

[This article appeared in *Confluent* 9 (October 2014): 1-12]

On Doing Performance Philosophy

Will Daddario (Illinois State University) and Ioana Jucan (Brown University)

Abstract: The academic field called “performance philosophy” came into being only recently, but the relationship between performance and philosophy has a complex history. From an external perspective, Performance Philosophy appears as both a hybrid form of research and also an embodied mode of thought. This essay gives an account of performance philosophy from the external perspective, emphasizing the importance of historical awareness, and then presents what doing performance philosophy might look like from an internal perspective. The authors end with an invitation to Chinese scholars and artists to join in the existing conversations around performance philosophy as well as to start new ones.

Keywords: Performance philosophy; Western and Eastern traditions of thinking and/as doing; performance-as-thought

The Concept

The concept of ‘performance philosophy’ came into being in the summer of 2012 when several theatre and performance scholars and philosophers met in Leeds (UK) to create a new field of inquiry. These scholars, several of whom would eventually become the core conveners of the Performance Philosophy research network, wanted to find an appropriate name for this field, which had emerged at the intersection of performance (broadly construed to include theatre, dance, visual art, music, film, rituals of everyday life, scientific experiments, etc.) and philosophy over the last few years. Several options were tried out based on different permutations of the two key terms designating the common interests of all those gathered there, such as “Performance and Philosophy” or “Performance:Philosophy.” Eventually, “Performance Philosophy” – a name that paralleled the movement at the intersection of film and philosophy called “Film Philosophy” – was declared the winner of the day.

Dropping the “and” between the two terms was not meant to erase either the

separation or the connection between them, both of which are undeniable at different levels of inquiry. Rather, it was meant as an invitation to think through the relationship between performance and philosophy beyond thinking the separation or connection between the two, without however excluding these as valid ways of approaching the relationship. In what follows, I (Ioana) will briefly discuss both the connection and the separation between performance and philosophy, and also make a few remarks that go beyond them.

Performance philosophy came into being not with a set of predetermined references attached to it but with a definite function: to place a question at the core of scholarly and artistic inquiry. The question: What happens/becomes possible if we look at performance itself as a form of philosophizing and at philosophy as a performance (of thoughts, ideas, concepts, figures of thought, etc.)? To answer this question, it is necessary to put thinking itself, in the different forms it takes and with the different processes associated with it, into question. This is not to doubt it (or its power) but, rather, to push it to its different extremes – beyond the discursive and propositional, to the point where it is fully embodied and attuned to the world (ideally, to a world that welcomes inhabitation).

The task here is, ultimately, ethical in nature and can be formulated along the following lines: eliminate the discrepancy between thought and action in your various inquiries, explorations, pursuits of knowledge, performances, existence (whoever “you” may be). Eliminate the discrepancy between thought and action not so as to put into action everything you (the thinking thing) think but so as to be able to think of thinking itself as a kind of doing. Thinking does things, it has effects (it changes one’s mood or

state of mind; it does harm; it bears witness to something, etc.), and this has to be taken seriously. Note here that this task does not rehearse the age-old conception that “drama” (*dran*) means “action” and so theatre and performance more broadly should concern themselves with the depiction of action whereas philosophy concerns itself with the realm of ideas.¹ Rather, it twists and enriches this conception by expanding and even changing the playing field of the conceptualization of the relation between performance and philosophy.

Once the name was adopted, performance philosophy began to fulfill its function. The Performance Philosophy research network was launched, and it now counts over 1,300 members from different parts of the world. Performance philosophy is an emerging field in the academia (especially in Europe and the United States), and performance philosophy events organized by Performance Philosophy members are taking place worldwide.

How has the field of performance philosophy been/can be staged? I will list some possible responses to this question drawn from the call for papers of the inaugural conference of the Performance Philosophy network that took place in 2012 and was entitled “What is Performance Philosophy? Staging a new field:”

- * the application of philosophy to the analysis of performance;
- * the philosophy of performance and/or the performance of philosophy;
- * the study of how philosophers and philosophical ideas have been staged in performance or how ideas and images of performance have figured in philosophy;
- * the theoretical or practical exploration of philosophy as performance and/or as performative;
- * experiments emerging from the idea that performance is a kind of philosophy or thinking or theorizing in itself.

