

Expression in the Performing Arts

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Edited by

Inma Álvarez, Héctor J. Pérez
and Francisca Pérez-Carreño

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P U B L I S H I N G

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Edited by Inma Álvarez, Héctor J. Pérez and Francisca Pérez-Carreño

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PREFACE

This volume is a selection of papers that were presented at an international conference, 'The Expression of Subjectivity in the Performing Arts' held at the Polytechnic University of Valencia (Spain), in November 2008. The editors of this book were the conference organisers and the editors of the online proceedings.

One of the main reasons for the conference was the major conceptual reorientation of postgraduate academic studies of performative disciplines at several universities. Theatre, music, dance, and even film studies, had been approached almost exclusively from theoretical perspectives, i.e. rarely were artistic practices included in the core research work of a doctoral dissertation. However, especially in the last decade, doctoral projects on theatre, cinema, music and dance have given way to new forms of doctoral theses in which performative art practice itself has become central to these projects and various research strategies. The performing arts are forcing us to rethink the current models of investigation, as it happened previously from the influence of other disciplines such as anthropology. Today, academic institutions such as the Sibelius Academy, the Orpheus Instituut or the Polytechnic University of Valencia, in the field of music, or the Institute for Theaterwissenschaft of the Freie Universität in Berlin in theatre and the University of Wales and University of South Australia in the performing arts curriculum are consolidating their strategies in performative research through a variety of options and academic formulas that are still fairly experiential and open. At the conference we did not encourage attention to methodological aspects of research, but to issues arising for researchers devoted to the performative phenomena, primarily through aesthetic reflection. The conference brought together established academics, research students and artists from a range of disciplines to debate current issues around various kinds of performative events. Therefore, contributions to this volume reflect academic discourses but also some performative discourses emanating from the field of artistic practice.

The book is divided into five parts corresponding to the different performing arts discussed at the conference: theatre, music (including opera), dance, cinema as well as other general issues relating to performance. The papers explore the characteristics and particular

challenges of aesthetic engagement with various kinds of performances. They focus in particular on how subjectivity emerges in the theory and practice of the performing arts, and on how recent discussion on different fields, can help to articulate new ways of understanding our experience of artworks. The introduction to these parts offers an overview of some past and present philosophical concerns regarding the performing arts as well as a summary of the points addressed by the different authors. Readers are presented with similar issues to contemporary debates on art as well as unique issues to the performing arts, such as identification of authorship, technical realization, ontological status, fictionality, or spectators' role.

The purpose of the book is to capture current ongoing thinking on the performing arts that can give insights to philosophers, art historians, art critics and artists. It is hoped that this collection will stimulate further reflection on key issues around expression in the performing arts and contribute to continuing the construction of new knowledge on aspects of these arts and our experiences of them.

The editors would like to thank Michele Cometa, Kari Kurkela, Derek Matravers, Christoph Menke, Vicente Ponce, José Pavía Cogollos, Julie Van Camp and Gerard Vilar for their invaluable assistance in selecting the original papers that were presented at the conference, many of which have made possible the present volume. We would like to acknowledge that the conference would not have been possible without the support of the Ministerio de Educación in Spain (project funds FFI2008-00750 and FFI2008-01705-E/FILO). Finally, our gratitude also goes to Stephen P. Hasler for his careful reading and editing of some parts of the book.

INTRODUCTION

The complex nature of the performing arts demands multiple levels of philosophical attention. It requires the study of their objects, that is, of both specific works and their particular instances realised in performative events; reflection on the processes of creation, performance, and reception; as well as consideration of the roles of the relevant agents involved—author, performer, and spectator.

A dominant view of the performing arts is that performances are tokens of a type, in other words, instances of works of art. Performances are generally considered the outcome of the reading, interpretation or realisation of a work which exists independently of its multiple instances. This conception assumes an identity correlation between works and types, as held by Richard Wollheim (1981). Probably, our understanding of the nature of performative arts is related to other shared ideas about art *tout court*. Among these ideas figure prominently the notion of a work of art as the finished product of an artist's—composer, painter, choreographer, writer, etc.—creativity. Every realisation of the original work is understood to entail an interpretation of that work which is put usually on the stage for an audience. The intentions of the author determine the identity of the work, thus good performances or tokens of a piece are the result of the correct interpretation of the author's intentions, which are in most cases recovered through the reading of the instructions specified by the artist in a script or notation. Particularly, expressive intentions determine expressive properties of the work and its instances, and therefore provoke affective responses from the public. For example, some kinds of written musical works seem to fit this model well; every performance being an instance of a previously established work, so the conductor of an orchestra and the musicians join forces to realise a composer's piece.

