RHYTHMIC JUGGLING: TRACING THE DISEMBODIED VOICE OF RICHARD FOREMAN'S ONTOLOGICAL-HYSTERIC PRODUCTIONS, 1968-2009

by

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Dissertation under the supervision of Doctor David Savran

This dissertation is concerned with the genealogies of the disembodied voice in Richard Foreman's Ontological Hysteric Theater. Each of the first three chapters posits a genealogy in which the disembodied voice is elaborated: first by the discovery of the unconscious, the historical avant-gardes, and finally by the neo-avant-gardes who return to the disembodied voice as a device with a difference, through technology and theorization. The final chapter demonstrates that these genealogies are essential to an understanding of Foreman's uses of the disembodied voice. The final chapter divides Foreman's Ontological-Hysteric productions into four sections, which trace the particular uses of disembodied voice of each period. Each section demonstrates how the disembodied voice gives form to Foreman's intellectual and aesthetic preoccupations. The disembodied voice allows Foreman to position himself as a literary critic with his own works of art as the object of his criticism and to "echo" the abyss that is left by the voice's retreat from the body.

Approved_____Date_____

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The inspiration to take on such a task lies first and foremost in Richard Foreman's productions, but was sparked also by the passion for disembodied voices in the works of writers and directors I admire, including Peter Handke, Samuel Beckett, Pina Bausch, Alan Weiss, and Christopher Cox.

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Introduction

> What we have to renounce is thus the common sense notion of a primordial, fully constituted reality in which sight and sound harmoniously complement each other. [1]
>
> Slavoj Zizek

In the 2002 production, *Maria del Bosco*, Richard Foreman stands where contact with his public is unavoidable: at the entrance to his own theatre--the Ontological-Hysteric--fifteen minutes before curtain, at the front of the stage seconds before the play begins, and then suddenly before the lights go up, in a seat beside the audience. And the whole time he has been talking to assistants at the entrance to his theatre, then (somewhat wearily) to his audience to remind us to turn off cell phones; and his words fill the walls of the set like an enigmatic crossword, for his audience to piece together. Letters and words in broken order, read: "RULE #1: THE DELAY OF GRATIFICATION IS GRATIFICATION." Then, sitting in the center of the audience behind a sound control board, Foreman cues his own recorded voice to rise from beneath Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben*, "the countess Maria del Bosco searching as usual for the appropriate image, meditating upon the given object of the moment." The lied swells and falls and women in tutus and brutish men carry in objects for Maria's appraisal. They tilt the heavy objects on the periphery, framing Maria, who in return offers up a blank stare; Foreman's voice returns: "meditating upon the given object of the moment."

The voice now buried, now rising from the music reiterates this "meditation." And for a moment the whole stage, props and actors included, moves with Maria's will; the voice--not her own--corresponds to her stares; consciousness, not action, moves the props. This is a moment of cohesion that will explode, as will the few that follow over the next hour, into slam dancing,

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1. Slavoj Žižek, *Gaze and Voice as Love Objects* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 192.

painful pantomimes, or faux ballet, throwing any certainties from the previous moment into the air in the next: the only constant, Foreman's meditating voice.

Maria Del Bosco (A Sound Opera: Sex, Racing, and Cars) is the production-as-enigma, challenging the audience to try to find a correct fit for the voices and the bodies. On the one hand, there are the physical presences of the ballerina-like actors, mostly mute. On the other hand, the play is composed of forty-four "aphorisms" recited and repeated almost entirely by Foreman's recorded voice in two accents: one thick, professorial; the other tentative, quiet, monotone. In addition, Foreman's disembodied voice taunts the audience with a body, since the real Foreman is seated in its midst. The ballerina-models on stage are hollow dolls that rarely speak, filled with "projections." When Foreman operates the tape recorder, he may be making audible and public private thoughts and texts that are at play in his head, thus emphasizing the particularities of his own consciousness against staged projections, which sometimes coincide with them. But the mechanics of recording also create a break between voice and body, which betray a counter-impulse to have words come as if from nowhere.

A satisfying fit of voice and body would purportedly mean the end of Foreman's project. When we try to put the pieces of Foreman's stage together, we are repeatedly frustrated by aural or visual interruptions: bright flashes of light and infamous gongs, thuds and buzzes of Foreman's theatre that indicate shifts in focus and/or subject positions. The voice must, at all costs, remain disembodied.

Summary of Argument

This dissertation argues that a century-long pursuit of the disembodied voice in psychoanalysis and the avant-gardes culminates in the disembodied voices of Richard Foreman's Ontological-

Hysteric Theater. I trace three genealogies that point to the places of Foreman's returns and indicate how his staging expands upon the disembodied voices described. The first genealogy traces the disembodied voice elaborated by the peak of hysteria and the discovery of the unconscious in the mid to late nineteenth century. The second genealogy traces the convergences of hysteria's disembodied voice and those of the historical avant-gardes, demonstrating those disembodied voices that precede psychoanalytic formulations: for example, Stéphane Mallarmé's "Idée" and Maurice Maeterlinck's "elsewhere" and other examples in which artists make explicit reference to hysteria and the unconscious: Futurism's noises, Surrealism's automatic writing, and Dada's glossolalia. The third genealogy traces returns to stagings of the disembodied voice by Post Second World War neo-avant-gardes, made possible by the perfection of tape recording technology. These voices are similar to those of the historical avant-garde, but postwar experiments with tape challenge the violences of the pre-war historical avant-gardes (and by extension, Hitler's appropriation of avant-garde devices). The device of the disembodied voice is vehemently in evidence in the neo-avant-gardes but to opposite effect, even when Dada or Futurism is specifically invoked. Pierre Schaeffer's musique concrète realizes, for example, several of the principles of Luigi Russolo's *Art of Noises*, but initiates (in place of the "glorious sounds of warfare") an ecological approach to the sounds of the world. Foreman's theatre fits within the theoretical framework of second wave neo-avant-garde--minimalist painters, musicians, and new American filmmakers.[2] Like them, Foreman posits himself as literary critic

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2. This designation of first and second wave neo-avant-gardes follows Hal Foster's analysis in *Return of the Real*.

> As the first neo-avant-garde recovers the historical avant-garde, dada in particular, it does so often literally, through a reprise of its basic devices, the effect of which is *less to*

with his own works of art as the object of his criticism.

If the relationships of the disembodied voices that this dissertation traces to Foreman's productions seem scant at times, the final chapter demonstrates that Foreman's staging of the disembodied voice is, in fact, the culmination of these three genealogies. Disembodied voice has played a continuous role for forty years in Foreman's Ontological-Hysteric Theater, since his first production in New York, *Angelface*, in 1968 at Jonas Mekas's Filmmaker's Cinémathèque. In the decade that followed, disembodied voice functioned as a central aspect of his experimentation. In *Pandering to the Masses* (1975), for example, he placed four speakers in the four corners of the space and alternated the use of each speaker for almost every word spoken. In *Sophia=(Wisdom) Part 3: The Cliffs* (1972), Kate Manheim spoke syllables of words that Foreman's off-stage voice completed. As Foreman began working with experienced actors in the eighties, he less frequently staged pre-recorded text and then returned again to its use in the nineties.

Although Foreman returned to using combinations of live and recorded speech, disembodied voice has remained more than a component of Foreman's work; it is, I argue, the defining element. Foreman began by using the device in order to guarantee an even delivery of inexperienced actors, but he has throughout been preoccupied by the implications of disembodied voices, as can be witnessed, not only by his return to the use at several different

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transform the institution of art than to transform the avant-garde into an institution [Foster's italics].

The second wave neo-avant-garde, which Foster locates in 1968, enacts "a creative analysis of the limitations of both historical and first neo-avant-gardes," and it "succumbs to apocalyptic impulses." Whereas Foster is concerned with other arts and devices than this dissertation--visual artists who return to the devices of collage and ready-mades; this dissertation is concerned with the avant-garde theatre's returns to the device of the disembodied voice. Hal Foster, "Who's Afraid of the Neo-Avant-Garde?," in *Return of the Real: the Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), 20-5.

periods in his career, but also by the thematic of binary oppositions of seeing/hearing in places where recorded voice is *not* used. So in the eighties when he worked with live, albeit miked, voices, he continued to write about these oppositions in such plays as *Film is Evil: Radio is Good* (1987). When Foreman returned to the device in *Lava* (1989) and *Permanent Brain Damage* (1997), the spoken text was almost entirely comprised of text recorded by his own voice. In *Permanent Brain Damage*, the voice-overs and recorded voices behave as soundscapes of indiscernible sentences, which absorb and resemble the pre-show chatter of the audience. The chaos of a royal party scene onstage conspires with the live voices to create a language web. In *Maria del Bosco*, Foreman has trimmed the language, so that there is hardly a web, but now a meditation, a reverberating and hypnotizing series of sentences that sound as if they belong to an "elsewhere."

Foreman's disembodied voices present multiple resistances to literary criticism, which I welcome and pursue. Foreman has borrowed (and continues to borrow) texts from his own earlier productions and words, phrases, and aphorisms of his favorite authors to introduce them through sampling into his own soundscapes. With the technology of recording Foreman is able to position his words on equal footing with those of his favorite authors, subjecting them to the same processes of looping and editing; in this way he troubles the notion of the singular, unified voice of the author. Additionally, Foreman's re-use of his own writing through sampling troubles the usefulness of a chronology that distinguishes one period's "writing style" from another. Finally, Foreman's use of the disembodied voice presents a challenge to his theatre's reputation as anti-literary and/or postmodern. To what extent can Foreman's use of disembodied voice to, for example, place text beside performance be considered a postmodern practice as opposed to a fulfillment of avant-gardist dreams? The second and third chapters ask: if the types

of fragmentations of voice and body in Foreman's theatre--often thought to exemplify postmodern theatre--can be traced in the historical and neo avant-gardes and on early and late modernist stages, does this not put into question the assertion of discrete categories, modern and postmodern? As a means of organizing all words in Mallarméan *Book*, the disembodied voice makes difficult the impulse to delineate the author's voice, aesthetic, and/or chronology.

Previous Scholarship on Richard Foreman's Use of Disembodied Voice

Until this study, there have been no extended analyses of the disembodied voice in Foreman's work; scholarship on Foreman's productions has, however, always *included* his use of recorded voice. Kate Davy has written in her introduction to *Plays and Manifestos* (1976), that the "primary vehicle for framing lines and activity is the tape recorded words, music, noises that accompany every performance."[3] Arnold Aronson dedicates several pages in *The American Avant-Garde Theatre* to the context that informed Foreman's early experiments with tape: La Monte Young's concerts and Jack Smith's desynchronized films and performances.[4] In *The Other American Drama*, Marc Robinson gives significant attention to a comparison of Gertrude Stein's theatrical concepts with Foreman's treatments of language and voice.[5] The reviews included in Gerald Rabkin's anthology, *Richard Foreman*, provide a record of the impact of

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3. Richard Foreman, *Richard Foreman: Plays and Manifestos*, ed. Kate Davy (New York: New York University Press, 1976).

4. Arnold Aronson, *The American Avant-Garde Theatre*: *A History* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 100.

5. Marc Robinson, *The Other American Drama* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

disembodied voice on audiences of early Ontological-Hysteric productions.[6]

The lack of in-depth analysis of the disembodied voice in Foreman's theatre can in part be attributed to the greater attention paid to the visual element to organize the stage, as an example of Bonnie Marranca's "theatre of images."[7] In contrast with the trajectory outlined in this dissertation, the postmodern trope of "the body" and emphasis on the visual suggests an absence of language and voices in the dominant *mise en scène*. Robert Wilson's early mute stages were proposed, for example, as privileged peeks into the pre-verbal creativity of minds troubled with speech and psychiatric disorders. Yet, for even those works that most maintain their silence a rejection of language is often enacted with a great deal of ambivalence. The absence of words informed the very existence of Wilson's productions. Fast upon the heels of Wilson's first period, his productions from *A Letter for Queen Victoria* (1973) not only included text but also brought taped dialogue into the foreground.