(cited from the “What is Performance Philosophy? Staging a new field” conference call for papers)

All these different possibilities of staging the field of performance philosophy can be found, variously actualized, throughout the history of the relationship between performance and philosophy.

The relationship between performance and philosophy is old and its history complex, even though the concept of performance philosophy is new. Throughout its somewhat troubled history (at least in the Western traditions of philosophy and performance), this relationship has taken many forms. For instance, consider how certain thinkers employed the dialogic and the poetic forms in their philosophizing, and how, because of this, difficulties in understanding their philosophical writings and, particularly, the relation between form and content in these writings sometimes arose.

By way of an example, let's briefly turn our attention to Plato who, in book X of his *Republic*, wrote that theatre has no place in his ideal state because it is dangerous: the mimesis the audience witness there is a threat to the constitution of their souls. This attitude towards the theatre is paradoxical if we keep in mind that Plato wrote his philosophy in the form of dialogues; his books are like plays, (most of them) featuring Socrates as their main character.ⁱⁱ Several theatre and performance scholars have taken note of this paradox and proposed ways to make sense of it. In his reading of Plato's *Symposium*, for example, Freddie Rokkem rehearses the claim that "Plato's dialogues were written by a philosopher who in different ways integrated dramatic-theatrical modes of writing within the philosophical discourse at the same time that he wished to outlaw the arts (and in particular, the theatre) from his ideal polis" and proposes the following way of making sense of the aforementioned paradox as it plays out in the *Symposium*:

Plato has set up his dialogue [the *Symposium*] so that Socrates, the philosopher, has the ability to unify the tragic and the comic modes of expression. This makes him superior to both of the dramatists [featured in the *Symposium*: Agathon and Aristophanes], who represent only half of this complete totality, writing in one of the genres only. Through philosophy, the writer of tragedy is able to find his missing, comic half, while the writer of comedy finds his lost, tragic half. (Rokkem, “The Philosopher and the Two Playwrights,” 243-44; brackets added)

Consider also how philosophers in different ages have used figures and images from the theatre, and even the concept of the theatre itself, to help flesh out their conceptions of the world and the mind. Take, for example, the notion of a “theatre of the mind” that we find in different philosophers of the Western tradition. We find the metaphor of the theatre of the mind explicitly articulated by David Hume: “[T]he mind is a kind of theatre, where several perceptions successively make their appearance; pass, re-pass, glide away, and mingle in an infinite variety of postures and situations” (cited in Gobert, *The Mind-Body Stage*, 2). But it arguably goes back to Rene Descartes, who, by way of a purely intellectual (theoretical, and therefore freed from any limits imposed by practical necessities) endeavor methodically conducted through thought experiments, came to make the stipulation: “I am a *res cogitans*” (I am a thinking being, and, Descartes added, I know indubitably that I think). This stipulation is momentous because it puts in place a new conception of the mind that has remained dominant to this day: the essence of the mind is consciousness (thinking), conceptualized according to a specific model. This model, as Daniel Dennett notes (*Consciousness Explained*, 39), amounts to a view of the mind as a theatre – a place where “intellectual thoughts and sensations, the ghost of neural activity, dance before the spectral observer we call the conscious mind” (Brown, *Descartes and the Passionate Mind*, 2).

