

ABSTRACTS

Shaken Manhood: Age, Power, and Masculinity in Shakespeare

Jim Casey

The essay explores the predicament of old men in Shakespeare's plays and examines how gender expectations shift in the early modern period as male bodies age. Relying on various historical chronologies of the Ages of Man, the essay establishes the boundaries of old age in the period and then notes that, for Shakespeare, aging occurs within the context of *theatrum mundi*, where Ages are acts and the aging are actors. Thus, age becomes primarily dramatic, having less to do with chronological age than with the performance of certain prescribed parts. Men become old men when they can no longer perform in the roles of younger men. Some men may become effeminized by age; unable to bear the toil and torture regularly expected of masculine bodies, these old men undergo a social and cultural transformation that parallels their physical degeneration, repositioning and refiguring their bodies as significantly less than male. (JC)

Borderlines Destabilized—Witches and Witchcraft in Frank McGuinness's Plays

Csilla Bertha

This essay looks into Frank McGuinness's use of witches and witchlike figures who, owing to their magic power, often serve as metaphors for the artist. They are revealed in their dangerous potential, but then, by the plays' conclusion, usually emerge triumphantly from the abyss of evil with renewed creative and/or healing power. As if moving from the pagan, demonic wild excesses towards deeper humanity impregnated by the (Christian) law of love and peace—conveying an obviously very personal religious vision, a kind of philosophical idealism. The ambiguities concerning the relationship between witchcraft and artistic gifts become theatricalized most strikingly in the final tableau of *The Bird Sanctuary* where borderlines between the inside and outside, onstage and offstage, art and nature, the physical and the fictional, material reality and the illusory world become destabilized or dissolved in a complex interplay between them. (CSB)

Urban Alienation and Mental Geography in Conor McPherson's Dublin

Nicholas Grene

Full modernization was late coming to Ireland, and Conor McPherson is the first Irish playwright to make urban alienation his primary theme. Though his best known play may be *The Weir*, with its remote rural pub where the regulars tell ghost stories, his more characteristic locale is the north side of Dublin, the working-class and lower-middle-class suburbs of Donnycarney, Artane, and Killester. His drink-dependent, emotionally dysfunctional men, in need of feminine support but incapable of fulfilled relationships, live in isolated consciousness outside the traditional networks of church or community. The essay explores urban alienation and mental geography in McPherson's drama from *Rum and Vodka* (1994) through *Port Authority* (2001) to *The Seafarer* (2006). (NG)

Theatres We Live By: Perspectives on Cognitive Theatre Studies

Ákos Seress

The essay provides a broad sampling of Cognitive Theatre Studies. Drawing on theatre theory, especially on Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner's theory of conceptual blending, the paper offers a detailed approach to the concept on theatricality, and it gives a review of relevant cognitive drama theory, focusing on those of Mary Thomas Craine's *Shakespeare's Brain-Reading with Cognitive Theory* and Bruce McConachie's *American Theater in the Culture of the Cold War—Producing and Contesting Containment, 1947-1962*. (ÁS)

“This Dasht-e-Tanhaii called the planet Earth”: The Metamorphosis of Space and Identity in Nadeem Aslam’s *Maps for Lost Lovers*

Éva Pataki

Space has become one of the most frequently used themes and critical tropes in recent criticism of ethnic and minority literatures. A spatial approach enables addressing literary renderings of experiences of dislocation and belonging, in-betweenness and hybridity, and seems particularly relevant in an analysis of diaspora experience. Reading space in diaspora fiction also may shed light on how the traditional English cultural-symbolic meanings of space are transformed with the creation of diaspora spaces. A close reading of Nadeem Aslam’s *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004) reveals the metamorphoses of space and identity: the creation of diaspora space, and the concomitant hybridization of identities and cultural spaces. Diaspora spaces are thus created through a two-fold process of hybridization, while movement and mapping prove vital factors both in the production of diaspora space and in the diasporians’ identity formation. (ÉP)

Palimpsestuous Intermediality: Paul Auster’s *City of Glass* (1985) and *City of Glass: The Graphic Novel* (1994)