How do questions of presence--instigated by an interest in poststructuralism in the United States in the early eighties--further define a landscape of an anti-literary obsession with words? Elinor Fuchs suggests that text in the late seventies'/early eighties' experimental theatre saw a new type of dominance.

> In a motion that parallels Derrida's deconstruction of speech and writing, theatre practitioners have begun to expose the normally "occulted" textuality behind the phonocentric fabric of performance.... One of the many symptoms of the shift is the

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6. Gerald Rabkin, ed. *Richard Foreman* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).

7. Bonnie Marranca, ed. *The Theatre of Images* (New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1976).

separation of the actor from her voice.[8]

Rather than operate as a signal of a demand to the text to come alive through presence and veracity in speech, text emanates, as if directly from the print on the page, and mimics in some sort an omnipotent narrator. The disembodying of the voice makes this possible. It allows the voice to travel in space unfettered by bodies or characters.

While the recorded voice has often been used to withdraw the voice from the stage and thus support a visual emphasis, it also serves to assign the text a new type of dominance. The disembodied voice neither pretends to the immediacy (presence) of speech, nor stands alone as a text (absence) without bodies. Rather, it is like an "arche-speech," combining presence with absence, text with voice.[9] It is distinct from off-stage voices in that it is un-locatable and distinct from radio in that it contrasts with the visible and from film in its contrast with presences. This dissertation argues that the inherent characteristics of tape have altered the way we listen to theatre and, in so doing, have fulfilled the dreams of an earlier avant-garde. Additionally, this dissertation asks: to what extent can the use of recorded voice to place text beside performance be considered a postmodern practice as opposed to a fulfillment of such avant-gardist dreams?

Foreman's productions have led me to re-think claims of an absence of text and language in visual theatre. Although Foreman's theatre engages forcefully with the visual and the body, "few playwrights," Robinson argues, "are as concerned with the dynamics and implications of

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8. Elinor Fuchs, "Presence and the Revenge of Writing: Re-Thinking Theatre After Derrida," *PAJ*, Vol. 9, Nos. 2-3 (May-September 1985): 166.

9. Mikko Keskinen, "Her Mistress's Voice: Gynophonocentrism in Feminist Discourses," *Journal of International Women's Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (November 2000), accessed 17 January 2002, http://www.bridgew.edu/SoAS/jiws/nov00.

the writing act."[10] And this concern, itself, is a testament to Foreman's placement within an avant-garde practice, for scrutiny of the writing act is a form of scrutiny of the self that in turn tends towards a glorification of the artist. This dissertation proposes that we look again at Foreman's participation in avant-garde practices, this time with specific attention to the staging of speech as disembodied.

It is tempting to apply Foreman's own manifestos, essays, and other texts as answers to the enigma of the disembodied voice (and other enigmas) of his productions. In *Unbalancing Acts*, Foreman notes his numerous motivations for using recorded voice. Initially a tool to attain flat delivery from non-professional actors, taped voice was one of the many contingencies that became central to his aesthetic.[11] Foreman has stated in a personal interview that his early experiments with recording were his most radical contributions to the theatre. Exegeses, made extensively available online, *seem* to serve as continued dialogues with his audience and critics that would otherwise remain truncated. Foreman's descriptions are not most illuminating when they are applied to analyses of his use of the disembodied voice.

This dissertation approaches Foreman's statements, instead, not as pure fact but as part gesture. His manifestos, essays, and especially the Internet, have served Foreman's impulse to blur the boundaries between theatre and not-theatre. While ensuring the "afterlife" of his productions, by giving his audience a greater insight into his context, process, and afterthoughts than video recordings might, Foreman takes part in a strategy he shares with such contemporaries as John Cage or the poet, Charles Bernstein, who combine theory and poetry to

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10. Robinson, *The Other American Drama*, 150.

11. Foreman, *Unbalancing Acts: Foundations for a Theater* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1992): 33-8.

resist distinctions in their discourse and with deconstructionists such as Jacques Derrida who make wordplay integral to their theory. It is as strategy, rather than as "exegete" of his own productions, that Foreman's statements prove useful to the disembodied voice.

Previous Scholarship on Voice

The rush to define Foreman's innovations in the realm of visual experimentation (when language/sound experiments have played such an important role since his earliest productions) speaks also to an absence of scholarly attention to voice in theatre. An analysis of the disembodied voice of Foreman's stage could not exist until the field of sound study began to flourish, since the late nineties. It is only since that time that a flux of critical work has picked up where the theories and practices of Pierre Schaeffer, R. Murray Schafer, and John Cage left off, to address the history and theory of voice in cinema, theatre, and the visual and performing arts.[12] The primary documents of tape experimentation as well as recent critical-historical analysis of that experimentation help to situate Foreman's innovations in disembodied voice.

This dissertation draws from studies that include Foreman in their analyses of voice. Radio studies proffer the contributions of Foreman's productions to the area. In Mary Louise Hill's essays on radio, for example, Foreman's innovations are suggested as a rare example in theatre of the confrontation of seeing and hearing as separate but equal sense/perceptions.[13]

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12. Andrew Kimbough, *The Voice in Postmodern Theatre* (PhD diss., Louisiana State University, 2002); Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Steven Connor, *Dumbstruck: a Cultural History of Ventriloquism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

13. Mary Louise Hill, "Developing a Blind Understanding: A Feminist Revision of Radio Semiotics," *TDR,* Vol. 40, No. 3 (Autumn 1996): 112-20.

Helga Finter includes Foreman's productions in her analyses of the semiotics of voice in theatre.[14] For Finter, Foreman's disembodying is a positive use of the voice. She contrasts it with the divided Racinian self, which though similarly divided is a national self. In *Voice in the Modern Theatre*, Jacqueline Martin proposes Foreman's use of voice as an example of the degenerating effect of postmodernism on the power of the voice in theatre.[15] Andrew Kimbrough approaches a corrective to Martin's analysis with his dissertation on voice in postmodern theatre. His argument is distinct from mine in that he proposes the disembodied voice as a signifying practice of postmodernism. It is thanks to these studies that the present dissertation might posit the interwoven genealogies of the disembodied voice in hysteria and on avant-garde and neo-avant-garde stages, as those that led to Foreman's staging of the device.

Methodology

The criticisms that arise in response to Foreman's formulations of consciousness and the unconscious prompt the questions in this dissertation. In Herbert Blau's extended criticism of Foreman's project, for example, he evaluates Foreman's rejection of character as too easy. In *The Feminist Spectator as Critic*, Jill Dolan takes Foreman to task for his assumption that the phenomenological and avant-garde framing of the female body as an object like all others will allow him to escape the pitfalls of chauvinism. Addressing these criticisms to the trajectory of the disembodied voice in hysteria, in the historical avant-garde, and in tape experiments, I ask

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14. Helga Finter, "Experimental Theatre and Semiology of Theatre: The Theatricalization of Voice," trans. E.A. Walker and Kathryn Giradal, *Modern Drama*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (December 1983): 502-17.

15. Jacqueline Martin, *Voice in Modern Theatre* (London: Routledge, 1991).

where the disembodied voice in Foreman's work functions as an instrument of intimacy to pick out the individual in the audience and speak directly to him or her. Where does it function as a pedantic, teaching and/or alienating tool for the spectator who can sit listening for the "main idea" during a performance, as if undergoing a test? The gaze has been unearthed, analyzed, and critiqued; to whom is the disembodied voice addressed?

Foreman's staging, according to Blau, leaves the audience out of the process of the character's disappearance, demonstrating to them only the aftershocks. Foreman's contention is that he is undoing a wrong perception and revealing "that character is an error," and that there is some *thing* that precedes identity. Far from writing to reveal a post-existence, Foreman explains that he has "always been interested in trying to write from and evoke that level of self that underlies character, that level of consciousness that we all share, upon which is superimposed the accident of character."[16] Foreman's use of the disembodied voice in his attempts to blur boundaries of identity of author, character, and spectator is, as Blau notes, a criticism of the "old humanism."[17] With Blau's critiques in mind, this dissertation addresses the disembodied voice in Foreman's works as an example of the challenge (even threat) to character.

Foreman's depiction of his productions' universality is challenged by another recurrent criticism that his staging of his own consciousness (or autobiography) is intended for a male audience of one. In *Pearls for Pigs* (1997), the Maestro (who represents, perhaps, Foreman's most obvious raisonneur) makes the target of his address explicit: "I'm speaking to just one of

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16. Foreman, cited in David Savran, "Both Halves of Richard Foreman: The Playwright," *American Theatre,* Vol. 4, No. 4 (August 1987): 14-21, 49-50.

17. Herbert Blau, *Take Up the Bodies: Theater at the Vanishing Point* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1982), 20.

you amongst many... a single one who feels my words reverberating."[18] If the stage is the site of pure consciousness (as opposed to character), is "the self that underlies character" free of gender identity? Can the (ideal) spectator be female?

Foreman's early stagings of voice/male and body/female made him particularly vulnerable to feminist criticism. Dolan writes, "Foreman's construction of women is not meaningless; it reflects the discourse of women's objectification in the history of representation."[19] His delineations seem set according to strict binary oppositions: male voice=knowledge, female body=experience (or auteur=discursive power over audience and actors=impassive instruments for projection).

In response to feminist criticism Foreman has stated that the female body has been a central preoccupation in western art and thus is subject to the same analysis he applies to all objects in his theatre. In an interview with Ken Jordan he represents the problem as the quandary of the male contemporary artist.

> I realize that I've been conditioned by my society, and I realize I tend to think of women in those terms. I tend to somewhat objectify women, to think of women as powerless, and that is reflected in my work. What should one do? I'm reflecting honestly the way I've been made by my society. That was my response in those days. And I'm being factual and honest about what goes on in most twentieth century male minds at this point.[20]

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18. Foreman, *Paradise Hotel and Other Plays,* 223.

19. Jill Dolan, *The Feminist Spectator as Critic* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991), 57.

20. Richard Foreman, interview with Ken Jordan, accessed 6 February 2001, http://www.ontological.com/FOREMAN/interviewarticles.html. The same interview appears

Well aware of the impression that his representations of women made on audiences, Foreman is in this interview enacting the man who cannot help but be himself. In his early productions that coincide with the sexual revolution and second wave feminism, Foreman's "honesty" leads him to bare his (or "man's") problematic relationship to the female subject. Along with Second Wave Feminists, Foreman returns to the peak of hysteria as re-enactment and critique of oppressive structures.

It is necessary to turn to the contributions of Foreman's wife and main actress for a decade, Kate Manheim to analyze where Foreman critiques and/or reinforces the oppressive structures. To what extent can the productions that included Manheim be considered collaborations? How did Manheim contribute to the placement of women-as-body in the center of Foreman's productions? Did Foreman's practice of placing Manheim at the center of the intellectual/experiential journey in his productions trouble the oppositions of body/voice? What distinguishes Manheim's participation in *Sophia=(Wisdom*) *Part 3: The Cliffs* (1972), in which Foreman completes her truncated sentences, from *Maria del Bosco* (2002), in which Foreman's sole voice comments on both the internal and the external of Juliana Francis's character, reaching beyond the scope of Maria's apparent understanding? In the first, Foreman attributes unattainable knowledge to the naked body. In the latter, Foreman's voice sounds as if it were making fun of Maria for her lack of knowledge. But his voice may be Maria's voice--a part of her that is smarter than she, escaping from its usual imprisonment.

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heavily edited and with Foreman's responses only in Foreman, *Unbalancing Acts* (New York: Theatre Communications Group*,* 1992): 3-64.

Three Genealogies

The next three sections delineate the genealogies of the disembodied voice that tie Foreman to psychoanalysis and the avant-gardes. While each genealogy corresponds largely to the section that traces it, there are overlaps between sections.