We can also think about performance-makers who have given material shape to

philosophical thought. Austrian playwright and novelist Peter Handke's play *Kaspar*, for instance, imitates Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* in order to make a point about being in/as language. Handke employs the language of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* and, in particular, of Wittgenstein's picture theory of language in bodies of text spoken by the Prompters of his play(ful) *Kaspar*, such as:

Every object must be the
 picture of an object: every proper
 table is the picture of a table.
 Every house must be the picture of
 a house.
 [...]
 Every
 sentence [...] which doesn't
 irk, doesn't threaten, doesn't aim,
 doesn't ask, doesn't choke, doesn't
 want, doesn't
 assert is a
 picture of a sentence. (Handke, *Kaspar*, 81-2)

A table is a true table when the
 picture of the table coincides with
 the table: it is not yet a genuine
 table if the picture of the table
 alone coincides with the table
 whereas the picture of the table
 and chair together do not coincide
 with the table and chair. The table
 is not yet a true, actual, genuine,
 right, correct, orderly, normal,
 pretty, even prettier, spectacularly
 beautiful table if you yourself do
 not fit the table. (Handke, *Kaspar*, 82)

The formulations that make up these chunks of text resonate with early Wittgenstein's (admittedly ambiguous) view of the object as the meaning of a name represented by a sign (Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, §3.221, 3.203) and with his conception of the necessary isomorphism between the world, language, and logic. Yet, keeping true to the poetic form

of the *Tractatus*, Handke does not reproduce either Wittgenstein's words or his philosophical ideas. Instead, he throws the first into performance and puts the latter into practice in a "journey to the sonorous land" (to extrapolate an expression that gives the title to another of Handke's plays) of theatre as a place of seeing.ⁱⁱⁱ

We could go on pointing towards different actualizations of the various possibilities of the relationship between performance and philosophy throughout its history. It is beyond the scope of this essay to trace such a history, however; that would be a difficult, perhaps impossible task (if it is meant to be exhaustive) and would involve rehearsing and undoing all sorts of familiar binaries (appearance-essence; truth-deceit, etc.). The point here is simply to call attention to the fact that there is a history of encounters of all kinds between performance and philosophy, some of which are friendlier than others.

Now, if we were to engage with this history, then we would probably end up discussing what perhaps might be called the "phenomenon of the [hopefully not but possibly] unbreachable gap" between performance and philosophy, which Martin Puchner discussed in his keynote address at the inaugural Performance Philosophy conference. Puchner's lecture was entitled, "Theatre and Philosophy: Please Mind the Gap." Insisting on the hostilities between the two disciplines throughout history, Puchner stated (from "Afterword: Please Mind the Gap between Theatre and Philosophy," 540):

Philosophers have tended to ignore the anti-philosophical or antiintellectual trends within theatre, which only confirmed their suspicions about this art form. Thespians (to use the term recently revived by Freddie Rokem), by contrast, have complained bitterly, no one more so than Jonas Barish, who hurled the invective "prejudice" at philosophers critical of the theatre when he diagnosed an "anti-theatrical prejudice" at work within this discipline.

Puchner operated with a notion of performance confined primarily to theatre^{iv} and

focused mainly on statements that philosophers and performance-makers' made about each other and each other' practices. If we broaden the focus, we will see that there is more to the history of the relationship between performance and philosophy than just hostility, as has hopefully already become apparent in the examples offered above. Moreover, even where such hostilities do exist, they are sometimes in fact the result of misunderstandings of various sorts – both philosophers and performance-makers' misunderstandings of each other, and later interpreters' misunderstandings of performance-makers and/or philosophers engaging with each other – rather than of some essential incompatibility between performance and philosophy.

Nonetheless, there is some truth in Puchner's assessment: There is indeed a gap between the two disciplines today, especially in the Anglo-American academic world. My (Ioana's) experience as both a theatre and performance studies and a philosophy scholar (with graduate formal training in both fields) can attest to its existence.

Speaking from my personal experience, the gap, at least in part, has to do with disciplinary constraints and institutional settings. It also has to do with a different kind of conception of and reliance on reason in the two practices. While (theatre) acting has sometimes been seen as the ruin of reason, reason does have a place in the practice of performance (including theatre). In performance, I would argue, reason is used as "something to reason with" – to use Jacques Derrida's formulation. To use reason as something to reason with means, very roughly speaking, to take seriously in one's thinking and doing the fact of connectedness and the possibility of connection among the different things of the world that are put into play/performance. Performance involves the practice of finding or making possible connections at a concretely general level – that is,

the level at which thought is pushed to the extreme, to the point where it becomes material (and yet the generality is not lost) – in a rigorous manner (at least one would hope) yet without accepting as necessary the task of proving the connection, or proving the connection to be right. The only necessary task is that of showing the connection in its becoming, in its taking place – of affirming the fact of connectedness and staging the connection. Through the assertion of the fact of connectedness and the staging of the connection, a world emerges. The ethical task at stake here is to make it a world that welcomes inhabitation.

