student at TCD, currently studying for an M.Phil. in Theatre and Performance. She completed her undergraduate B.A. in English with Drama at UCD in 2013. Her main academic interests include the representation of the woman on the Irish stage and gender studies within the theatre.

The Consciousness of Place: Language, Memory, Landscape in the Theatre of Marina Carr.

Dr. Melissa Sihra

Trinity College Dublin.

My paper will explore the consciousness of place in the theatre of Marina Carr. Landscape is intrinsic to expressing meaning within Carr's plays, particularly in relation to the central female characters where it is infused with a 'consciousness' of memory, myth and narrative. I will explore the politics and poetics of these strata as a means of understanding Carr's female characters, and her appropriation of nature and landscape as a potent feminist repository of culture and history. The physical terrains evoked in Carr's plays, such as Irish peat-bogs, rivers, lakes and farmlands, resonate in terms of geopolitical stratifications which preserve objects and artefacts (such as in bogs), (with)holding multiplicit hidden histories. Landscape in Carr's theatre is a resonant site of visceral energy and a vital space of living-death within which the sedimented layerings of our embodied histories may be exhumed. The familiar yet underrepresented physical topographies of the Irish Midlands reflect and inflect the emotional and ontological consciousness' of the characters. My paper will consider these layers of meaning-making within Carr's theatre as a way of quantifying and excavating the fragments of past and present, public and private.

Bio

Dr. Melissa Sihra is Assistant Professor of Drama at the Samuel Beckett Centre, Trinity College, Dublin. She is President of the Irish Society for Theatre Research and editor of *Women in Irish Drama: A Century of Authorship and Representation*, (Palgrave Macmillan), co-editor (with Paul Murphy) of *The Dreaming Body: Contemporary Irish Theatre* (Oxford University Press & Colin Smythe Ltd.) and co-editor (with Pirkko Koski) of *The Local Meets the Global in Performance* (Cambridge Scholars Press). She is writing a monograph on the theatre of Marina Carr.

Surface Tensions: exploring synaesthesia and kinesthesia within site specific performance spectatorship

Dr Rachel Sweeney

Liverpool Hope University

Our bones must be electric: even as we sit here perfectly still, our shadows convulse on the walls behind us.

This paper will consider the dynamic temporality of certain spectator processes found within site specific theatrical performance, through investigating some of the physiological processes that occur when bodies watch other bodies in motion. The site based approach to performance can be seen to activate a kind of affective engagement with an audience through immersivity. In moving the audience beyond the 'black box', site specific performance encourages empathic responses whereby moving bodies might evoke a similar movement sensation from their audiences in registering the presence of speed, emotion, proximity, densities and pressures through the process viewing live motion based performance.

Drawing on current visual cultural theories derived from film studies as well as from scientific research found within William Forsythe's recent Choreography and Cognition laboratory projects, this paper will reflect on acts of viewing live performance as an active metaphor for embodying empathetic processes. The performance practices of Bonemap and Tess de Quincy Company (AUS) and also Wrights and Sights and Blast Theory (UK) will be explored here, in addition to the author's own site based performance work (see www.orrandsweeney.com). In viewing such diverse practices, this paper will expand an inquiry into the role of proximity, perception and proprioception in contemporary site based performance. In particular, the paper will emphasise an inquiry into the role of spectator empathy processes within the above performance models as providing a key site on which to contest current debates surrounding the role of the sense-perception in performance.

Finally, Phillip Zarrilli's writings on psychophysical practice as well as Nigel Stewart's writings about viewing live dance will facilitate a debate on kinaesthetic empathy whereby Stewart suggests how the dance image may be considered kinaesthetically - not as detached through vision but invested and reflected⁷.