This understanding, however, is not without problems. First of all, a performative work of art is portrayed as an artefact whose properties are to be identified in an experience of it. In the performing arts the properties of the work—notoriously their aesthetic and expressive properties—are known through their performances. If we take also into consideration the acquaintance principle—by which an artwork, as artwork, is not known unless one has had a direct experience of it—then, in any understanding of the performing arts, performances are as necessary to works as works to

performances. So, it seems we are caught in a loop when referring to the properties of the performing arts, since there is no way to experience them without a performance, and a performance is said to be of a work if it realises some properties the work essentially possesses.

In most artistic traditions there are author's written indications about what properties the performance should have (with the exception of dance, where documentation of works' specifications has been rare). In addition to prescribing to a greater or lesser extent how the performance should look, sound and feel, there are conventions and traditions about the properties relevant to different artworks. However, it is only when the properties are displayed in the performance that we experience the work as art, get to know it, enjoy it and are able to appreciate and evaluate it fully. More to the point, it is not that a property exists as something just by prescription of a creator artist, but rather that the property of the work is identified in the experience of the performance, hence in the experience of the work. It may be enlightening to refer here also to Wollheim's (1980) account of painting, where representational or expressive properties of the work could not be accessible to the author prior to the activity of painting itself, since it is only artists' *fulfilled intentions* that determine the representational or expressive content of the work. In the same sense, it can be argued that only when the performance takes place does it makes sense to speak about properties of the work. With respect to this point, Graham McFee (Chapter 8) distinguishes between artistic appreciation of the properties of a dancework and the distinctive contribution of the dancers whose particular characteristics might not belong to the work they are performing.

There is a wide variety of positions regarding the relation between the properties of the performance and the properties of the work. They range from those holding a more empirical stance, like James Hamilton's (2007) claim that theatrical performances are works of art, to more conceptual ones, like Graham McFee's (1992) view that performances are instances of works. In any case, what is commonly agreed is that every performance is a specific object of artistic and aesthetic experience and judgement, whether or not it is an ontological type on its own, and this is precisely what is of relevance to the topic of the present collection.

Despite its centrality for the performing arts, the general debate between works and their instances is not directly entertained in the chapters of this book but it certainly figures in the background of all. Every work of art is an artifact created to be perceived, interpreted, and taken into consideration in different ways at different times by different kinds of spectators. What is specific to the performing arts is that the work

is previously conceived, and usually rehearsed, in order to repeatedly take place later on in front of an audience. In addition, it is characteristic that performers share space and time with the spectators of the piece. The aim of this book is to analyse issues surrounding how expression occurs in the performing arts from the point of view of their particular nature.

Two contributions share an interest in expression, with a reflection and exploration of the general response to and the aesthetic experience of the performing arts. Alessandro Bertinetto (Chapter 13) focuses on the nature of performance, addressing the nature of performing arts from the point of view of the experience they call for. He criticizes Erika Fischer-Lichte's claim (2004) that distance and disinterestedness cannot characterize performing arts, and that, contrary to the rest of the arts, the performing arts are events, actions really performed by the actors, singers, etc. in the presence of a public; therefore, there is no difference between meaning and action, fiction or illusion and reality, work and public, and the rest of dichotomies in play when dealing with disinterestedness. Since the avant-garde, performance art exploited what was always part of the nature of the performing arts: an artist may be a performer; improvisation is a form of creation; and the public can interact and affect the work. Since the audience is also participant, it makes no sense to call for distance. Bertinetto criticizes the idea that performances do not represent or express anything but themselves, the idea that improvisation precludes the existence of a previous work, and more to the core, the idea that performances cannot be experienced with detachment, that is, aesthetically. He maintains that participation does not preclude the spectator to having a disinterested experience of what is happening, that is to say, considering it for its own sake, and not functionally. However, Bertinetto argues for a logical and not psychological version of disinterestedness which entails considering works of art out of the stream of life, in the sense of appealing to imagination and the play of faculties, instead of action or instrumental reasoning. Radically Bertinetto claims that it is possible to aesthetically contemplate any objects and events, but getting rid of your aesthetic attitude in your experience of them leads to the concealing of their artistic character.