In the practice of philosophy (particularly analytic philosophy, which dominates the field of philosophy in the Anglo-American academic world), reason (or/as rationality, or/as logic) is used in the service of what often is seen as the supreme goal of the enterprise of thinking: offering explanations and demonstrating the correctness of points/arguments made. The starting point in this enterprise is to consider and refute all possible objections to the fact of connectedness that is being proposed. A battle is going on all the time (and, if you have ever listened to the words contemporary philosophers in the analytic tradition often use, you know what I mean: “bite the bullet,” “attack,” “opponent,” “defense,” “fight the battle”). The right to exist (as a fact) of the fact of connectedness is being fought for and over.

By contrast, in (the practice and theorization of) performance the fact of connectedness is most often taken for granted in order to explore what is enabled by its existence. Here, explanation has no place – unless it takes place in the form of playing (things animate and inanimate playing with each other within a world that oftentimes emerges or is made apparent through the playing itself), at a remove from the burden of a

demonstration of the correctness of what is being put into play. For example, take that beautiful scene in Béla Tarr's film *Werckmeister Harmonies* in which, at a local pub in a village in communist Hungary, in the wee hours of the morning (right before closing time), a peasant explains immortality to his "comrades." How does he do it? He gets them on their feet and has them re-enact the movement of the planets and the astonishing fact of a solar eclipse. This epitomizes the way in which the idea of explanation is dealt with in performance, if at all.^v

This being said about the phenomenon of the gap, performance and philosophy (including analytic philosophy) do have something in common and that thing in common makes it possible for them to come together and form one distinct concept: "performance philosophy." This thing in common can be described in terms of an effort (to quote Wilfrid Sellars, who is talking specifically about philosophy in a book entitled *Science, Perception, and Reality*, 1) to "understand how things in the broadest possible sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term."

Yet, there are limits to "the broadest sense of the term." "The broadest" is not (or, should not be) so broad as to lose all substance. Boundaries need to be drawn around the object of thought (and/as performance) for understanding to be possible at all – and drawn carefully. Also, "the broadest" is not (or, should not be) merely "general;" rather, it is concretely general. It is concrete because it is embodied, present in the here and now, in the moment. It is general because it evokes something that is beyond what is embodied here and now, something that holds – with some variation – across different times and places; and it holds because it matters. Performance philosophy, as I (Ioana) understand it

and desire it to be, attends to these limits of “the broadest” and inhabits the field that emerges in-between them.

Doing philosophy/Performance-as-thought

From an external perspective, then, Performance Philosophy appears as both a hybrid form of research and also an embodied mode of thought. Researchers in the emerging field seek, on the most basic level, to understand what it means to *do* philosophy, to actualize philosophy’s practical component, and practitioners in the field express thought through artistic form. Many members of the organization do both simultaneously through performative writing, performance lectures, and live, choreographed or staged events. The view from within the practice of performance philosophy, however, looks a little weird because, deprived of an external vantage point, performers and participants coexist in time and space as life unfolds. This unfolding resembles ordinary life, day-to-day lived experience, but something is different. Acts of concerted attentiveness – hallmarks of the events attended to by performance philosophers – have the ability to distend the present moment and make the present strange, despite its banality and surface familiarity. Thus, in the performances and events created and scrutinized by performance philosophers, and often in the essays or written works composed by other performance philosophers, one tends to find self-reflexive maneuvers that call attention to the acts taking place in the present. For example, I (Will) am creating a narrative that draws your attention to the period at the end of this sentence. We might now reflect on the performances of reading, writing, and thinking taking place in times and places simultaneously disconnected and fused. There is nothing

extraordinary about this suture of times and places, since it happens whenever reading/writing/publishing occurs, and yet the simple act of naming the ordinary reveals an unsettling dimension to the most mundane of acts.