Borbála Bökös

This essay analyzes the ways through which the impossibility of creating a coherent (narrative/artistic) identity is reproduced in the graphic adaptation of Paul Auster’s first novella, *City of Glass* from *The New York Trilogy* to *City of Glass: The Graphic Novel* (1994) by Paul Karasik and David Mazzucchelli. The graphic novel contains recurring motifs and narrative strategies which set up the thematizations of intermediality and/or visual/literal intertextuality. In *The Graphic Novel* both verbal and visual techniques generate an uncanny effect on the part of the reader, especially through the oppositions between image and text. The intermedial uncanny and intermedial coexistence are occasioned not only by intermedial references, but also through media combinations and transformations. The essay also identifies the high-low interactions and mutual influences of the different media forms in the graphic novel (literature, art of painting, and cinema), while at the same time looking at the various manifestations of palimpsestuous intermediality as connected to the intermedial uncanny. (BB)

Picturebooks Challenging Sexual Politics. Pro-Porn Feminist Comics and the Case of Melinda Gebbie and Alan Moore's *Lost Girls*

Anna Kérchy

The Lost Girls trilogy, a highly controversial, sexually explicit, mixed-genre graphic novel saga published in 2006 by Top Shelf Books, co-created by pro-porn feminist comics artist Melinda Gebbie and visionary writer Alan Moore, eludes conventional categorizations on grounds of strategically transgressing a plethora of cultural taboos along with medial, generic, gender, and ideological boundaries; and as a result remains banned or restricted by several bookshops and libraries worldwide. A lecherous web of fabulously illustrated, entangled stories undertakes to explore childhood sexual traumas and compensatory erotic fantasies of the most memorable heroines of children's literature: Alice from *Alice in Wonderland*, Wendy from *Peter Pan*, and Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz*. These predominantly visual adaptations of youth novels combine the iconography of children's picture books with stock narrative patterns of the pornographic genre to tackle the dilemma "Whose desires emerge in the narrative throughout adult fictionalizations of children's sexuality?" The abused girls find a therapeutic cure while regaining their lost voices, visions, and visibilities through their sexual autobiographical agency organizing the imagetext that dares to flirt with the unspeakable and the unimaginable alike. (AK)

Scots: a Language or a Dialect? Attitudes to Scots in Pre-Referendum Scotland

Kirsten Lawson

This essay addresses the twofold question of whether locals perceive a connection between Scots and their Scottish identity, and whether they consider Scots an additional identifying factor, or an issue of greater importance. Results of a survey conducted in Scotland are presented. Interviewees were also asked whether the independence referendum influenced their view regarding the status of Scots. Results indicate that for some, Scots is but a substandard variation of English, which is indicative of belonging to lower social classes (Cormack 1997, Nihtinen 2006). Others perceive Scots as a language in its own right, sharing the same origins as modern English, but rich in literary tradition. The study emphasizes how major efforts are essential to encourage and sustain Scots as "a mirror of Scotland's soul" (Kay 1993: 189) and as a community language in order to

support and create conditions for Scots-speakers to value their identity, use their language, and strengthen the position of Scots within existing language communities. (KL)

A Post-Indyref Perspective on the “remainder of normal at the end of normal” in Scottish Literature: Disability, Miserablism, and Constitutional Patriotism

Arianna Introna

The essay explores the reluctance to imagine disability as a legitimate part of Scottish culture and literature in relation to the cultural and political contexts which frame the definition of what constitutes Scottish culture. It foregrounds the relationship between the expectation that Scottish culture, and consequently Scottish literature, should make a positive impact on Scottish society and politics and the rejection of attitudes and representations perceived to be detrimental to cultural confidence. It traces narratives in Scottish politics, culture, and literary studies which have naturalized the connection between miserablism as an essentially Scottish attitude and derogatory disability associations, and does so from a perspective informed by reflections on the run-up to the 2014 referendum on Scottish independence. Also considered are narratives of disability in Scottish writing published in the year of the referendum that clash with and problematize the negative perception of miserablism and disability in Scottish culture. (AI)