Susan Feagin (Chapter 2) also refers to the nature of performances exploring the differences between performance and Peter Kivy's claim in *The Performance of Reading: An Essay in the Philosophy of Literature* that a silent reading to oneself of a novel or a short story is a performance. She criticizes Kivy's idea, and comments on her own experience as spectator of a theatrical rehearsal with puppets. For her, performance is informed by several substrates of activities that are internalized by

performers, while Kivy asserts that the performance appears in the first reading. Feagin concedes to Kivy that reading is not different from many other actions we perform, but in the sense that philosophers are wont to describe any action as an action one performs. Differences are argued with respect to the goal of the agents involved: the goal of a performer is a presentation, while the goal of the appreciator of the work is understanding and appreciating it. The most striking differences between reading and performance however are the diverse processes to which a rehearsal serves for the preparation of a performance. Feagin argues that the material of a work requires a lot of “starting and stopping, trying out and reconsidering” during rehearsals, a pretty different process from the continuity of reading.

The process of rehearsal is precisely the focus of Paola Esposito’s study of butoh dance (Chapter 10). Esposito highlights the importance of attending to the production process during the creation of a work for our understanding of the performing arts. She follows Dwight Conquergood’s (2002) suggestions on researching with proximity, i.e. closing the gap between analysis and action, rather than with distance. With this in mind, she offers a personal account of how she used participant observation during the rehearsals of the piece *Orpheus* by the butoh dance theatre company Café Reason. Esposito parallels commonalities between doing ethnography and the making of a performance as processes that involve difficult dialogues and share a sense of the unexpected, the unfamiliar, danger, curiosity, commitment and trust. Using ethnographic methods, she investigates the relationship between the peculiar use of language and the body in training (Butoh-fu), concluding that the different roles or modalities of participation among performers intersect to create the subjective paradigm of Butoh dance and of performance.

Before we continue, readers should know that we have included the practice of film making as a performative activity; although some of the characteristics of the performing arts mentioned at the beginning of this introduction are very different from those of films. Films are artistic objects that contain drama, live music, dancing, but, nevertheless, they have not been systematically considered as performative artistic practices. There are differences in the creative conception of the pieces (scriptwriter, filmmaker, producer), the mechanic reproduction of the work instances, and the actual experience of it since film actors never share time or space with the spectators during its artistic development. In addition, the living dimension of the representation is replaced by the projection of a film. There are however some important reasons for deeming cinema as a performing art. Since the earlier debates about the artistic nature of cinema, cinema was compared to theatre (Benjamin 1934). After all,

cinema is mostly practised as a narrative artform, in which the representation of the events is realized by acting. Moreover, as a relevant consequence, movies, unlike literature or paintings, use the human body as their main vehicle of expression. In this sense, cinema becomes very close to the performing arts. Cinematic practices are clearly at the borders of this category, becoming an interesting case for reflection on performative events that complements and enriches the debate, even when our perspective is focused on the most cinematic aspects of it.

One of the topics explored by several authors in this collection is the specific contribution of the agents involved in the processes of the performing arts. We have mentioned already the artistic merit attributed to the author of the works. An example of this is when a composer writes down a score, gives instructions over its executions, assumes many implicit conventions and envisages, to some extent, how it will be received and interpreted by the listener. Acknowledging that performing works of art are to be performed does not imply that the authority, and responsibility, of the creator with respect to her work disappears. Indeed, McFee (Chapter 8) establishes a distinction between responsibilities of artists as creators of the work and dancers as interpreters, and contends that dancers are not artists, as they are not—in most cases—makers of the artwork.