The performance *Sea & Poison* (1999) by the Chicago-based performance group Goat Island provides another opportunity to think about this phenomenon and to look at performance philosophy from within, as it were, while also reflecting on the philosophical ramifications of attending to the minutia of the present in daily life. Indeed, Goat Island attracts frequent attention from performance philosophers because of the group members' explicit references to and keen familiarity with the philosophical works of Henri Bergson, Gilles Deleuze, and Stanley Cavell. In this particular performance, all three philosophers are summoned (tacitly) during a particular moment when company member Matthew Goulish plants a bean on his head in an attempt to become the earth. This act of transformation fails as Goulish becomes first a houseplant, then a dancehall, then a normal person distracted by the base need of drinking water.

Reflecting on the performance at a later date, Goulish writes the following: “[W]hat is earth? A terrain, not a territory. A place where a bean might grow. Therefore, if I become a place where a bean might grow, might I not become earth? What do I need? Soil, water, light, music, and a bean” (cit. Cull “sub species durationis,” 140). Eventually, however, he wants a drink of water and forgets all about his desire to become earth, thus “he has discovered the difference between the earth and the human: distractibility. The earth remembers; the human forgets” (ibid). What precisely is happening here?

Laura Cull, the founder of Performance Philosophy, understands the performance as an enactment of Gilles Deleuze's interpretation of Henri Bergson's philosophy

articulated in *Creative Evolution*. “The power to be distracted,” she writes, “is part of the human’s way of being in time” (ibid). As such, Goulish’s enactment of distraction and his subsequent act of reflection about the failed performance of becoming earth resonate, for Cull, with Bergson’s philosophy of duration, which he began to realize while stirring sugar into his tea and confronting his own tendency toward impatience and distraction. Goulish becomes something of a surrogate for Bergson in Cull’s line of analysis insofar as his performance of becoming earth serves the same function as the narrative about waiting in *Creative Evolution*: both events call our attention to the unfolding of ourselves in duration and thus make possible a more acute awareness of our identities, our modes of transformation, and our actions. A performance such as *Sea & Poison* becomes for Cull, “a privileged space in which we can experiment with a non-utilitarian use of the senses, an education of feeling that enlarges the senses as well as consciousness” (142).

If this is possible, it is so because the performance experience calls upon a multiplicity of spectators to wait together in the moment of Goulish’s failed becoming-earth. Imagine yourself there. Goulish puts dirt on his head. He does this slowly because his bald head is slippery and the dirt wants to slide to the floor. Yet, this action has been rehearsed for months and so Goulish is able to transfer dirt to his head with the craftsmanship of an expert (as though there were such things as experts who excel at such things). With the dirt in place, he pushes the bean into the soil and reaches for the watering can. Again, you marvel at the precision with which he does this absurd action. Why is he doing it? Why are you watching it? Or better yet, why are you reading a description of the performance written by a person who has read about but never seen the moment in question? Put that question aside for the moment and return to the lamp,

which has now been switched on to provide the bean with the light it needs to grow. And listen to the sound of the radio that introduces music to the scene, music that, as scientists tell us, can help to stimulate seed growth. All of this takes (we imagine) over quite some time, meaning that we watch it for quite some time, and yet it is destined to fail since we know that Goulish is not the earth and we assume that, were he able to become-earth, we would leave the (again, imagined) theatre long before the bean grows and his transformation is complete. Indeed, it fails. And we're left with the awareness that we have been sharing several moments of attention as we waited for something to happen. Nothing more, nothing less.