Psychobiography versus psycho-poetics: Tracing the Disembodied Voice in the Peak of Hysteria and the Discovery of the Unconscious

Foreman's texts and stagings lend themselves to comparisons with psychoanalytic texts and theories. His productions may be read as sessions on the couch. Indeed, it sometimes sounds as if he were asking the audience to act as his analyst and watch his unconscious unfold or, enacting Lacanian master/analyst-hysteric/analysand dynamics, imagine him as the superior voiced being (in *Symphony of Rats* or *Film is Evil/Radio is Good*) who bears the power of discourse. Besides staging the dynamics of the session, Foreman frequently borrows specific discourses of psychoanalysis: including most prominently the theories of Freud, Lacan, and Kristeva.[21] Though he began his intense reading of Lacan's writing in the seventies and continued for much of the time since, he considers himself a "stupid reader of Lacan." That is, he asks us to take his readings, which appear onstage, as mis-readings.[22]

Foreman's extensive intellectual and aesthetic engagement in psychoanalysis is not an isolated phenomenon; chapter one shows that Foreman's use of hysteria in theatre fits within a "tradition." The path begins with the peak of hysteria in the late 19th century in which Jean

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21. Richard Foreman and Josefina Ayerza, "More Hysteria, Please: A Psychoanalytic Session," *Lacanian Ink,* No. 12 (Spring 1997): 14-37. The article is a transcript of a staged psychoanalytic session between Foreman and Ayerza, in which Foreman is the patient.

22. Foreman, "An Interview with Ken Jordan."

Martin Charcot produced a spectacle but altogether rejected the label of theatre. The path then veers to the formulations of the disembodied voice through dynamic psychiatry and Freudian psychoanalysis. In seeking to maintain the theatrical effects on the patient but reduce the stigma of spectacle, Freud repeatedly altered the relationship of speech and body in his practices and theory. This genealogy leads to the convergences of the historical avant-gardes and dynamic psychiatry in which we see a variety of responses to the hysteric, from rejection to emulation.

In the intermingling of fiction and reality early psychoanalysis influenced the very way that character came to be formulated. At the peak of hysteria, charismatic characters from real clinical life provided ample models to the arts. Jules Claretie based his *Les amours d'un interne* (1881) on his personal knowledge of flirtations at Salpêtrière. The protagonist of Georges DuMaurier's *Trilby* (1894), Svengali, shares with Charcot a dominating charisma and liberal use of hypnosis. The famous painting, *Une leçon clinique a la Salpetrière,* by André Brouillet, portrays the famous Blanche Wittman, in the arms of an intern, as Charcot lectures to an exclusive audience. Authors and artists drew on dynamic personae and their ideologies.

The disembodied voices that are heard throughout the history of avant-garde performance draw, frequently explicitly, on the definitions of hysteria provided by the theorists of the time. Symbolists point to an elsewhere; Futurists reject hysterics but draw on hysteria to influence the masses; Dadaists reenact madness and the wireless imagination; the exchanges reach an apex of creativity, Elisabeth Roudinesco writes, with Surrealism.[23] The disembodied voices of the historical avant-garde, like those of psychoanalysis, are consistently anti-theatrical and anti-

23. Elisabeth Roudinesco, *Histoire de la psychanalyse en France* 2 (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1982), 28.

mimetic: staged to resist and evade the actor's body.

If a hysteric aesthetic evolved in the arts parallel with the peak of hysteria and Freud's discovery of the unconscious, so also a schizophrenic aesthetic evolved in literary criticism and cultural critique as Lacan turned toward the schizophrenic, whom Freud deemed "unrepresentable." Lacan's theories and practices are built on Freud's omission of a coherent theory of speech and voice. Attending to verbal hallucinations, Lacan demonstrated the domination of the psyche by the speech of the Other.

Disembodied voices in the formulations of the unconscious are *stagings*, from amphitheatre to private theatre, that represent a safeguard against the deceptions of the hysteric's body and direct speech.

Tracing the Disembodied Voice as an Avant-Garde Strategy

Foreman's work has inspired "protective admirers" from various communities to claim him as their own. Even as Foreman was establishing his identity as a theatre artist in a late sixties' New York, his name was combined with Robert Wilson's to form a single word: "ForemanandWilson." Some years later, Bonnie Marranca coined the term "theatre of images" to describe a new American avant-garde that was united by an emphasis on the visual. An underlying question in this study is: What aspects of Ontological-Hysteric productions, if any, can be fittingly described as a "theatre of images," or "postmodern"?

Four decades after Foreman began his contribution to American experimental theatre, it ought to be possible to ask which categories do apply to his productions: avant-garde, neo-avant-garde, modernist, or postmodernist. Jacqueline Martin has written in *Voice in the Modern Theatre* that Foreman's use of recorded voice is evidence of the degradation of the subject.

Andrew Kimbough, in his dissertation *Voice in the Postmodern Theatre,* argues exactly the opposite, that the disembodied voice is evidence of the wish to return a place to the subject. I dispute both arguments and maintain that Foreman's project fits within an avant-garde explicitly engaged with the unconscious and psychoanalytic history.

Revisiting the avant-garde, chapter two outlines how and in what ways the disembodied voice enabled autonomy and *also* a merging of life and art: that is, terms usually associated with, respectively, modernist practice and avant-garde practice. In Stéphane Mallarmé's *Igitur*, character is subsumed in stage directions so that we do not know who speaks. A propeller tells the fate of Futurist literature in F.T. Marinetti's *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature* (1912) and in his *Toy Theatre of Love: Drama of Objects* (1915), cupboards whisper the secrets of the bourgeoisies; in Tristan Tzara's *Le Coeur* à *gaz* (*Gas Heart,* 1921), a face, fragmented into its parts, speaks automatically; in André Breton's *Champs Magnétiques*, a voice is called up as if "knocking on a glass window pane." Chapter two describes the staging of the disembodied voices in symbolist, futurist, dada, and surrealist texts and analyzes their relationships to the discourses of hysteria. The disembodied voices of the avant-garde are staged sometimes as no body, sometimes as a fragmented body, and sometimes as an inanimate object.

Contexts: Tracing the Disembodied Voice in the Post War Neo Avant-Gardes

The disembodied voices of the historical avant-garde are made problematic by their service to Nazi propaganda. So when the post-war neo-avant-gardes return to suggestions from before the war, they reject the violences of Futurism and fascist ideologies. With the discovery of tape, Pierre Schaeffer and John Cage use the medium to undo the connotations of war and to recover the soundscape. The human voice is dislocated, meaning shuffled by editing and playback, so

that the tools of ideology (the human voice and meaning) are subverted. In the late fifties, critiques against post-war distance from politics provoke a hybrid form that is both experimental and outwardly political: New Music Theatre, in which the human voice disembodied on tape plays an important role.

Chapter three points to the refraction of the anti-theatrical theatricality of post war composers into the environment of the late sixties. Cage's integrated philosophy in which he described theatre as anything that we see and hear--held sway over artists from all disciplines. Cage's concept suggested a disruption of the limitations of music or theatre, allowing each as dynamic spaces in which the tensions of the instrument, the player, the environment, the audience, and any element that could be seen or heard contributes to its performance and reception. At this juncture Foreman is one of the very few theatre practitioners to introduce magnetic tape into theatre.

While Foreman is often quoted as saying that he was more influenced by those musicians who were influenced by Cage than by Cage directly, it is difficult to ignore the congruency in Foreman's statements and theoretical orientation with Cage's dictums. This is perhaps because those influences in music that Foreman does claim, La Monte Young and Steve Reich, are composers who were in turn responding to Cage in their music. La Monte Young began to use tape to compose in the sixties; he featured sustained tones and advocated silence within the noise. His performances not only incorporated theatrical elements; they redefined theatricality as a mental process, between the idea of the work and the spectator.

Experiments in music, performance, and film converged at Jonas Mekas's Filmmakers' Cinémathèque on Wooster Street, where Foreman happily found himself in the early sixties. It is here that the New American Filmmakers had some of their earliest showings and that Jack Smith

presented his *Flaming Creatures* and "Expanded Cinema." It is also here that Foreman's first New York productions were staged: that is, at a performance space in which theatre was featured as only one of the many other types of performance.

While Foreman participated in Musical Theatre in his collaborations with Stanley Silverman, his exposure to experimental practices in tape composition most influence his use of disembodied voice in Ontological-Hysteric productions. Putting aside Foreman's books for Silverman's compositions and his stagings of operas, including Johann Strauss's *Die Fledermaus* (1983) and Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill's *Threepenny Opera* (1976), recorded sound, most especially the human voice, was, from the first production, an integral part of Foreman's originality in theatre. And this remains true. Foreman writes that he often begins a production by imagining the way it will sound. Although he no longer attends concerts, the music that he includes in his sound scores demonstrates an active knowledge of experimental trends. Foreman has often cited the importance of experimental music on his development as a writer and director, beyond that which he experienced early in his career, but this has not been explored in greater depth.

Tracing the Disembodied Voice in Ontological-Hysteric Productions

Foreman's contexts define his work, even as he defines his work against his contexts. In his "Ontological-Hysteric Manifesto 1" (1972), Foreman rails against the experimental productions of Peter Brook, Jerzy Grotowski, and Joseph Chaikin, writing that by 1967 "suddenly the theater seems ridiculous in all its manifestations and continues to do so in 1971."[24] Foreman is openly

24. Aronson, *American Avant-Garde Theatre*, 111. Aronson writes that Foreman's

antagonistic to the anti-literary theatre of the late sixties, which shares with him a basic rejection of "straight" theatre. The brunt of his scathing critique largely concerns "orchestrated speech and activity" in the theatre and the pretense of the American experimental theatre that where experience counts above dialogue one can attain the originary moment of speech.[25] Foreman's disembodied voices were an important means of designating his outsider status against other outsiders: to avoid theatrical conventions of speech in naturalistic theatre (of intent and meaning) and in the experimental theatre of the sixties (as truthful and spontaneous).

Not only did Foreman set his work in opposition to an imagined Other, but he also set the terms of his theatre in oppositions. By giving half of the name of his company to "Hysteria," Foreman directs his audience to specifically psychoanalytic associations that include the hysterical body and the hysteric's discourse. The other half, the "Ontological," is cast against an implied phylogeny: the general against the particular. In relation to the "Ontological," Foreman writes, "hysteria lies as a seed/spark which forces the unseeable to cast shadows."[26] Critics often associate the first part of the title with the verbal/aural and the second half of the company's name with frantic bodies and vaudeville in Foreman's theatre. But in Foreman's productions (as in the history of psychoanalysis) the meanings and symptoms of hysteria vary according to culture, political climate, and economic and social conditions of women. The disembodied voices of Foreman's theatre fold ontology and hysteria into one another. What is ontological may

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productions, like Wilson's, "stood in direct opposition to the creative methodology, form and content of the physically energetic, ensemble based theatre of the 60's."

25. Enrique Pardo writes that the Dionysian theatre of the sixties and seventies "becomes a panacea, an exclusive ruling idol, and singing a form of pious, conservative ritual." "Figuring out the voice: Object, Subject, Project," *Performance Research* Vol. 8, No. 1 (June 2003): 41-50.

26. Foreman, *Plays and Manifestos*, 68.

resemble a hysteric symptom: unbearable knowledge dissociated in a faraway voice.

Foreman constructed his performances, his position, and his persona within the New York downtown experimental "scene" as against not only the conventional theatre and stale dialogue, but also against his very own audiences. While in the early period of his productions, the tiny audiences who attended performances at his Soho loft would dwindle down to a handful, it was from this handful that he courted a small but loyal audience, a position of authority, and reverberations and dialogue with (in) a community that has continued to support his project. If Foreman's early pieces bore affinities to theatre, it was to the theatricality of experimental poetry, music, and film of the sixties.

Foreman's stance of opposition and alienation has certainly been challenged by his successes. Within a relatively short time Foreman began to inform and collaborate within the context that defined his work: experimental artists and writers, downtown composers such as John Zorn (on *Mickey Spillane* and *Astronome*), Charles Bernstein and the language poets, theorists such as Arthur Danto, Sylvere Lotringer, and Jalal Toufic. In the mid-eighties he directed the Wooster Group actors. At one point his popularity peaked to the extent that his dust covers boasted of blurbs from such Pop icons as David Bowie. Within the booming world of sound art, Foreman's loops have carried over from background sound and compilations of his favorite music to functioning as scores in their own right. They can now be heard on *ubuweb,* a vast resource on the web for sound art and experimentation.