A central theme related to authorship in the performing arts revolves around authors' intentions. Several ideas have been advanced. An author cannot properly have intentions about every property of the performance, hence of the work. Authors do not control wholly how their work will be executed, how it will look or sound every time it is performed, on this stage or concert hall, and with this public. Even when the work has been recorded with precision, performative texts have been subject to interpretation, to a reproductive cycle that has allowed the intervention of improvisation and imagination to a greater or lesser degree throughout history. Thus, original creative intentions might be more or less respected, more or less fulfilled in performance. On the other hand, it may be said that it is obviously true for every work of art that the author's intentions do not determine completely the aspect of the work, works of a unique token included. But there is something more illustrative about intentionality in general and the social character of it in the performing arts. The author's main intentions assume that the work will be performed, hence that others are to direct the piece, act the roles, design the costumes, attend the spectacle, and so on. Normally the production process is a cooperative enterprise in which all individuals involved contribute to the completion of a work. The responsibilities of these agents inevitably exceed the loyalty to the author's intentions in that every performance will be judged for

itself. The expressive and aesthetic properties of a performance can be critically appraised independently of the original properties assigned to the piece; therefore artistic or aesthetic value is then attributed to agents beyond the author. The important point here is that the intentionality of the work is one to which all contribute, with bigger or smaller responsibility, and which is imposed to all of them. And clearly the main intention is expressive.

In addition to the collaborative authority of performing works of art, it has been pointed out that there is a characteristic interaction between performers—acting, representing or executing a work—and the audience—appreciating and enjoying a work. On the one hand, performers act in front of and for an audience, intending to grasp their attention, to be understood, and to arouse emotional and other responses. On the other hand, observers react to the presence and actions of the performers which may affect the performance. How the audience is addressed, how the audience responds, and how the work is affected by the response is central to the very nature of the performing arts. There is a general recognition of the fact that the roles of author, performer and spectator sometimes overlap. For instance, in music, when there is a chance for the performer to create, as defended by Alessandro Bertinetto (Chapter 11), in the practice of musical improvisation, or when the audience has a chance to participate in the work and become a performer, as suggested by Miguel Corella (Chapter 7). It could also be that a single person controls the whole process of production, for instance, a composer of music, who writes the piece and conducts the orchestra, or better, writes a solo and plays it, becoming creator and performer at the same time.

Turning now to expressive intentions, this collection of essays reflects very specifically on the way expressions of subjectivity are to be understood in the context of the performing arts. Expression through performances is analyzed in relation to the way the work is conceived, the work as presented to the audience, and the affective responses the work elicits in the audience. The expressive conception of a work is exemplified in Rosella Simonari's essay on dance (Chapter 9). She examines the interaction of Emily Dickinson's poetry with the dancing in a choreographic piece by Martha Graham. Simonari produces an account on how the spoken lines are in many cases used to portray and highlight the mood changes of the different characters. Expressivity in performance is discussed by James Hamilton (Chapter 1) and Francisco Guillén and Antonio García (Chapter 15). However, while Hamilton searches for expression in the basic performative components of theatre, in the actors, Guillén and García focus on the expressive role of illumination and

chromatism. Hamilton presents a series of intuitions about this issue. The first intuition he comments on is that actors in narrative performances convey (rather than express) the feelings and moods of their characters. Another is that spectators and performers may differ about the moods and feelings of given moments in a performance. A third one concerns the fact that when an actor varies his physical orientation to the audience, what he says will have a different impact on the way spectators experience the mood and feeling of the moment. The fourth intuition is that recognizing the role of causal inducements in theatrical performances is connected to the physicality of performances. Hamilton states finally that the recognition of at least some of the foregoing is required for an appreciative response to any particular performance. In contrast with this point of view, Guillén and García dissolve the primacy of the performer and his word in the theatrical narrative and open up its meanings. They analyse in particular the role light and colour play in the work of Robert Wilson. Their proposal is that these elements liberate individual spectators' visual thoughts into a contemplative emotional state whether it is a dance, theatre or cinematic event.