Bio

Rachel is an interdisciplinary dance artist and co-director of Orr and Sweeney, whose performance work seeks to expand upon current knowledge practices in body-place relations both within arts and the New Sciences. Her PhD focused on the role of physical consciousness within the Japanese contemporary performance practice, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Rachel is a Senior Lecturer and Subject Leader in Dance at Liverpool Hope University, and has published widely on the area of perception within contemporary performance training. Rachel has lectured in Performance Studies

in the UK and Ireland and more recently was Guest Lecturer at Monash University, Melbourne and the University of Sydney. Research posts include a Visiting Fellowship through the Humanities Research Centre at the Australian National University (2012) and also Centre Fellowship through the Centre for Sustainable Futures at the University of Plymouth (2007-08).

Rethinking: Beckett in performance across disciplines

Michael Murphy & Dr. Bernadette Sweeney

Media Arts & Theatre and Dance, University of Montana

Based on ideas formulated during a theatre production of Krapps Last Tape, Michael Murphy, Bernadette Sweeney and collaborators have created three further project evolutions based on some of Beckett's material and ideas, including a film (be again), a media performance theatre piece (sleepwalker no. 1) (created in association with Drama and Theatre Studies UCC), and a performance and media gallery installation (...without having ended...). Over the course of four years, this set of varied projects with a common core was designed to shed light on the differing ontological systems generated by each iteration, on its own and in relationship with each other.

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Acoustic Consciousness, Embodiment and Spatiality in Role-Playing and First-Person Video Games.

Marcus Tan

Queen's University Belfast

Questions of immersivity and performativity in video game playing have revived early modern debates about corporeality and consciousness, body and mind. Approaches to, and opinions on, the engagement and location of self-consciousness in these digital 3D environments, where an avatar explores and circumnavigates hyperreal worlds, acts, performs and directs the outcome of the plot with varying degrees of agency, lie at and between the antinomies of the Cartesian divide and those of phenomenological embodiedness. In Role-Playing (RPGs) and First-Person (FPGs) video games, such a duality seems most evident since the 'body' is digitally (re)created, constructed and telematically transferred into digital environments; it is controlled by the 'mind' of the player which exists outside of this virtual Other that is also the Self. This performing avatar entails a high degree of consciousness as an entity bound in space for space, as Kant has described, mediates self-consciousness since the subject is always in space. For Merleau-Ponty, bodies are not merely in space but of it and to experience oneself is to be self-conscious of lived in action, in and as space. Game avatars become performative self-articulations that are both subject and object, actor and character. The gamer's self-consciousness is thus not merely a developed perception of oneself as a participant in the world but also as the materiality of the digital composition and the work itself. This self-consciousness in/at play becomes more acute when one listens to the soundscapes of video games. Listening to the ambient sounds, voices, echoes and effects instills an acoustemological knowing and an acoustic consciousness that dissolves digital and real spaces. The soundscapes of virtual places thus become fluid states that permit the movement of consciousness between virtual and real coordinates, where consciousness becomes both 'here' and 'there.' If self-consciousness is, as Merleau-Ponty posits, bound to and is the experience of spatiality, then listening to a game becomes an experience of self-consciousness.

Bio

Marcus obtained his PhD from Trinity College Dublin and now lectures at Queen's University Belfast. His primary research interests include interculturalism, globalisation and performance, sound studies, Asian Shakespeares and virtual performativities. He has published in *Contemporary Theatre Review*, *Theatre Research International*, *The Drama Review* and is the author of *Acoustic Interculturalism* (Palgrave Macmillan 2012).

Mirroring the Mind: Monodrama and the Immersive Staging of Cognitive Subjectivity