Foreman enjoyed a permanent residence at the St. Mark's Church on the Bowery between 1992 and 2010. From the opening of the theatre, administrators of the space fostered emerging artists through such programs as the Blueprint Series and Incubator Workshops. In 2005, the Ontological website offered a brief overview of its luminaries:

> Through internships, staffing, residencies and short festivals, the OHT has been a site for many artists making their mark in New York City and internationally including Richard Maxwell, Sophie Haviland, Bob Cucuzza, DJ Mendel, Ken Nintzle, David Neumann, and Young Jean Lee, Damon Keily (American Theater in Chicago), some of the artists of Collapsible Giraffe, Radiohole, Elevator Repair Service and NTUSA. Ontological Theater Visiting Artists have also included Anne Bogart, Mabou Mines, John Jesurun, David Herskovitz.[27]

Despite this apparent engagement and collaboration with a community, Foreman complained of an absence of community, which he attributed in most recent years to "bottom line" concerns: profit, rent, and popularity. The absence of community that Foreman speaks of is one that he wrote into the structure of his theatre, making his oeuvre directed to what Bernstein has referred to as "uncommunities," the largest community of all.[28] The voice-over in Foreman's theatre functions as an instrument communicating isolation: a reiterating device, a way to spell out the important points in the (expected) event that the spectator to whom he speaks misses them.

Chapter Overviews

The first chapter of this dissertation traces the genealogy of the disembodied voice in nineteenth century discourses on hysteria. The devices of "body madness"[29] and the disembodied voice,

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27. Ontological-Hysteric Theater, "Incubator Programs, Overview, 2005," accessed 26 July 2006, http://www.ontological.com/INCUBATOR/index.html.

28. Bernstein, *My Way: Speeches and Poems* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 154.

29. The literal English translation of F.T. Marinetti's *fisicofollia*.

which form Foreman's aesthetic, emerge from a "poetics of hysteria." This chapter shows that this poetics---or a common metaphoric "staging of affect"[30]--is formulated at the peak of hysteria in nineteenth century Paris, in Freud's theories of hysteria and its cures, and in second wave feminist discourses. Whether the feminist discourses examined in this chapter rearticulate and/or repudiate psychoanalytic discourses, they help to answer questions of gendered ontology and/or hysteria. The first genealogy will provide the basis for further questions that I attempt to answer in the final chapter. How does the disembodied voice of Foreman's plays suggest a new and not-so-new poetics of hysteria, one in which the secrets are not hidden behind symptoms, but behind the secrets themselves, one in which in a world that affirms male hysteria, hysteria steadfastedly remains associated with the female body? How does the framing of hysteria in Foreman's theatre interact with the problematic association of hysteria-woman-body? Also, are Foreman's hysterical/ontological, verbal/physical binary oppositions stand-ins for the non-gendered sides of a hysterical psyche in sum--or a stand-in for two separate (non-gendered) psyches: one that is hysterical (the body) and one that is philosophical--pursuing ontological truth (voice)? Can the hysteria in his productions be accepted as not exclusively female because it relates to all "bourgeois drama, which in its typology is hysterical"?[31] The second chapter traces a genealogy of the disembodied voice in the avant-garde, and its convergences with the disembodied voices of hysteria and the discovery of the unconscious. The third chapter traces a genealogy of the disembodied voice in post-war neo avant-gardes. Most specifically, the chapter examines how tape recorders transformed the threshold of the imaginable. Although tape had

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30. Psychoanalysis draws on metaphors of theatricality and also produces them.

31. Foreman, *Unbalancing Acts*, 75.

been perfected by Nazi Germany in the middle of the war, it was not until 1948 that it became a material adaptable for experimental compositions. Schaeffer, a wartime radio engineer, experimented with the medium and founded the first electronic music studio in Paris. Schaeffer included Cage and Stockhausen in his resultant Musique Concrète that in turn inspired them to other applications of the techniques of looping and sampling. The attitudes and practices of tape composition establish one of the important contexts for Foreman's use of voice recording.

The final chapter is divided into sections that follow Foreman's uses of recorded and/or disembodied voice. Foreman's genealogy demonstrates that the disembodied voices posited in the previous genealogies of hysteria, the historical avant-gardes, and tape experimentation are key to any critical assessment of the more than forty-year history of Ontological-Hysteric productions. Foreman's disembodied voices are crucial to the troubling he stages between dramatic and critical texts and between writer and reader. As in the historical avant-gardes, the voice with no body of Foreman's theatre presents the most potent challenges to the "clichés of middle class theater." With the disembodied voice as dissociated symptom of no character in particular but a condition of all beings, Foreman challenges a theatre based on the psychological denouement of characters and their motives. Foreman replaces the conflicts of traditional theatre with conflicts between voices and bodies, and he disables the individual actor's appeal to the spectator's emotions by distancing the actor's voice on recorded media. This chapter demonstrates how Foreman's contributions add to the discourses of each genealogy.

With film, Foreman has contrasted his image with his speech or linked the two to dominate the presence of live actors: in *Film is Evil: Radio is Good* (1987), in *Symphony of Rats* (1988) and in the films, *City Archives* (1977) and *Total Rain* (1990). In *Lava* (1989)*, Permanent Brain Damage* (1996), and *Maria del Bosco*, Foreman's voice is, for the most part, the only

recorded one and there is intermittent "live" speech. In *Panic (How to be Happy!)* (2003) Foreman's voice functions almost as a narrative voice-over, introducing the spectator as witness to aural events long past.

Since my first exposure to Foreman's productions in *Film is Evil/Radio is Good* in 1987 at NYU Tisch School of the Arts, I have attended most of his annual productions. For those I missed I have been grateful to gain access to videotapes at the Lincoln Center Performing Arts Library: *Pandering to the Masses* (1975), *Penguin Touquet* (1981), *Dr. Selavy's Magic Theatre* (1972), *Birth of a Poet* (1985). Many others became available at the illuminating 2002 exhibit at Exit Art. In the summer of 2007, Fales Library at New York University opened Foreman's archives to the public and I have been fortunate to be able to visit their holdings. In 2009 and 2010, respectively, John Zorn's label, Tzadik issued two commercial DVDs of Foreman's productions: *Sophia=(Wisdom): Part 3*, which includes clips from productions throughout his career, and *Astronome: A Night at the Opera*, Henry Hills's film of Foreman's 2008 collaboration with Zorn. I analyze the use of recorded voice through personal interviews with Foreman, his most recent sound operators, and through close readings of the texts. The analyses are of the role of recorded voice in rehearsal and the effect of voice recording on each production.

Chapter One: That Tape Keeps Running in My Head: the Staging of the Disembodied Voice in the Formulation of the Hysteric.

Richard Foreman often sounds pejorative in his references to hysteria, even when he is discussing it as an element in his own productions.

> The situations depicted were normal bourgeois theatrical clichés, domestic triangles, things like that. That's why I called my theater "Ontological-Hysteric," because the basic syndrome controlling the structure was that of classic middle-class, Boulevard Theater, which I took to be hysteric in its psychological typology.[1]

Here, as elsewhere, Foreman aligns the hysteric with nineteenth century theatre, love triangles, the neurotic pursuit of love therein, and with deception. Foreman seems to give hysteria a subsidiary role to the "new ontological mode of theater (within which hysteria lies as a seed/spark which forces the unseeable to cast shadows)."[2] Yet this sentiment is ambiguous enough to leave room for other relationships between hysteria and ontology.

It is the undertaking of this chapter to trace a genealogy of disembodied voice in the spectacle of hysteria to demonstrate that Foreman's references to hysteria are more than off-the-cuff remarks; his use of hysteria in theatre fits within a "tradition." The chapter begins with the peak of hysteria in the late nineteenth century in which Jean Martin Charcot produced a spectacle but altogether rejected the label of theatre and then traces the formulations of the disembodied voice through dynamic psychiatry and Freudian psychoanalysis. In seeking to maintain the

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1. Foreman, *Unbalancing Acts: Foundations for a Theater* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1992), 71.

2. Foreman, "Ontological-Hysteric Manifesto 1" (1972) in *Richard Foreman: Plays and Manifestos*, ed. Kate Davy (New York: New York University Press, 1976), 70.

theatrical effects on the patient but reduce the stigma of spectacle, Freud repeatedly altered the relationship of speech and body in his practices and theory. The genealogy of the disembodied voice in this chapter leads to the convergence in the next chapter of the historical avant-gardes and dynamic psychiatry in which we see that artists such as F.T. Marinetti reject the hysteric even as they seek to provoke a contagion of disembodied voices.

Criticism on the Ontological-Hysteric Theater has tended to privilege the ontological. But, the fact that historically the two terms do not stand in opposition to each other may illuminate Foreman's coupling of the terms. Medical, philosophical, and literary eyes were focused on the hysterical body for the study of being. When the symptom eluded this focused gaze, hysteria's physical manifestations disappeared, reverberating in speech, language, and voice. In the twentieth century's return to hysteria, hysterical discourse pushed the Other "against the wall" to produce knowledge. On the Ontological-Hysteric stage, neither the voice nor the body represents a fixed place of knowledge or symptom. An "unbearable" ("unseeable") but powerful spark, hysteria is the shadow cast from and *onto* ontology.

Theatres of Un-Consciousnesses

This chapter traces the stagings of the disembodied voice in the theories and practices of dynamic psychiatry, twentieth century psychoanalysis, feminism, and schizophrenia (in its différence from hysteria). Beginning with Charcot's multi-media demonstrations, and following the transformed stagings of the disembodied voice in Freud's private theatre and then Lacan's "hystericization of discourse," this genealogy leads ultimately to the poetic strategies of Foreman's Ontological-Hysteric Theater. The first section of this chapter provides an overview of the formulation of the voice as disembodied at Charcot's demonstrations and lectures at

Salpêtrière. The second section shows re-stagings of the voice as disembodied in Freud's formulations of hysteria and schizophrenia. The subject of the third section is the disembodied voice as a challenge to the phallologocentric voices that silenced hysterics' voices. The final section traces Lacan's recuperation to psychoanalysis of the disembodied voices of schizophrenics.

Foreman's place within the genealogy of the disembodied voice in formulations of hysteria is indicated throughout the chapter. The *belle indifference* of the hysteric--that absence of knowledge regarding her own pain--resounds, for example, in the weights that are placed on Rhoda's naked body to interrupt the symptoms of hysteria. Injunctions, hypnotic suggestions, instructions, and dream texts haunt the recorded voices, which speak to and above the actors and spectators in Ontological-Hysteric productions. Like the infamous gong that Charcot used in his demonstrations to break the hysteric's trance, the sounds of buzzers and alarms in Foreman's theatre disturb the listener's auditory trances to begin again and isolate another symptom, another sentence, or another body part.

That the hysteric identity that stands at the center of Foreman's early plays to confront the problematic of the meeting of the body and the voice is usually female, in itself, refers us to the female split subject at the center of psychoanalysis' *raison d'être*.[3] The charges of misogyny aimed at Foreman's productions notwithstanding, Foreman shares an ambivalent fascination in

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3. As a central metaphor for the universal psyche, hysteria is not (in principle) linked to male or female gender. Male hysteria *is*, starting in the seventeenth century, tentatively theorized. Nevertheless, hysteria continues to be associated with women's sexuality. If the split female subject is the molten core of a reformulated subjectivity, does that mean that subjectivity is seen as female *a priori*, or does hysteria serve as a confirmation of the male doctor's superiority over a hopelessly fragmented female subject and an evasion of male hysteria? How is the scripting for women to stand for trauma, "beyond representation," challenged and/or accepted by psychoanalysis?

hysteria with feminists who returned to the site of its historical peak. Foreman's fascination converges with feminists in the belief in the ecstatic or creative energy of hysteria.[4] In roughly the same period, Second Wave feminists recovered the voices of hysterics and Foreman began to chart Rhoda's journey through Potatoland.