A historical approach to the origin of the expressed emotions in performance is offered here by Miguel Corella (Chapter 7). Corella starts by considering different manifestations of Expressionism critical to the developments of the avant-garde, to go on examining Romantic music, as presented in different literary visions. Corella explains how artist novels contrast the subjectivity of the creator with the objectivity of the work, its autonomy from its author. He points out a paradoxical situation in the expression of subjectivity: it appears to be "a process of disindividualisation" where one's own subjectivity is partly recognised through the appropriation of performative structures or patterns. The expressive gesture might come from a conductor or a soloist but also, in some popular instances, from each of the spectators who are compelled to become performers themselves by singing and dancing along. He illustrates this by reminding us of the tradition initiated by Plato's theory of poetic inspiration where the artist is presented as a vehicle of expression of a divine or demonic force. In the literary tradition the artist appears as a creator of original and subjective forms that seem to obey a necessity and are able to be immediately recognised as rules.

Noël Carroll (Chapter 11) contributes to this discussion with a critical account of the history of the theory of motion pictures, showing how the discourse of subjectivity entered cinema studies as a concept employed by Althusserian-Lacanian. After tracing certain cognitivist approaches to different levels of the engagement of affect by motion pictures, Carroll

defends, against Marxist-psychoanalysts, a cognitive account of the role of emotion in film. He explains his concept of criterial prefocusing which specifies that for the elicitation of a certain emotion from the audience, a movie maker must provide scenes and sequences with the right properties as salient. Carroll's concerns about radical cognitivism are echoed by Salvador Rubio (Chapter 12) who explores the complementary side of the fiction paradox related to documentaries. Carroll concludes with a discussion of the ways in which recent psychological approaches to the moral emotions can enrich research into the emotional shaping of subjectivity by the moving picture media. Carroll completes this cognitive account with a reference to moral emotions, in order to provide further insight into the subjectivity of the viewers. A programme for future investigation should attend to developments in moral psychology. An account of our moral emotional responses should contemplate them as evaluative judgements of certain situation without necessarily involving rational deliberation.

Until now, the issue of responses to moral emotions has been mostly discussed in relation to performance art, probably since the corporeality of the theatre brings a different dimension to the experience, opening up wider possibilities of transgression during performance. Doris Kolesch's contribution to this volume (Chapter 14) looks precisely at the moral emotions prompted by the representation of pain. Herbert Blau has pointed out that "the bodily sacrifice of the subject" (1992, 125) is not a new phenomenon of the avant-garde but one that links contemporary performances with ancient theatre. In a compelling account of pain in performative events, Kolesch investigates how responses to the presentation of pain in performance art—in which performers are effectively suffering pain—differs from the representation of pain by other means, pictorial or cinematographic. Kolesch argues that in observing these events, spectators not only perceive, but also sense and get affected by pain. Compassion, indignation and the like are inevitable responses when perceiving the suffering of others. But, as Blau had suggested, the aestheticized violence in the theatre might also lead to desensitizing and even to transforming a passive audience into a participating one which becomes the inflictor of pain. Kolesch acknowledges the fact that the public is not mere spectator but witness and participant. However, she is more interested in those cases in which response turns into responsibility rather than real action.

The relation between reality and fiction is another topic mentioned with respect to different performing arts. Doris Kolesch (Chapter 14) emphasises the non-fictional character of performance art. Paola Esposito (Chapter 10) refers to the influences between the real and fictional

activities of performers. Salvador Rubio (Chapter 12) holds that documentary films, though assertive in character, prompt in the spectator responses not dissimilar to those caused by fictional cinema. In fact, he defends that rhetorical mechanisms in documentary films are basically the same as those used by fictional works in order to arouse emotional responses in the viewer. On the part of the viewer, he argues that imagination plays the same role, even if it is beliefs and not merely non-asserted thoughts which are set in motion to understand and emotionally experience the work.

Music has been, without doubt, the artistic field that has led to the most nuanced reflection on the aspects of expression. For centuries there has been a strong tension between advocates of musical formalist purity, exemplified by instrumental music, and those who regarded it as the most expressive art considering the example of vocal music. For the vast majority of musicians, expression is fundamentally a difficult goal, only reached when all the technical resources of the instruments are fully mastered. For thinkers, this concept is also difficult to address, without falling into reductionism (and here the non-representational character of the music has been a serious problem.) One of the greatest contributions to the evolution of theories of musical expression has been based on some consensus about the expressive nature of music. This has led to suggestive reflections, from those about the role of the imagination to the interesting hypothesis of the similarities between music and the world as the origin of experiencing expression.