In this performance, there is no representational action. Goulish did not seek to represent the earth. He sought to become earth. But that doesn't even matter since we eventually understand that the purpose of the moment was to turn our attention toward the ordinary and mundane unfolding of small, seemingly insignificant actions taking place on a stage in the present moment. Goulish's writing and the performance work of Goat Island always aims at the cultivation of this attentiveness so as to introduce a slowness into the lives of audience members that can lead, perhaps, to greater specificity of thought. "The impulse to describe my thoughts and sensations accurately," he writes, "perhaps gives birth to what we call philosophy, which it seems locates its inception in what we call *the ordinary*" (129). Bergson, Deleuze, Cavell, Goulish, Goat Island, Cull, Jucan, me, and now you: we are all joined in an imagined present that spans many years and multiple continents in order to return to a simple philosophical exploration of the ordinary through a staged performance of becoming earth, an essay by Performance Philosophy's founder about that performance, and another performative piece of writing

about all of these things.

Performance Philosophy: A new field, not a new practice

Calling attention to the acts of reading, writing, and thinking occurring right now so help to acknowledge the benefits of self-reflexivity and play that performance philosophy expresses through its doing. While the ordinary has been a focus, especially of Anglo-American philosophy, for many decades, it is increasingly difficult to cultivate mindful attentiveness, due in part to the ever-increasing neoliberalization of educational institutions and the metastasization of technological distractions (from smart phones to embedded and targeted advertising). Performance philosophers return to the so-called “devised” work of groups like Goat Island for this reason. It is important for us in the United States and Europe to remember, however, that philosophical awareness of the present moment and attunement to one’s own becoming has been a hallmark of Eastern performance practices for many centuries.

The recent gathering of the Performance and Philosophy Working Group (PPWG) at the Performance Studies international (PSi) conference in Shanghai provided an opportunity to remind ourselves of this fact. The theme of the conference was “Avant-Garde, Tradition, Community” and sought, overall, to introduce the new “social performance studies,” designed in part by Faye C. Fei and William H. Sun, to the international membership of PSi. Seeking to participate in the China-specific venue and ethos of the conference, I (Will), as Chair of the group, presented our members with the sub-theme of 功夫 (*gongfu*). The Chinese term 功夫 (*gongfu*) translates variously into English as “effort,” “labor,” “work,” “achievement,” and even, more poetically, as “an

effort achieved through time and practice.” Most familiar to or membership, perhaps, is the phrase *kung fu*, derivative of *gongfu*, which has migrated into Romance and Germanic languages where it connotes a wide range of martial arts. Whether one hears the phrase in association with a disciplined fighting technique or as 工夫茶 (*gongfu cha*), an equally disciplined and stylized tea ceremony dating back to the fourteenth century, the term connotes a form of social and artistic practice and expresses a culturally-specific outlook on life that has received philosophical elaboration in, most familiarly, the writings of Zen and Taoist practitioners.

To investigate the intersections of 功夫 and performance philosophy, participants were asked to present papers touching on the following themes:

- What contemporary or historical performance practices demonstrate a philosophy of effort that comingles, either explicitly or implicitly, with 功夫?
- Working within the Chinese and/or Asian environments more broadly, how might a philosophy of 功夫 further the current research underway in the field of Performance Philosophy?
- Conscious of the tendency for Western philosophers and artists to appropriate Eastern ideas (John Cage, Bertolt Brecht, to name two obvious examples), what methodological approaches might best negotiate the pitfalls of, at worst, Orientalism and, at best, the act that James Clifford calls “poetics of displacement”?
- How does a philosophical treatment of 功夫 intersect with, question, or productively challenge the theory of “social performance studies” recently outlined in *TDR* by Faye C. Fei and William H. Sun? More specifically, how

might your paper deal with the following statement: “What was badly needed [in China] was social performance studies, a new research field focusing mainly on the performances of urban professionals such as teachers, doctors, lawyers, sales-people, and government officials. [...] In a sense, one of the missions of social performance studies is to study and develop appropriate norms and standards of performance in and across all professions.” (“Social Performance Studies” 12)

Implicit in each of those questions is a belief that Western philosophers and performers have a great deal to learn from Chinese philosophies of the ordinary. That is to say, there is no certain parallel between Eastern and Western philosophy; rather, in order to discover points of intersection between, on the one hand, two distinct cultural traditions, and, on the other, performance and philosophy, it is necessary to extend invitations to researchers whose work seldom arises in the major journals of our field in order to map out points of contact.