This chapter outlines the poetics of hysteria and schizophrenia and lays the groundwork for the next chapter, which traces the convergences of the historical avant-garde and modernism with the discovery (made in pursuit of hysteria) of the unconscious.

1.1. Staging the Hysteric Symptom: Jean-Martin Charcot and the Spectacle of Hysteria.

In the mid 1870's, Charcot brought the hysteric to center stage in the anatomo-clinic spectacle at Salpêtrière, and there he displayed her to a packed audience that included spectators of all ages and backgrounds. Charcot cast the hysteric as the living element against still images that he projected on screens: ancient representations of hysterics as witches, women possessed by demons or dancing St. Vitus's dance, or women, victims to a uterus with a mind of its own. Charcot displayed his own meticulously organized photographs and drawings that he and his collaborators had produced as an update to such ancient representations of hysteria. Charcot used his own artistic skill and organization to re-represent hysteria as an orderly disease through a "nosology."[5] And in his spectacle, Charcot included himself and his interns, the public, and at center stage, the hysteric, herself.

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4. Bruce Fink, *The Lacanian Subject* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995).

5. Charcot explained that whereas the clinic sought out exceptions, nosology established rules. By systematizing--in naming the stages and states of hysteria and/or hypnosis--and stilling the hysteric's body through induction, Charcot isolated the hysteric from speech to suggest a hysteria that was "showing" itself as if for the first time. In the interest of educating a larger

If Charcot proffered his demonstrations as visible proof, rejecting any association, however unavoidable, with acting or theatre, his contemporaries, advocates and adversaries alike, seemed driven to the demonstrations, at the same time as they were repulsed, by the theatricality of Salpetrière. A journalist, identified as M.L., reports on his Sunday visit to the amphitheatre at Salpêtrière. The journalist recounts his afternoon as if he were attending the theatre and specifically refers to the "Maitre's" lesson as a "performance."[6] Charcot's devoted student, Pierre Janet could not help but point to the man behind the curtain, reporting that, "Everything was designed to attract attention and to captivate the audience by means of visual and auditory impressions."[7]

Charcot's dramaturgy has remained, in and since his lifetime, the subject of debate. For some, the spectacle invalidated Charcot's scientific contributions. For others, it was the inevitable outcome of the new anatomo-clinical approach. All have been unable to ascertain whether Charcot intended theatricality. Charcot maintained that he did not. Whether or not Charcot intended his demonstrations as theatre, his repudiation exhibit the anti-theatrical

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public he compiled and published his massive collection of representations.

6. M.L.,"Un *dimanche* à La Salpêtrière," *L'Union Médicale: Journal des intérêts scientifiques et pratiques, moraux et professionnels du corps médical* (12 December 1878): 893-99.

7. Pierre Janet, quoted in Georges Guillain, *J. M. Charcot, 1825-1893: His Life--His Work* (London: Pitman Medical Publishing, 1959), 55.

theatricality of the Closet Drama that Martin Puchner defines in *Stagefright*: that is, Charcot's resistance to the theatrical *was* itself innovative theatre.[8]

Charcot's dramaturgy is a product of the shift in the perception of the patient and his or her disease at the end of the seventeenth century that Foucault outlines in *Birth of the Clinic*. Foucault writes that prior to the early eighteenth century, the doctor made visible that which his patients could not see. In the case of hysteria, this meant that what the doctor "saw" in his mind's eye as the cause of hysteria--a moving uterus--was "real" for those to whom it was described (often not the sufferer herself, but her guardians); seeing and saying were one. The clinic was built to stand in stark contrast to the doctor's own imagination, to be founded on the withholding of projections, and on the evidence of the visible. With the birth of the clinic, an age was heralded, according to Foucault, in which "a new alliance was forged between words and things, enabling one *to see* and *to say*."[9] The separation of seeing and saying established the clinic's *appearance* of objectivity. It made the subject's body and his or her symptoms visible to a public. But restrictions, intrinsic to maintaining objectivity were applied, especially to speech. The body was isolated from speech, for fear of contaminating that evidence that was embodied in the subject.[10] Dedicated to the clinic's faith in visibility and outspokenly hostile to theory, Charcot formulated a dramaturgy of separated seeing and saying.

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8. Puchner, *Stagefright: Modernism, Anti-Theatricality, and Drama* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2002).

9. Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), xii.

10. Whereas Foucault holds that the key significance of this shift is that the objectivity produced by the clinic was no less a fiction than the doctor's imagination, I argue that this fiction created a space for the psyche to perform.

Freud's obituary for his one-time teacher Charcot contributed to the historical reputation of Charcot as a man who *saw*.

> He was not a reflective man, not a thinker; he had the nature of an artist—he was, as he himself said, a *visuel* [Freud's italics], a man who sees. Here is what he told us about his method of working. He used to look and look again at the things he did not understand, to deepen his impression day by day, till suddenly an understanding of them dawned on him.[11]

In the above description, Freud opposes thinking and seeing but maintains that Charcot's double gift of seeing as a visual artist *and* a scientist gave Charcot the unique ability to grasp a patients' symptoms and classify their ailments almost instantaneously. Freud, along with the weekly audiences of five hundred who witnessed Charcot's uncanny access to truth firsthand, believed Charcot that they had seen true hysteria for the first time. They also took Charcot at his word that earlier observer-artists who interpreted the symptoms of hysteria had been unwitting victims to seduction by the hysterics who posed for them. Former spectators of artists' interpretations took the images they saw to be documents of the "truth," and in so doing, they became the more numerous victims. The misidentification of symptoms resulted in the perpetuation of other misdiagnoses for centuries. It was for these reasons that Charcot constantly distanced himself from theory and speech: to establish his nosography as invulnerable to seductions of hysterics and their diseases.

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11. Sigmund Freud, "Charcot" (1893), *The Freud Reader,* ed. Peter Gay (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1989), 49.

The staging that Charcot featured in his lectures and clinical visits, which was intended to guarantee objectivity, also threatened objectivity. In his staging, Charcot employed hypnosis to get at the truth of the symptoms, but hypnosis was barely distanced from its identification as charlatanism; hysteria and hypnosis were unfavorably associated with performance and contagion. Charcot brought them together to demonstrate the mystery of the disease and proposed to reveal the secret of hysteria to a culture in which the layers of prejudice around hysteria were at least two millennia old.

Charcot minimized threats by repeatedly designating theory as the greatest enemy to objectivity. He did this in regards to his own discourse by maintaining as his motto, according to Freud, "La théorie, c'est bon, mais ça ne l'empêche pas d'exister" (Theory is good, but it [hysteria] exists all the same).

> You know that my principle is to give no weight to theory, and leave aside all prejudice…. It would be truly fantastic if I could create ailments as my whim or fancy dictate. I am nothing more than a photographer; I inscribe what I see.[12]

Underscoring theory as a form of saying that potentially contaminates, Charcot asserted that what he saw, everyone (in the audience) could also see. He confronted doubters head on, challenging them to confront their own superstitions and imagine him as a magician who could "create ailments." Charcot drew on the modern technology of the camera to define himself, and he proffered demonstrations as what occurred *in spite* of theory.

In place of theory, Charcot continued to pile up evidence, disseminating images of hysterics in antiquity and setting them against photographs of hysterics from Salpêtrière. He also

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12. Charcot quoted in Didi-Huberman, *The Invention of Hysteria*, trans. Alisa Hartz (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), 29.

eventually (and reluctantly) published transcripts of his lessons. Because Charcot recognized that the doctor's speech-theory was regarded as a contaminant of the truth of the symptom (its unrehearsed performance), he consistently disavowed his own voice and made images and letters readily available to his public. In his disavowals of his speech with images in its place Charcot performs one of the disembodied voices that recur throughout this dissertation.

Charcot's disavowals were especially pronounced in exchanges with outpatient hysterics in his Tuesday Lessons. When, for example, a patient would bring the history of her or his diseases to a visit, Charcot patronizingly dismissed what the hysteric had to say, explaining that words had very little import for the medical understanding of the disease. Rather, in these lessons Charcot set the hysteric a series of tasks, whether in speech or through movement, or sought through hypnosis to "reproduce" the symptoms in order to discover their logic and place the type in his nosography. Frequently, in order to discover the route of paralysis, Charcot would poke hysterics with needles.

Charcot's weekly interviews with outpatients, in which he actually spoke to them, read as little dramas.[13] In one instance, Charcot asks a hysteric about her symptom, but when the patient essays an understanding of her own disease, Charcot draws the line. The hysteric's speech is circumscribed by the destination of his nosography, which always relates to what can be seen (not heard).

In disavowing the hysteric's speech in addition to his own, Charcot elicits disembodied voices. Speech brims from Charcot's iconography, writes Jean Francois Lyotard in "Speech

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13. Charcot, *Leçons du mardi à la Salpêtrière*, *Policlinique 1887-1888*, Tome 1 (Paris: Bibliothèque des Introuvables, 2002).

Snapshot." "They insist. They want these women to say something, a primal scene, a hypnosis, a fantasm, the castration of those who observe them, impossible love, playing at being a man."[14] Lyotard postulates a perceptible drive of the images themselves to make those photographed hysterics speak. The projection speaks beyond what the photographer projected. These images reflect the hysteric's desire to tell the observer something that is not expressed in or by the frozen image.

Charcot's use of speech in his spectacle clashed with his adamant refutations of the impact of speech; his inconsistencies brought about his downfall. Charcot had insisted that he could study symptoms while eluding the potential danger of contagion or contamination of evidence by hypnotizing hysterics. Critics had throughout the peak of hysteria raised doubts about the ethics of Charcot's lectures and demonstrations, and the hysterics' susceptibility while hypnotized. Joseph Babinski, who had once been Charcot's greatest advocate, put forward that with hypnosis *and* photography, Charcot rendered hysterics incapacitated while leaving them susceptible to everything that occurred or was spoken.

Charcot created the circumstances for the hysteric to talk about her pain in public, but he denied her an expanded opportunity. His denials and disavowals created a black hole in the center of the molten core of hysteria, which in turn provoked questions**.** Why, if hysterics were amenable to commands, would they not also be as susceptible to other instances of speech? Why would the doctor and audience not be vulnerable to the hysteric's speech, which occurred despite Charcot's disavowals? Critics put these instances forward as evidence that Charcot's lectures, his

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14. Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 133.

repeated repudiations of theory, and his asides to the audience functioned on the hysteric and the audience as hypnotic suggestions. If Charcot spoke but denied that he spoke, his audience still heard him.

In his "accidental" staging, Charcot, like Foreman on his deliberate stage, speaks in order to say that no one speaks; in both the hysteric body gestures towards an absent speech and speech gestures towards a spiritless body. In Foreman's "Rhoda Plays," Rhoda is absented as she moves across the stage in the nude, while Foreman whose voice is heard throughout, is not physically represented onstage. Instead, seated at the control booth in these early productions, he seems to control from afar Rhoda's sentences and her movements. Foreman stages a spectacle in which a woman's body is at the center of a male voice's lessons.

Foreman's dramaturgies, put forward as "truth," are as much projections as those at Salpêtrière, but Lyotard maintains that unlike Charcot's photographs and demonstrations of hysterics, Foreman's theatre gives voice to the unforeseen.

When Foreman declares that,

"Most art is

created by people trying to make their idea,

emotion, thing-

imagined *be-there*

more. They re-

inforce.

I want my imagined to be an

occasion wherein the not-imagined-by-me can be

there,"

it is as though we were hearing today what Charcot's patients want.[15]

Lyotard suggests that the female patients want to provoke the Other and that Foreman's gaps, at least in rhetoric, are aimed at eliciting the "not-imagined-by-me." The raison d'être of Foreman's theatre, following Lyotard's logic, is at the peak of hysteria. An implicit request in the photographs of hysterics of Salpêtrière fuels Foreman to answer with his theatre.