Kurt Taroff

Queen's University Belfast

In the recent 'cognitive turn' in theatre studies, considerable (and valuable) attention has been paid to the experiences of spectators and actors while watching and performing in plays. Comparatively little has been said about the content of the plays themselves and how they may reflect our changing understanding of the processes of human cognition. But over the last hundred years (and arguably considerably longer), the genre of theatre known as monodrama, as the term was used by Russian symbolist theorist and playwright Nikolai Evreinov, has attempted to portray on stage the subjective experience of how perception and thought shape reality for the individual. That much of the philosophy of mind that undergirded the genre has remained plausible in light of what we now know about the way the brain works suggests that monodrama too may maintain its currency and potential to enhance our understanding both of ourselves and of the experience of the other. Evreinov was particularly interested in the possibility that a staged monodrama might be so thoroughly immersive as to induce the spectator to believe that he or she had in fact merged with the protagonist in the process of sharing that protagonist's experience. Is it not possible, given recent theory regarding the actor's experience while performing, that the immersive experience Evreinov imagined for the spectator is in fact quite similar in kind to the experience undergone by the actor in the process of performing that role? And thus, that in a contemporary conception of monodrama, it is not merely spectator and protagonist that merge, but indeed spectator, actor and protagonist? Using the work of McConachie, Blair, Kemp, and Shaughnessy, this paper will explore the possibility that Evreinov's theory might go a step further than even he imagined.

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Broken language, broken self: The impact of fragmented language on the representation of subjectivity in Marina Carr's *Portia Coughlan* and Enda Walsh's *Disco Pigs*.

Dr. Kevin Wallace

Dun Laoghaire IADT

"I wanna walk inta da sea an neva come back. I wan ta tide to take me outa me an give me someone differen ... maybe jus fur a half hour or so! Dat be good, wouldn't it, Pig?"⁸

At least as far back as Nietzsche the term subjectivity has been considered contentious. Today it functions as a multipurpose substitute for a person/individual/identity in (to name just a few) continental philosophy (especially German idealism), marxist criticism, psychoanalysis, gender studies, phenomenology and semiotics discussions of theatre, literature, and other media. In and of itself it runs the risk of dehumanizing the person (either performer or character) being analyzed by transforming them from an 'autonomous individual' into an effect of power relations, or more contentiously an effect of discourse or language. Using the work of Slavoj Žižek and Pierre Bourdieu this paper will discuss the impact of the fragmented language of Enda Walsh's *Disco Pigs* and Marina Carr's *Portia Coughlan* on their representations of subjectivity.

In 'Language, Violence and Non-violence' Žižek locates both *jouissance* and violence in the human capacity for language.⁹ He argues, following Jacques Lacan, that there is a violence done to the individual, the subject, through their entry into the symbolic order. Bourdieu's notions of symbolic violence resonate with this, he suggests that language or the symbolic does violence to the subject by attempting to homogenize people and thus erase the difference presented by individuals.¹⁰ In the two plays discussed by this paper, both the scripts of Walsh and Carr's plays attempt to subvert this aspect of the symbolic and turn its violence on itself by using strange rhythms, and non-standard dialects of English written and performed in a phonetic form. It will be argued that this performative violence as well as disrupting symbolic structures also upsets not only the representation of, but also the very symbolic structure of, the speaking subject in these plays. In so doing it will be argued that this kind of theatre creates both an alternative model for subjectivity and their relationship with the world.

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Enda Walsh, 'Disco Pigs' in *Enda Walsh Plays: One* (London: Nick Hern Books, 2010), p. 60.

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Down the Rabbit Hole of Mind Reading and Mind Control

Scotty Walsh

Accademia Dell Arte, Tuscany

“Neuroscientists are novices at deception. Magicians have done controlled testing in human perception for thousands of years. Neuroscientists—well intentioned as they are—are gathering soil samples from the foot of a mountain that magicians have mapped and mined for centuries.”

Teller (Penn & Teller) – Smithsonian Magazine, March 2012

Many people largely consider mind reading and mind control to exist somewhere between trickery, conspiracy theory, and science fiction. In this presentation, I will demonstrate not only that mind reading and mind control exist but these capacities are scientifically supported. Furthermore, I will demonstrate that most of us remain largely unaware of these abilities, despite that fact that we use these techniques on others, and others use them on us, on a daily basis. But how deep is the rabbit hole?