This essay that you are reading now is a similar invitation: we invite Chinese artists and scholars into the current discussions held by the members of Performance Philosophy because, despite the many differences between our cultures, there are surprising points of overlap in our various philosophies. Chief among these points of overlap is the tendency to perceive the great benefit of *doing* philosophy and expressing thought *through performance*. Even our differences in philosophical understanding will be fruitful to explore. The emphasis on self-reflexivity, for example, that we have endorsed in this essay may not be something valued by Chinese artists and thinkers. Indeed, one might reasonably object that self-reflexivity overemphasizes the “I” instead of making way for the “Not-I” or “the many,” and that ceaseless attention to the self reflects the Western

world's egotism in matters of cultural production and, possibly, politics. These conversations should take place, however, since the results would certainly enlighten both parties. More importantly, however, and more germane to the discussion here, the forms that conversation might take deserves considerable thought. For if Performance Philosophy acknowledges that performance and the other arts are themselves modes of thought, then performance philosophers in the East and West should be able to exchange wisdom through an exchange of artistic events. For all who are reading this article, the authors invite you to consider the terms of that exchange and to contribute your considerable knowledge to this emerging field.

All of this is to say that the field of Performance Philosophy may be gaining a new legibility in academia, but the practice of performance philosophy is not at all new. The authors end with this thought, which is similar to the thought they began with, in order to stress the importance of process-thinking over novelty, of historical awareness over production for production's sake, and of ethical attunement to one's surroundings over imperial proclamations of mastery and uniqueness.

Notes

ⁱ Martin Puchner problematizes this conception by giving attention to "*thea*" - the shared etymological root of both "*theatron*" and "*theoria*" ("From the Editor," 179-181).

ⁱⁱ In light of this, Martin Puchner proposes reading Plato as a dramatist and writes about Plato's theatre of ideas in terms of a "Platonic dramaturgy" (*Drama of Ideas*).

ⁱⁱⁱ A detailed discussion of how Handke does all this can be found in my (Ioana's) essay, "Metaphorically Speaking: Possibilities of Theatre Performance in the Digital Age" (*Revista Caracteres*, 2012).

^{iv} The examples offered above are also taken mainly from the theatre, and this choice has to do with my (Ioana's) personal interest in theatre more than in other forms of performance. Nevertheless, I approach "theatre performance" with more of an emphasis on performance rather than on theatre – in other words, with an emphasis on the taking place of the theatrical event and on the process that makes the event possible.

^v There is much more to be said – and more specifically – about the phenomenon of the gap, but it is beyond the scope of this essay to say it. I (Ioana) mention it here because I want to remind us that it exists.

References

- Brown, Deborah J. *Descartes and the Passionate Mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Cull, Laura and Goulish, Matthew. “sub specie durationis.” *Deleuze and Performance*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009. 126-146.
- Dennett, Daniel. *Consciousness Explained*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Co, 1991.
- Fei, Faye C. and Sun, William H. “Social Performance Studies: Discipline vs. Freedom.” *TDR: The Drama Review* 57:3 (Fall 2013): 9-19.
- Gobert, Darren R. *The Mind-Body Stage: Passion and Interaction in the Cartesian Theatre*. Stanford: Stanford University Press: 2013.
- Jucan, Ioana. “Metaphorically Speaking: Possibilities of Theatre Performance in the Digital Age.” *Revista Caracteres* 1.2: 2012. Available online at: <http://revistacaracteres.net/revista/vol1n2noviembre2012/metaphorically-speaking-possibilities-of-theatre-performance-in-the-digital-age/>.
- Puchner, Martin. “From the Editor.” *Theatre Survey* 49.2 (November 2008): 179-181.
- _____. *The Drama of Ideas: Platonic Provocations in Theatre and Philosophy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Sellars, Wilfrid. *Science, Perception, and Reality*. London and New York: Routledge, 1963.
- Tarr, Béla. [dir.]. *Werckmeister Harmonies*. 2000.
- “What is Performance Philosophy? Staging a new field.” Conference page: <http://performancephilosophy.ning.com/page/cfp-2013-conference>.