As the following sections demonstrate, Charcot's disavowals of speech were of central importance to recognizing the hysteric's speech in the history of psychoanalysis. Charcot's disavowals operated like the failures of the avant-garde, to fuel innovations. They fueled the Suggestion Debate, outlined in the next section, and also Freud's obsession with hysteria, outlined in the subsequent section. Suggestion, which only reached the induced as a voice with no body, points to the trouble with framing speech in relation to body, symptom, and cure: a trouble that continues to haunt the poetics of hysteria and remains at the foundations of psychoanalysis, as at the core of the Ontological-Hysteric Theater.

1.2. Debating the Place of Speech in Hypnosis, Hysteria, Cure and Symptom

> Oh, I expected to find a place going on in my body, then I expected to find a place growing in my mind. Then I find a place growing some place that wasn't in me at all but it was growing so much it finished by being in me.
>
> Foreman, *Rhoda in Potatoland (Her Fall-Starts)*

The Suggestion Debate, which came at the end of the nineteenth century and the end of Charcot's life, brought speech to the fore in discourses on hysteria and dynamic psychiatry. The

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15. Ibid., 133. Lyotard here cites Foreman's "Ontological-Hysteric Manifesto I," for the catalogue that accompanied the exhibition, "Photographs of the Salpêtrière" in Venice 1981, proposing Foreman's theatre as an answer to the portrayed hysterics' implicit demand. Foreman was a popular figure in French intellectual life during the mid to late seventies when he was most frequently making his home and his theatre in Paris.

protagonist of the debate, Auguste-Ambroise Liebeault (a country doctor who treated all types of ailments with hypnosis in his practice at Nancy), disagreed with Charcot's methods and argued that words were all that a doctor needed to "prepare, induce, suggest and revive" *any* patient.[16] Liebeault had done away with crystal eyepieces and flashlights, those props that Charcot used to defend his belief in the superfluity of speech; Liebault maintained in place of props that a doctor's power to cure his patent came from the suggestion he put into words and he argued that everyone was hypnotizable.

Paralleling Liebeault's emphasis on speech, Pierre Janet challenged the ideas of Charcot, who had been his teacher, and this intellectual apostasy led him to the discovery of automatic writing. While Janet maintained the premise that susceptibility and hysteria pointed to disease, he also speculated that language was related to dissociation. Janet's speculations came from his investigation into the craft of the spiritualist medium as the "hearer," of invisible presences and as their gifted interpreter *and* transcriber.[17] Interviews with mediums revealed to Janet the likenesses in the mediums' access to spirits that were "out there" with the hysterics' dissociation from their own thoughts and memories. Further, Janet thought this proved that the spiritualist medium's craft was a form of hysteria, or hysteria itself. Janet appropriated the mediums' use of

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16. Liebault and Bernheim, his apologist, represented the "Nancy School." The principles of the Nancy School were based on the beliefs that anyone might be hypnotized and that suggestion was not the product of visual manipulation, as Charcot had maintained.

17. Janet, "Le Spiritisme Contemporaine," *Revue Philosophique de la France et l'étranger* (January 1892): 413-42. The international Spiritualism movement, ignited by the first mediums, the Fox Sisters, in upstate New York in 1848, made of the craft and persona a worldwide phenomenon. The teenaged sisters had ostensibly heard "knocks" of the dead in their upstate house and had begun to communicate with the knocks. This phenomenon had become widespread enough to inspire constant debate in literary and medical magazines and to require a congress on spiritualism and Mediums. Janet writes that in 1889 at least 88 journalists from around Europe were represented at the congress.

automatic writing and experimented with it on hysterics. Hysterics showed a marked relief after writing, and Janet postulated the role of memory in the performance of symptoms. Automatic writing was evidence for Janet that traumatic memories were dissociated in language. And with automatic writing as the cure for hysteria, memories could also be recovered through language. Janet also held that automatic writing could reunify the split to which automatic writing pointed, making use of the dual role of speech in the formation of the hysteric's symptom and in the treatment of those symptoms.[18]

Although the respective treatments by Liebeault and by Janet removed the outward trappings of spectacle, the voice that could treat symptoms or that was at the root of the disease was still portrayed as disembodied. Liebeault had done away with the eyepieces and flashlights on which Charcot relied and held instead that a doctor's power to cure his patient with hypnosis came from the suggestion he put forward in words. According to Liebeault, the patient did not know that she or he *heard* the words conveyed by the voice of the inducing doctor. Nevertheless, suggestions conveyed by the doctor could *remove* symptoms. Likewise, Janet noticed that, while the hysteric ignored the content of her automatic writing, she felt relieved once she had written. In the wake of the debate, Janet and Liebault were equally wary of an audience in their formulations; in appearance the treatments were less theatrical than those at Salpêtrière. However, if speech came now to be at the core of hysteria and functioned as its cure, it was not a direct speech associated with presence.

The ideas that arose from the Suggestion Debate led to automatic writing or speech,

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18. Janet held that a fully recovered memory would eradicate the psyche's need for a split. This is the main point of contention between him and Freud. Janet did not believe in an inherently split subject, but only a split hysteric.

which served many purposes in the avant-gardes. Most importantly, automatic writing suggested that through a simple practice, the writer could access the voice that always speaking just beyond reach. For Foreman, automatic writing has remained one of his preferred solutions to the problem of writing otherwise inaccessible voices.

> My interest has always been to escape the constrictions of personality, the socially conditioned self. Since I am not able to write under the influence of alcohol or drugs, as many writers can and do, I find other ways to drug myself. One way was to allow myself to sink into a kind of semiconscious state, somewhere between wakefulness and sleep, and set whatever came from that state down on the page.[19]

Foreman's ideal writing state is a self-induced trance, which gives him access to another voice. Foreman draws on the theories of Anton Ehrenzweig to produce art in a "wide unfocused gaze," relinquishing control over his own processes. As I show in the final chapter, Foreman uses automatic writing in his staging to create a stage-worthy translation of the process with his monotone recorded voices that in turn induce the spectator.

1.3. Re-Staging The Symptom: Freud's Private Theatre.

Freud is credited with removing the hysteric from a prurient display to an intimate space. The privacy of his consulting room contrasts with the theatricality of Charcot's Salpêtrière and the gaze, exhibition and nosology of Charcot's dramaturgy that stood for domination contrast with Freud's more kindly narrative, his play of elements in a dialectic that leads to the hysteric's cure. Yet, Freud did not entirely negate Charcot's model; Freud recognized Charcot's coupling of hypnosis and hysteria as the most important step towards solving the mystery of the disease**;**

19. Foreman, *Unbalancing Acts*, 11.

Freud turned to hysteria only after returning from France and studying with Charcot at Salpêtrière. Freud borrowed too from Charcot's rivals in Nancy, Bernheim and Liebeault, even translating Bernheim's writings on hypnosis into German. And, though insufficiently acknowledged by Freud, Janet's discovery that hysterics suffer from suppressed memories predated the discovery of psychoanalysis.[20] While there are key differences in their understandings, in Freud's theories and practices we can find reflected his French forerunners: Charcot's charismatic staging of art and the psyche, and the methods that resulted from the Suggestion Debates.

In Freud's first theorization of hysteria he improved upon Charcot's dramaturgical model and benefited from the discourses that surfaced as a result of the Suggestion Debate. Freud maintained that Charcot proffered the most important illumination in the discovery of the unconscious because, among other things, "he was the first to explain hysteria," and he "put an end once and for all to any doubt about the reality of hypnotic manifestations."[21] Charcot's dramaturgy revealed the importance of re-enactment to hysteria. Yet, Charcot's demonstrations did not allow for any hope of a cure. Under Charcot, the patient's very susceptibility to hypnosis was evidence of hysteria. In agreement with Liebault's belief in universal susceptibility to hysteria and hypnosis, Freud abandoned degenerative theories. Re-presenting the link that Charcot had imagined as the result of degeneracy or a lesion in the brain, Freud presented hysteria as a "normal" psychosis that occurs in otherwise normal subjects while

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20. Inner speech, Janet argued, was central to the construction of dual aspects of the personality (and an evidence of hysteria, not the unconscious) and traumatic memories, Janet contended, did not always exist. When they did, were not necessarily sexual.

21. Freud, "Charcot" (1893) in Peter Gay, *The Freud Reader* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1989), 53.

dreaming, daydreaming, or under hypnosis.

Freud's private theatre emphasizes speech to replace Charcot's spectacle, but his formulations are constantly mutating; speech is never a fixed quantity. At first, Freud formulates the hysteric's symptom as a type of voice, created by the division of thought and affect, which wants to tell the analyst its story. Freud then happens upon the "talking cure" through Anna O., who leads the way by speaking in her own treatment; later in his theoretical writing, he engages the voice to guide him to the truth of the body's performance. Still later, when Freud abandons the body, he stages a disembodied voice to circumnavigate the problem of deceptive re-enactment *and* speech. Freud's formulations of speech in relation to symptom and cure produce disembodied voices hardly less theatrical than those of Charcot.

Freud miniaturizes the spectacle in evidence at Salpêtrière, but makes more explicit use of the terms of theatre, employing "catharsis." In his first published paper with Breuer, "Preliminary Communications," he describes their procedures:

> [It is] a therapeutic method [that] brings to an end the operative force of an idea which was not abreacted in the first instance, by allowing its strangulated affect to find a way out through speech' and it subjects its associative correction by introducing it to normal consciousness under hypnosis.[22]

In their early methods, in other words, Freud and Breuer put the "idea" into the past by summoning affect to speak. The "associative contents" (the contexts) communicated with consciousness by hypnosis. Freud and Breuer's understanding of catharsis was a theatrical

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22. Breuer and Freud, "Preliminary Communications" (1895) in *Studies On Hysteria*, trans. and ed. James Strachey, 17.

understanding combined with a variation on Jacob Bernays's mid-nineteenth century medicalization of catharsis as a purgative.[23] Unlike Bernays (and much more like Charcot at Salpêtrière), they conflated the effect of performance with performance itself, hypothesizing an abreaction as the release of the trauma/symptom. In order for a trauma/symptom to be "abreacted" (released), a patient must reenact her own trauma and use language to narrate memories that had long been inaccessible. Freud called on the patient's own re-enactment of symptoms to release (or abreact) the trauma. Catharsis was the means by which conversion symptoms were *re* translated into speech.

While Freud's treatment included an audience of only one, his Talking Cure was nevertheless a private theatre. Elisabeth Roudinesco writes that Freud translates Charcot's pictorial representation of hysteria into an acoustic one. Peggy Phelan has called the translation that occurs in the body of the hysteric a shift in time.

> Passing into language, the somatic symptom passes into the past. Psychoanalysis and choreography are two different modes of performing the body's movement. Each seeks to give the body a system of time.[24]

Freud's use of catharsis, like dramatic catharsis, makes use of both choreography and

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23. In mid nineteenth-century Vienna, Bernays had proposed Aristotle's catharsis in "medical terms." A patient could undergo treatment, "not because of a mere reduction of [pitiful and fearful] emotions, but because of an emotional discharge. Watching a tragedy onstage discharged pity and fear from the soul, resulting in a transient relief and over a longer (but not permanent) period, quieted the disturbing feelings." Onno van der Hart, PhD and Paul Brown, MD, "Abreaction Re-evaluated," *Dissociation* (1992). Accessed 12 January 2003, http://www.onnovdhart.nl/articles.hml

24. Peggy Phelan, *Mourning Sex: Performing Public Memories* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 60.

"acoustics." Freud "choreographs" symptoms as pointers to the hysteric's own speech and demands the guidance of the patient's voice in addition to her or his body. The patient's manifested symptoms of paralyses, neuralgias and attacks lead Freud to direct the patient to discoveries; symptoms "speak" to the doctor. *After* a patient imitates the state of her or his original trauma with her or his body, "verbal utterance" can be heard. Language (or "acoustics") stands in place of an uncompleted action at the moment of the originary trauma, and "by its help an affect can be abreacted almost as effectively [as by an action]."[25] The symptom cannot be abreacted until the patient matches thought through speech to affect.