Three contributions to this volume connect directly with some discussions in this context. David Levin (Chapter 4) turns to some recent thinking about presence and mediation in our engagement with operatic performance to answer this question. Antoni Gomila (Chapter 5) and María J. Alcaraz (Chapter 6) defend the value of music in the capacity of the performances to arouse emotions in the listeners. Gomila explains musical expression in terms of an expressing agent, actual or imagined; implying an interpretative activity on the audience's part that fails to explain the more immediate and non-reflective experience of expression in music. He argues that the second-person point of view permits the attribution of expressive intentions in interactive situations, in which there isn't an interpretation in terms of a third person or a deduction from the behaviour of the expressing subject, but a spontaneous reaction on the part of the second person to certain perceptible features in the situation. Gomila defends that the second person is not reducible to a first person point of view, as it is not always necessary or sufficient to identify with the expresser in order to understand expression. The listener is ready to be

emotionally affected by the way the music sounds, that is, to recognize intentional expressive attitudes in it. What count as the ground of musical expressivity is that music affects us emotionally; there is no further necessity of logical or analogical justifications. Since music is a human activity musicians intend to ostensibly express through it, looking for the acknowledgment of their intention. The audience reciprocally perceives music as the product of an agent, and respond to it spontaneously. Even atonal expressionist music can be explained within this interactive framework as music that seeks to express the experience of crisis, and revolt against the Bourgeois art and world.

Alcaraz clarifies the issue of emotional experiences in music by suggesting that to be moved by music does not entail that the music is expressing some inner state. Furthermore she admits, as formalists do since Hanslick, that absolute music—not having representational character—is not capable of expressing mental conditions. So we respond emotionally to certain properties of music as we sometimes respond emotionally to other abstract arts, and here she mentions dance, but painting could also be a case in point. Even in representational arts as literature or cinema, emotional responses cannot be completely warranted by propositional or representational content. Alcaraz finds Peter Kivy's suggestion about the syntactic relevance of expressive properties of music to be insufficient for an account of how emotions are related to music. The expressive character some pieces of music exhibit may only be acknowledged when we respond emotionally and properly to their qualities. As in literature, emotional responses help to organise the content, to fix attention on some character or other, or to provoke expectations about the story. Finally, in responding emotionally to music we may be in a better position to wholly understand and appreciate it.

Two further articles by Sven Kristersson (Chapter 3) and Judit Vidiella (Chapter 16) present a very singular view of performance and text. Kristersson's ideas relate to a performance where he shows the structure of a research developed in and through performance. The author, a professional singer, puts forward subjectivity as a narrative choice in the exposition of his own work, an artistic research process included in a doctoral thesis. Kristersson explains the project, developed around the *Gilgamesh* epic in collaboration with Karim Rashid, an stage director based in Malmö. Using Shakespearean traditions as described in Peter Brook's *The Empty Space*, where scenic communication is established using verbal imagery rather than a stage set and props, Kristersson embarks on the embodiment of a series of performances and a subsequent "reflective interpretation of the interpretations." For this, he makes use of

artistic methods related to various musical, theatrical and literary traditions as well as the myth of Orpheus as analytical tools. Similarly unique, in her discourse, Vidiella argues that as performers, we dis/un-cover ourselves by putting our own selves at risk and into play, manifesting the power relations between spectators and actors. She maintains that, as spectators, we attend a performance in order to inhabit zones of alternative subjectivities, which we put into play in and outside of the act. Vidiella concludes that this allows us to confront macropolitical and micropolitical subjectivities in a concrete time and space.

The contributions in this book are arranged in five parts which reflect writers' interests on particular performing arts. As we have tried to articulate here, many of the issues discussed within each part clearly present relevant comments to other parts of the book, so readers will be able to make many connections between them.

Part I offers three chapters with a focus on the theatre. In the opening chapter, "Performer subjectivity and expression in theatrical performance," James R. Hamilton looks at the role of the physicality of performers in the inducement of moods and feelings in theatre audiences. Susan Feagin's essay "Performing and rehearsing" considers differences between theatrical performances and rehearsals. This first part ends with a more practical study "The performer in the empty space" by Sven Kristersson on how to communicate historical songs and poetry to contemporary audiences.