I will examine the available research, both scientific and practical, and demonstrate a number of techniques available to control and read others, as well as oneself. After establishing the line between reality and conspiracy theory, I will demonstrate how powerful these approaches can be – even when one is aware of them – by presenting a theatrical application of these techniques which aims to obliterate the line between science and fiction.

Recent works such as *The Invisible Gorilla: How Our Intuitions Deceive Us*, by Christopher Chabris and Daniel Simons, *Sleights of Mind: What the Neuroscience of Magic Reveals About Our Everyday Deceptions*, by Stephen Macknik and Susana Martinez-Conde, and *Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces that Shape Our Decisions*, by Dan Ariely, have argued similar points across the fields of social psychology, behavioral economics, and neuroscience: Our brains function differently than (and not as well as) we like to think they do. What is perhaps most fascinating, is not the fact that our programming has glitches, but rather that we remain fairly oblivious to these vulnerabilities – reluctant to fully acknowledge, mediate, and compensate for these cognitive loopholes.

Bio

Scotty Walsh is a veteran trapeze artist who began studying magic and mentalism at the age of eight (after wasting his first seven years). He holds a Master of Fine Arts in Physical Theater from the Accademia dell'Arte, and a Master of Public Administration in Strategic Public Policy from the American University of Paris.

The Physiology of the Act of Utterance: The Language of Tom Murphy and the Creative Performer

Dr. Jesse Weaver

Independent Researcher - Doctorate from DTS, UCC

In an interview in 2008, playwright Tom Murphy aired a complaint in relation to two younger actors running roughshod over his dialogue. Citing the instance, Murphy says ‘they come into a rehearsal room on the first day and they want to display their talents for improvisation, and they start to mess about with the stuff.’¹¹ Recent approaches to theatre-making in Ireland have sought to emphasize actors’ creativity through improvisation, at times eschewing prewritten texts for a more fluid and physically visceral process of performance creation and production. This way of working can be viewed as an attempt to challenge the perceived hegemony of ‘literary theatre’ in Ireland, where the creative impulses of the performer are curtailed by their prescribed roles as interpreters of the playwright’s intentions in performance.

However, the work of Tom Murphy belies a willingness to submit those texts to the instability inherent in the collaborative process of staging a play for performance. In fact, if the physiological processes of speech production are considered, Murphy’s construction of language can be viewed as a provocative structure within which the actor can improvise and create using the uniqueness of their own physiology. This twenty-minute paper will investigate how the work of Tom Murphy can defy the easily applied label of ‘literary theatre’ by working to engage and collaborate with the performer’s own unique mode of speech production. This paper will attempt to illustrate the creative potential inherent in the performer’s physical embodiment of Murphy’s language using the frames of the science of speech production, the work of Kristin Linklater, and Mikhael Bakhtin’s theorizing on the act of utterance. In doing so, it is hoped the paper will illuminate new potentialities in possible stagings of the playwright’s work that defy the label of ‘literary theatre’.

Bio

Jesse Weaver received his doctorate from University College Cork, where his research focused on the changing roles of the playwright in Irish theatre production from 1980 to 2010. He reviewed for Irish Theatre Magazine from 2008 until the magazine ceased operations earlier this year. He is also a playwright.

I Love XXX: the Search of Self in the Globalized China

Zheyu Wei

Trinity College Dublin,

This paper examines the anti-dramatic experiment in *I Love XXX* (1994) by Chinese avant-garde theatre director Meng Jinghui. The play offers a pastiche of Western classic, ideological and pop-cultural images together with native cultural images to show sketches of the life people live in a cross-cultural context in the 20th century. Meng, probing into post-modern techniques to represent the life experience in the fast-changing China, in his production tries to picture the complexity and the liveliness today human society has. Asserting the implicit idealist slogan, "I love; therefore I exist" in a performance with no plot, *I Love XXX* portrays the younger generation's vigorous attempt to feel the world as a whole, yet more importantly, signifies the ideological shift from collectivism to individualism in aesthetics of Chinese "Little Theatre Movement" since the 1980s. I argue that the play shows a welcoming attitude to globalization, since it has been inferred that the Chinese people has been suffering too much from self-seclusion from the outside world and that their ideas as well as way of life have ossified, while at the same time, the search of identity in the play is incomplete because of its underlying "West-and-the-rest" binary and failure of staying critical to the already deconstructed grand narrative of globalization.