Freud abandoned catharsis, and then speech took on an even greater importance, demonstrating his faith in words and his abandonment of the body's choreography. Freud attributed powers to words, Julia Kristeva writes, that "permit us to gather all symptoms, and that we would be able to make all traumas, drives and all sexual and psychic disturbances appear in language." Words can translate the body. They have such power because they represent, Kristeva continues, the preconscious, which is the "intermediate model between the unconscious . . . and consciousness."[26] Words build a bridge between the preconscious and the conscious.

Developing his psychoanalytic theories further, Freud established a means of maneuvering around the patient's conscious interpretations in "depth psychology." He separated the psyche's functions into primary and secondary processes. The after-thoughts of the latter intruded upon the immediacy of the patient's unconscious and often were products of self-

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25. Freud and Breuer, "Preliminary Communication," 8.

26. Julia Kristeva, "Freudian Models of Language," *Journal of European Psychoanalysis*, Nos. 3-4 (1997), accessed 12 September 2002, http://www.psychomedia.it/jep/pages/number3-4.html.

repression. Patients were their own censors. In seeking access to the "truth" of the hysteric's speech, Freud sought to evade secondary process. It was through the analysand's resistances, dreams, jokes, and slips, as the fulfillment of unconscious wishes, that the analyst might gain access to thinking that the patient could not express directly.

Free association is the term Freud assigned to speaking without censor that became a means for the hysteric to reveal to her or himself and to the analyst the secrets of the unconscious. Free-association seemed to democratize the relationship of hypnotized object and doctor-subject by asking of the hysteric to commit to her or his own speech and cure.[27] But it also tamed and ultimately erased the analysand's body. In *Hysteria from Freud to Lacan*, Monique David-Ménard describes Freud's greater reliance on speech that resulted from his abandonment of hypnosis as a retreat, not only from the physical body, but also from the body imagined in time. David-Ménard probes the reversal: how the "foreign body," which is words and/or affect, is transformed into a symptom and points to an "epistemological break between associative and symbolic conversion." [28]

When Freud integrated trauma into language, he removed the symptom from the realm of jouissance, "outside" of language. David-Menard proposes that it is Freud's "turning away in disgust" from the body that produced such integration and that there is, therefore, at the core of Freudian analysis a disgust of the patient's body. Freud distanced the symptom from a physical event that occurred at the moment of trauma to one that stood for the trauma in symbolic terms.

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27. Lavina Gomez, *An Introduction to Object Relations* (New York: New York University Press, 1997). Gomez writes that Freud's interest in free association is evidence of a more rarely seen feminine side.

28. Ned Lukacher, foreword in Monique David Menard, *Hysteria from Freud to Lacan*, trans. Catherine Porter (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), xi.

Freud's turning away from the hysteric's body and towards her or his speech represented a tentative optimism. If Freud believed that all could be revealed through words, his uncertain faith in speech was reflected in his implicit domination of the patient. Relinquishing his role as "prompter," Freud bequeathed the role to the hysteric. The patient would draw her or himself through the sound of her or his own voice, into a state of concentration. Creating a self-induced state, the hysteric reverted to a blurry subject-object relationship with the analyst and produced knowledge that was conveyed as expected (by the analyst). While free association and the couch were meant to do away with the seductions of hypnosis, they merely replaced one form of control with another.

Freud seemed to get around the problems he had with direct speech through dreams, slips, jokes, but even the language that occurs in these is suspect. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud explains that the dreaming subject can rarely produce any new imagined speech. More often, instead, the dreamer picks up and re-organizes pieces of overheard dialogue.

> Other sorts of speeches which are not, as it were, heard or spoken (that is, which have no acoustic or motor accompaniments in the dream), are merely thoughts such as occur in our waking thought-activity.... But whatever stands out markedly in dreams as speeches can be traced back to real speeches, which have been spoken or heard by the dreamer.[29]

Language is unverifiable because it is borrowed; it does not emanate directly from the patient's self, who unconsciously and constantly mediates her or his speech through resistance and self-censorship.

Freud makes the analyst irreplaceable in the case of dream interpretation. Describing

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29. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, trans. and ed. James Strachey (New York: Avon Books, 1965), 455.

why, in Freudian analysis, dreams need an interpretation, Guy Briole writes,

> The rule is that the manifest content of the dream is nothing but a 'facade', and that, whether in a dream 'it shows'[3] sometimes to the point of blinding, above all, a dream is a want-to-say [… *il veut dire*, can also read: *it means*]. If there is a want-to-say, it does not say, it is not said. So, the dream's latent content is more important for Freud, than the manifest content. The Freudian answer to the dream's enigma is that it expresses the fulfillment of an unconscious wish. The dream would therefore understand an interpretation of desire.[30]

Direct speech could not be trusted, either from the patient who was awake or the patient who was dreaming because for Freud, dreaming was like a temporary hysteria in that "the hysterical symptom expressed the trauma in symbolic form, in the dream the latent content also tends to express itself in dream symbols."[31] And, like the hysterical symptom, the dream was situated in a web of the patient's censorships and interpretations that required the analyst's understanding of what the dream "wanted to say." These formulations of the hysteric's speech, as primary and secondary processes pointed towards Freud's tendency to distrust his or any analyst's ability to ever hear (see) the true (real).

A frustration is built into psychoanalysis through Freud's own blind spots. Freud's "hystericization of discourse" is due, according to Lacan, to Freud's tendencies to inscribe the inaccessibility of direct speech and voice in the unconscious. Freud inscribes his desire to hear

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30. Guy Briole, "The Dream: an Interpretation of the Subject," trans. Richard Klein, *Psychoanalytic Notebooks* 2 (1999), accessed 29 May 2003, http://www.londonsociety-nls.org.uk.

31. Henri F. Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), 491.

(see) the true (Real) and the certainty that there was an inherent inability to hear in his theory. Is Freud's frustration at the absences in the hysteric (the uncertainty of her or his "truth") responsible for the hysteric's articulation of desire as the frustration of desire? The only subjects who can truly hear voices in dreams are those same who hear thoughts as voices in waking life--those, in other words, who Freud had relegated to the unrepresentable. This formulation encourages an aestheticization of unrepresentable space and desire, which Lacan pins on Freud, to make speech come from dead, empty, and dreaming spaces.

Returning in the mid twentieth century to Freud's frustrations, Lacan revolutionized the analytical approach to speech. He brought the disembodied voices that Freud relegated to the unrepresentable into "the light of day." Most importantly, Lacan re-read Freud's readings of schizophrenia, in which Feud linked the disease to the inability to represent the father. Lacan linked the illness instead to gaps of representation in language and speech. Continuing from this premise, Lacan made speech central to his theories, tying language to the voice in his list of *l'autre petite a*, which included the gaze and the feces and were the parts of the other in the self.

Foreman's theatre averts direct speech, sharing with the major texts of psychoanalysis strategies to get around or behind direct speech; Foreman sometimes borrows from the formulations in such texts to constantly shift the ways that discourses occur onstage. In early productions, the actors' discourses about the body are external to the body, fixed by their own voices on tape. In *Pandering to the Masses* (1975), a production that marks a shift in Foreman's uses of recording, he creates "webs of language." A continuous soundtrack of the actors' spliced voices makes language simultaneously omni-present and inaccessible. Such staging resonates with Lacan's theories of speech and language and like Lacan, Foreman seems dedicated to recuperating disembodied voices to normal neurosis from Freud's unspeakable and un-nameable.

Foreman's dramaturgies of speech and movement are more Lacanian than Freudian. In a mock therapy session sponsored by *Lacanian Ink,* Foreman (as analysand) "reveals" to Josefina Ayerza (as analyst) the ways in which his work is aligned with Lacanian concepts.

> It's true I'm mostly interested in Lacan as he stimulates me to try and figure out ploys where some kind of structure... some kind of texture, some kind of form can be involved which reflects the fact that we are broken. We are in pieces.[32]

The pieces that Foreman describes are the pieces of the Other in the self. While Foreman acknowledges that the fragmented self is not specific to Lacan, the "Real," which is, represents a "ploy," or "structure" that allows him to reflect this fragmentation onstage. Because the voice and body of Foreman's productions are almost never "integrated," each part points at an elsewhere, a "Real" beyond the prison house of the body and/or language.

The next two sections trace the literary practices of the late sixties that followed Lacan's re-readings of Freud. These re-readings, which arise largely from Lacan's clinical work with schizophrenics sparked *écriture féminine* and the literary movement and theories inscribed in *Tel Quel*. The writers in these movements shared with Lacan the intention of reclaiming disavowed speech. As we will see in the fourth chapter, it is against the backdrop of these returns to Freud's disembodied voices that Foreman stages his version of a private theatre.

1.4. Staging Essentialist and Materialist Disembodied Voices in Second Wave Feminist Discourses.

> He thinks about his face being her face. And thinks about his person as being her person. And worships it, finally. And reads it, finally, like a wonderful book.

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32. Foreman, "More Hysteria Please," Interview with Josefina Ayerza at Deutsches Haus, Columbia University, *Lacanian Ink* 12 (Spring 1995), accessed 1 June 2003, http://www.lacan.com/issue14.php.

Foreman, *Pandering to the Masses: A Misrepresentation* (1977)

This section traces the genealogy of disembodied voice through Second-Wave feminism. Staged in feminist discourses, the disembodied voice seemingly essentializes presence on the one hand *and* problematizes it on the other: in *écriture féminine,* by mimicking fragmentary language or language disorders associated with hysteria and other forms of mental illness, and in poststructuralist critiques, by staging the disembodied voice in the place of a hidden physical body, in film, radio or multi-media performance. Voice tends to more metaphorical usage in the first, to more literal usage in the second, and can slip easily from one to the other. As Rebecca Schneider shows in *The Explicit Body in Performance*, as regards the body, it is just such slippages that reveal the hidden work of signifying, in this case, speech.[33]

The profile of the hysteric has throughout history remained tied to the female body. When female hysteric patients of nineteenth-century France rejected the connection between sexuality and disease; they were rejecting ancient stigmas of the disease's cause in the floating uterus and of its relation to nymphomania. While doctors, dating from the early eighteenth-century, had long recognized male hysteria and Freud had replaced Charcot's hysterogenic zones with sexual trauma as the root cause of hysteria, there remained an absence of representations of the male hysteric's body and the female body remained tied to the identity of the hysteric. As integrated as the hysteric body may have become in Freudian analysis (to the point of disappearance) in language, it remained nonetheless specifically female. Freud's translation of the body into language may have given female discourse more importance than it had previously possessed,

33. Rebecca Schneider*, The Explicit Body in Performance* (London: Routledge, 1997), 60.

but when second wave feminists come to the fore, they return to the site of hysteria to appropriate the diagnoses *and* to refute it.

Phyllis Chesler points out in her influential study of 1972, *Women and Madness*, that the speech of women, as important as it was to psychoanalytic theory, was not so important in itself. Rather, their speech mattered only insofar as it was translated through a male physician's interpretation.

> The headaches, fatigue, chronic depression, frigidity, paranoia and overwhelming sense of inferiority that Freud recorded so accurately about his many female patients was never interpreted in any remotely accurate terms. Female "symptoms" were certainly not viewed by Freud as the indirect communications characteristic of slave psychologies. Instead such symptoms were viewed as "hysterical," and neurotic productions, as underhanded domestic tyrannies manufactured by spiteful, self-pitying and generally unpleasant women whose inability to be happy as women stems from unresolved penis envy.[34]

Chesler not only challenges the imbalance in the proportions of male analyst to female patient, or of the number of women in mental institutions, she also questions the interpretation of symptoms to, in turn, problematize the very diagnosis of hysteria. At the center of her work and those produced by *écriture féminine* is the translation of female hysteric bodies by male doctors.