The four essays in Part II direct the attention to the world of music. David Levin's initial essay, "Subjectivity unhinged. *Elektra* in Zurich," bridges the discussion between expressing in theatre and music as it is focused on the expression of subjectivity in opera. He examines in particular in Martin Kusej's contemporary production of *Elektra*, asking about how we might delineate and theorize the distinctions between textual, performative, and mediated subjectivities. In Chapter Five, Antoni Gomila points to the interactive character of expression in music with his essay "Musical expression and the second person perspective." He acknowledges the complexity of the expression of emotions in this medium and articulates extrinsic and intrinsic aspects of them. In the text that follows, "The cognitive value of emotions in musical understanding," María J. Alcaraz continues the discussion focusing on listeners' emotional stimulation by musical works. She provides an explanation of how emotional responses may have a role in the understanding of music. This part of the book closes with an essay by Miguel Corella, "Expression and expressing oneself in music." He, however, approaches the expression of subjectivity in the arts from artist novels, in particular those featuring

musicians (performers and composers.)

Part III is dedicated to dance, a performing art that encompasses multiple arts. Graham McFee's chapter, "Dance, dancers and subjectivity" describes danceworks as "performables" which differ in ways relevant to expressiveness or appreciation. He focuses on the distinction between artistic appreciation of danceworks, which involves attention to the features or properties of the work itself, and the distinctive contribution of the dancers who instantiate them. The other two chapters on dance are dedicated to analysing expression in specific works. In her article "Is it a word dead when it is said?" Rosella Simonari analyses the relationship between text and performance in Martha Graham's dance piece *Letter to the World*. Utilising ethnographic methodology, in "Café Reason's *Orpheus*" Paola Esposito looks for evidence of whether the production of a Japanese Butoh dance affects the participants' notions of self and body identities.

In Part IV, Noël Carroll's text "Subjectivity, emotions and the movies" opens up considerations of expression from the point of view of the theory of motion pictures. He argues that emotions are, compared to processes of rational deliberation, very fast decision-making routines. A second text in this part by Salvador Rubio proposes a questioning essay "How do documentaries raise emotions?" in order to explore the complementary side of the fiction paradox related to documentaries. Rubio's work focuses on the film *Las Hurdes. Tierra sin pan*, by Luis Buñuel, and shows how the viewer becomes caught at times in conflicting emotions which converge to give a feeling of discomfort.

The final part of this volume concentrates four final essays that consider, in diverse ways, how expression occurs in the performing arts. Alessandro Bertinetto addresses the nature of these arts from the point of view of the involvement of the audience with "Aesthetic distance in the performing arts". However, Bertinetto still defends the relevance of the concept of aesthetic distance in the experience of the performing arts with a logical rather than psychological version of disinterestedness. In the following chapter, "Witnessing the pain of others," Doris Kolesch invites us to reflect more specifically on audiences' experiences of and reactions to the depiction and demonstration of pain in performance art. Chapter fifteen, "The silent utopia" by Antonio García and Francisco Guillén, offers readers yet another focus on significant aspects of production processes in theatrical performances commenting on the role of illumination and chromatism in the work of Robert Wilson. The book ends with a truly performative script, "Queer subjectivities," by Judit Vidiella where she indicates the adoption of different roles of gender stereotypes

and rhetoric in order to reveal how everyday discourse and behaviour are subjected to performative conventions.

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PART I:
THEATRE

CHAPTER ONE

PERFORMER SUBJECTIVITY AND EXPRESSION IN THEATRICAL PERFORMANCE

JAMES R. HAMILTON

In this chapter, I focus primarily on theatrical performances of narratives. The contents of such performances are stories. Stories are the representations of sequences of actions put in motion by agents. This narrowness of focus is put in place in order to help get us started. But the view I propose has more general application.

The problem I will address is how theatrical performances generate moods and feelings apart from those moods and feelings that are generated by the grasp of the contents in a performance. For example, a spectator may feel sad for a character's plight and even at the resolution of the plot but still think the overall mood of the performance is light-hearted. And she may not be able to point to anything particular in the content of the performance that would justify her overall characterization. The inability fully to explain felt reactions to whole performances is fairly common. And, it seems, it has more to do with facts about performances themselves than with facts about the contents of performances.