Bio

Zheyu Wei received his B. A. in Sun Yat-sen University and his M. A. in Nanjing University in China, both in English Language and Literature. Co-funded by Trinity College Dublin and Chinese Scholarship Council, he is currently a first-year PhD student in Department of Drama in Trinity College Dublin. His doctoral research "Post-Cold War Experimental Theatre of China: Staging Capitalization, Globalization, and Interculturality" offers a study of contemporary Chinese spoken drama, especially experimental theatre, through the theoretical lens of globalisation, consumerism and interculturalism.

When the Mirror Laughs: Significant citations of the bodied original in *The Well of the Saints* and *The Boys of Foley Street*.

Eric Weitz

Trinity College Dublin

Setting aside any propensity in Irish drama to solicit laughter from an audience, one sometimes finds this extremely loaded bodied response cited on the stage, bearing for the spectator both semiotic intent and phenomenological splash. This paper will draw upon theory from the social sciences to assess the pointed embodiment of laughter within the confines of a stage world. It first will offer an example of the way Sigmund Freud's insights upon laughter and its joking target (with an assist from, more recently, sociologist Michael Billig) stands to illuminate audience disposition as foreseen by the playwright in J.M. Synge's, *The Well of the Saints*. The essay will then proceed to ruminate upon effects of laughter within stage worlds (rather than from their audiences) in a recent trend by Irish theatremakers to engage the spectator face to face, deprived of fourth-wall protection, as represented in Anu Productions' *The Boys of Foley Street*. Theoretical touchstones will be supplied from the domains of neuroscience (Robert R. Provine), evolutionary biology (Hurley, Dennett and Adams) and social psychology (Judith Nelson).

Please see back page for Bio.

‘I cannot telle what joy, what blysse / Now I fele in my body’: ¹²

Embodying Faith and Medieval Dramatic Practice

Clare Wright

University of Kent

Recent advances in neuroscience and cognitive theory have increased scholarly awareness of the role of the body in our cognitive and affective lives. However, the application of such theories to the study of medieval performance cultures remains underexplored because of an understandable concern for the universalising potential of such research. In this paper, I will argue that the commonalities posited by neuroscientists are not incongruous with a historically and culturally informed analysis of medieval drama and, moreover, that cognitive methodologies, considered in light of theatre history, can offer ways of accessing the elusive, yet vital, aspect of performance: audience experience. Many current theories of consciousness and cognition resonate with pre-Cartesian notions of the interconnectedness between body, mind and soul, as reflected in the philosophies, courtesy books, spiritual manuals, and devotional handbooks of the medieval period; indeed, late-medieval piety is rooted in both physical experience and the performative display of devotion. Drawing on modern theories of embodied intersubjectivity, corporeal memory and kinaesthetic empathy, I will suggest that medieval playwrights (who were often also clerics) clearly understood the embodied nature of their medium and that they actively manipulated their audience’s bodily perceptions of performance to generate dramatic experiences that had the potential to effect profound spiritual changes in participants, changes that continued to resonate in the body long after the end of the play.

Bio

Clare Wright is Lecturer in Medieval Literature at the University of Kent. Her research focuses on medieval drama, space, place and embodiment. She is the founder of the *Early English Drama & Performance* network and is currently collaborating on the *Cognitive Medievalisms* project. Clare’s publications include a chapter on ‘Body, Site and Memory in the Croxton *Play of the Sacrament*’ for the forthcoming collection *Performing Environments: Site Specificity in Medieval and Early Modern English Drama*, edited by Susan Bennett and Mary Polito. She is also currently writing her first book, *Negotiating Flesh: Body, Audience and Affect in Medieval English Drama*.