Here, I offer an explanation of this phenomenon by emphasizing the role that the physicality of performers plays in the inducement of moods and feelings in spectators.

What seems obvious

Expression of emotion is central to theatrical performances of narratives in some way. Here are five widely believed claims about the relation between expression and performance.

Actors in narrative performances convey the feelings and moods of their characters.

It is appropriate to describe theatrical performances using emotion and

mood terms.

What actors do to convey characters' feelings and moods is connected to what justifies spectators' ascription of emotion and mood terms to theatrical performances.

The physicality of the relation between performers and spectators has something to do both with how character feeling and mood is conveyed and with what justifies spectators' ascriptions of feelings and moods to performances.

Recognition of at least some of the foregoing is required for an appreciative response to any particular performance.

In this chapter, I will consider only the first four of these claims. The fifth takes us beyond the current topic.

I will regard these claims as intuitions. By calling them "intuitions," I mean they are claims many of us are prepared to believe before we engage in critical reflection. They can be wrong, the results of mere prejudice. But they often afford a place from which to start a discussion. And, of course, they are often right; which helps explain why they afford such a place. In the next section, I will discuss each of the first four claims in greater detail.

Four intuitions in more detail

1. Why should we use the term "convey" in (1) rather than "express" when talking about actors? Doesn't the latter make better sense? The idea that actors "convey" their characters' moods and emotions sounds flat. And good acting, in particular, seems correctly characterized as involving the *expression* of emotions, not their mere conveyance.

However, substituting "express" for "convey" in (1) is a mistake. If to express a mood or feeling requires actually being in that mood or having that feeling, then puppets do not express them. Yet spectators sense emotions and moods when observing puppets. Moreover, in narrative performances it is characters who express emotions and suffer moods. And the fact that characters express emotions or suffer moods does not entail that actors express emotions or suffer moods. But, what about *good* acting? It might help here to think for a moment about one species of bad acting. Actors sometimes talk about something they call "committing to the action." The difference between performing an action in that manner and failing to do so can be demonstrated, but it is best explained by reference to several reasons for which actors may fail to be committed to an action. They may fail because they are nervous about what they are supposed to do. They may fail because they do not actually understand

what they are doing and why. But, generally, they fail when they are self-conscious for some reason.

The self-consciousness of which I write here is not to be confused with self-awareness. For example, if the style of performance calls for it, an actor can be self-aware and aware of her relation to spectators without being self-conscious. Moreover, self-consciousness can undermine a deliberately self-aware performance as easily as it can undermine acting/performance in any other kind of style. All it takes is for the performer to be uncomfortable acknowledging her relationship to spectators.

This species of acting failure is often obvious to spectators. When an actor is self-conscious about what she is doing, her unguarded mannerisms reveal her sense of discomfort. This is why a fair amount of actor-training involves learning how not to be self-conscious in the performance of those actions that will become the routine developed in rehearsals and performed in front of others. "Committing to the action" is one way in which actors overcome self-consciousness.

It is also a way to infuse the doing of any action or set of actions with the kind of focused energy that enables the actor to make the actions convincing, that is, to make them convincing examples of actions done with certain feelings and moods. This observation applies to acting training that insists the actors must feel the same things as their characters feel in order to portray those feelings, in the manner of "The Method", perhaps. It also applies to actor training that insists such same-feeling is not necessary at all, in the manner suggested by Diderot. So, all things considered, it seems to me we should stick with the word "convey" in (1) and not substitute the word "express."

2. Spectators ascribe feelings and moods to whole performances. And it seems right to say that a performance may be correctly described as, for example, dark and cynical. But beyond this observation, we seem to be pulled in different directions by other facts about emotion ascription to performances.

I have hesitated to write that performances *express* moods and feelings. Sets, costumes, props, lighting, sound, and other technical elements contribute in some way to whatever moods and feelings spectators experience. On a standard conception of expression, as requiring a subject who expresses, this would make no sense. More importantly, it is unlikely that these elements make their contribution as the result of spectator recognition of them. Instead, it is more likely these elements causally induce spectators to have particular experiences that are related in some way to their sense of what is going on in the content of the performance.

I have also hesitated to write that the moods and feelings ascribable to