Unlike Chesler's academic refutation of the diagnoses of hysteria, Hélène Cixous embraces the associations of sexuality/body and language that were in other contexts misogynist descriptions of female hysteria. In her *Portrait of Dora* (1976), Cixous gives several bodies to

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34. Phyllis Chesler, *Women and Madness* (New York: Doubleday, 1972), 95-96.

one of Freud's most famous hysterics. There is the Dora who tells her story and other Doras who re-enact parts of Dora's life. One of the voices of the play disavows her own speech. In Freud's narration Dora's speech is not her own, as she suffers from aphonia. By splitting Dora, Cixous returns to hysteria's disassociated symptoms. From a feminist perspective, Dora's symptoms speak even when she cannot. Dora's aphonia is a symptom but also a liberation.

By giving a stage representation of a persona, otherwise only known to us through Freud's descriptions of her in writing, Cixous's proposal is for embodied discourse, but her hope, according to the "Voice of the Play," is beyond the body and character. "These events declare themselves, like shadows in dreams, they often become so real that we feel we can reach out and grasp them, but, in spite of this, they elude any final clarification."[35]

Like the Symbolists, Cixous wants an uninterrupted communication between idea and spectator. Despising the embodied "I" of character/author, Cixous traces the unified enunciation to ontology and an inevitable patriarchy.

> The ideology underlying this fetishization of character is that an "I" is a whole subject (that of the character as well as the author) conscious, knowable: and the enunciatory "I" expresses himself in the text.[36]

Cixous proposes fragmented stage *speech* through multiplicity and fragmentation as a challenge to embodiment, ontology and the "I"; she also suggests that an *emphasis* on the auditory in theatre is a solution to intention, which she equates with ontology.

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35. Cixous, *Portrait of Dora* (1976), trans. Ann Liddle in *Selected Plays of Hélène Cixous*, ed. Eric Prenowitz (New York: Routledge, 2004), 35.

36. Cixous, "The Character of Character,'" trans. Keith Cohen, *New Literary History* 5 (1974), 385.

> If the stage is a woman it will mean ridding this space of theatricality…. It will therefore be necessary to work at exploding everything that makes for "staginess," going beyond the confines of the stage, lessening our dependency on the visual and stressing the auditory, learning to attune all our ears, especially those that are sensitive to the pulse of the unconscious, to hear the silences and what lies beyond them.[37]

Cixous's project, like that of closet drama and symbolist theatre, is that with the auditory, one may eradicate the visible obstacles of interpretation to arrive at a direct and unmediated contact with the spectator's unconscious ear. Cixous's pursuit of intimacy is made problematic by screens or blocks of interpretation; one cannot prevent excesses or reductions. Even when one places an emphasis on hearing, one continues to see bodies.

Rather than embrace psychoanalytic interpretations of the female psyche or refute them, Luce Irigaray calls for a discourse that elides a male equivalent. In *The Sex Which is Not One*, Irigaray draws on Freud's absence of knowledge regarding female desire and ties it to a possible language of desire.

> Woman's desire would not be expected to speak the same language as man's; woman's desire has doubtless been submerged by the logic that has dominated the West since the time of the Greeks. Within this logic the predominance of the visual and of the discrimination and individualization of form is particularly foreign to female eroticism.[38]

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37. Cixous, "Aller à la mer" (1977), trans. Barbara Kerslake in *Twentieth Century Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 1995), 134.

38. Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which is Not One*, trans. Carolyn Burke and Catherine Porter (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985): 25-6. Irigaray's analysis might even serve as a description (if superficially) of Foreman's project with his female characters, Sophia and Rhoda.

Irigaray ties the domination through the look to the "logic" of the West and to "discrimination." The West's logic inevitably proffers a misreading of woman as absence, when the truth of her body, Irigaray argues, is not so visible or so single. The female body proves that "her sexuality, always at least double, goes further; it is plural."[39] Irigaray proposes the double-ness of the female body as writing, concluding that woman's writing will not compete with male writing. Instead, her writing must double upon itself, and produce excesses that mirror the "double-ness" of the female body.

Already in 1975, Shoshanna Felman pointed to the quandary in the discourses for and against the project of a feminine/feminist language. In her essay, "Women and Madness: The Critical Fallacy," Felman judges the two avenues for women, "'to speak in the name of' and to 'speak for' could thus mean, once again, to appropriate and to silence."[40] Felman interprets the "speaking for" of materialist feminists as a silencing of the unrepresented. And radical feminists who "spoke in" the name of the father appropriated Lacanian theory and thus ultimately silenced themselves. Arguing the same impasse of essentialist language, Jill Dolan writes in *The Feminist Spectator as Critic* that *écriture féminine* "focuses its debate in language, and proposes that biologically based differences in female sexuality give rise to a form of female textuality that can subvert male signification." Dolan levels the charge against such approaches that they obfuscate differences of class, race and sexual orientation, thus turning women (and men) into caricatures of themselves. Dolan writes, "linking women's sexuality to their textuality offers a subject

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39. Irigaray, *This Sex Which is Not One*, 28.

40. Shoshana Felman, "Women and Madness: the Critical Fallacy" (1975), *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, eds. Robyn R. Warhol and Diane Price Hendl (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 9.

position carved in transcendent universalisms."[41]

The feminist theorization of media, informed by Lacanian psychoanalytic theories, suggested a means of circumventing the impasses of female/feminist identity with the tools of cinema. Articulating a new feminist position in "Visual Pleasure and The Narrative Cinema," Laura Mulvey claimed that, "the voyeuristic-scopophilic look... can itself be broken down." While the "conventions of film deny" the camera and the audience's look, the "female image... bursts through the world of illusion." Directing the reader-spectator's attention to the female body that stopped narrative and drew the speaking male to a halt, Mulvey concluded with a call for intervention on the part of criticism, as well as on the part of cinema itself:

> The first blow against the monolithic accumulation of traditional film conventions (already undertaken by radical filmmakers) is to free the look of the camera in its materiality in time and space and the look of the audience into dialectics, passionate detachment.[42]

Taking Mulvey's analysis of the "male sadistic gaze" as a starting point, film directors of the seventies proposed to define non-narrative film by replacing the male voice-over with female voice-overs.

Replacing the male voice-over as a means of displacing male narrative made feminist filmmakers susceptible to the same criticisms launched at writers of écriture féminine. The project to replace the gaze with the voice, writes Mikko Keskinen, masks issues of presence. He

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41. Jill Dolan, *The Feminist Spectator as Critic* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991), 8.

42. Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Screen*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (Autumn 1975): 33.

argues that while pretending to promote a distance, the disembodied voice really functions as if it were direct speech, from author to listener, thus staging (again) a false sense of origin, in a vengeance, and validating issues of power, regardless of gender reversals.[43] The woman as narrative voice would not directly translate into a female subject position in any event if, as Michel Chion argues, the female body inevitably reveals itself in the voice; the male gaze could not be transgressed.[44] Is Irigaray's question of a discourse that does not try to compete with the male discourse answerable? If women have represented in psychoanalytic theory an absence, the disembodied voice is perhaps a too fitting metaphor for the unattainable, indefinable or lack.

While Mulvey's theorization found its greatest relevance in film, Sue-Ellen Case writes that the efforts of feminist film directors to create a new subject position for women via voice-over could prove valuable to the poetics of feminist theatre. Case writes, "The potential for women to emerge as subjects rather than objects opens up a field of new possibilities for women in theatre and its system of representation."[45] What are the differences between the theatre and film's "systems of representation"? Case leaves the question unanswered how this potential can be translated to the stage.

In two essays, Mary Louise Hill suggests that radio can present a new radical challenge to the male gaze in the specific systems of theatre.

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43. Keskinen, "Her Mistress's Voice: Gynophonocentrism in Feminist Discourses," *Journal of International Women's Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (November 2000), accessed 21 January 2004, http://www.bridgew.edu/soas/jiws/nov00/a_gynoft.htm.

44. Michel Chion writes that in the rare instances that a female disembodied voice is heard in cinema, the voice performs a "striptease," until it becomes embodied, thus referring it again to the body's "essential" sexuality and gender. Chion, *The Voice in Cinema,* trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 28.

45. Sue-Ellen Case, *Feminism and Theatre* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 121.

> Because it lacks the concreteness of theatre, including the physical limitations set by the space of the stage, radio would seem to offer the ideal venue for anyone who seeks to transgress what feminists call "the economy of the gaze."[46]

Radio shares with cinema the techniques of editing and montage that shape a final "image" (in this case, aural), but radio is not as totalizing as cinema in its representation of reality because it deprives the listener of a visual confirmation of the aural image. According to Hill, radio can supersede the objectification of women and sadism towards the female body, and she links the radio to Pavis's theory of the *mise-en-jeu*. In "Woman's Time/Radio Time," Hill theorizes beyond translation and listening to the spectator's act of spectatorship, which "involves accommodating not only words but also their sound picture, as well as their cultural and physical implications."[47] Borrowing Patrice Pavis's mise-en-jeu in which the translator's job is of "comparing and trying out," Hill maintains that the relationship of the aural to the visual opens up a space for the feminist spectator because it is not pre-determined.[48]

Hill proposes that her alternative, in which sound and image coexist in imperfect unity, can be extended to the stage. Using the concept of mise-en-jeu*,* Hill projects an idealized vision of audience participation in which the spectator might, like a translator, reoccupy the places of the author. The writer makes choices of "attention" and so does the spectator. Medias expose

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46. Mary Louise Hill, "Developing a Blind Understanding: A Feminist Revision of Radio Semiotics," in *TDR*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (Autumn 1996): 117.

47. *Mise en jeu* is an "*exchange*... effected by comparing and trying out word and object presentations in the two languages and cultures and in adjusting the language-body of the two systems accordingly." Patrice Pavis, *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture*, trans. Loren Kruger (New York: Routledge, 1992): 148.

48. Mary Louise Hill, "Women's Time/Radio Time: Time, Translation and Transgression," *Women and Performance,* Vol. 9, No. 2 (1997): 27.

these choices to the light of day: as in the case of recording that traduces the written word to a mid place between writing and speech.

For Hill, Foreman's aesthetics suggest what might happen in the radio listener's consciousness, and so in her ideal alternative theatre.

> Foreman's work grants some insights into how a radio listener might maneuver these jumps. In the theatre, Foreman's work asks observers to become as involved as they please, perhaps latching onto one or two images that resonate for them and ignoring others. In essence, Foreman accommodates the fact that most theatre-goers do not think in a coherent narrative line.[49]

Between what a spectator sees and hears, Foreman might posit a unity that he never fulfills. By making room for the spectator's will to unify elements that resist unification, Foreman allows the "iconic" to be constantly challenged. The Ontological-Hysteric Theater permits the spectator to hold off on his or her construction of identities.

Foreman's theatre most often proved problematic for feminist spectators and critics, especially in his productions throughout the seventies that included his wife Kate Manheim as the entity Rhoda. Foreman staged Rhoda restlessly pushing against the limits of her own body/desire and her body as desired object. The twisted positions of her body and her doe-like gaze seemed the very symptoms of hysteria while Foreman's disembodied voice probed these symptoms. And, like the analysand in Lacan's analysis of the hystericization of discourse, Rhoda pushed the Other (Foreman, the audience?) "against the wall" for knowledge of herself. For some, these stagings in the formative years of Foreman's oeuvre managed to challenge iconic representations of male and female identities; for others, such as Dolan, Foreman's *mise en jeu*

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49. Hill, "Women's Time/Radio Time," 38-9.

instead reconstituted the all-seeing, all-knowing, and undivided male-subject and the female as hysterical body.

If Foreman's staging during the seventies highlighted the formation of gender identity, does it follow that his productions necessarily performed a critique? Foreman's language and precepts often seemed in agreement with second-wave feminism in his returns to hysteria as a creative force, but as Dolan demonstrates Foreman's returns in practice are problematic for the actual feminist spectator. His stage puts very real actresses through erotic and sadomasochistic paces in the name of deconstructing identity. The final chapter of this dissertation analyzes the conflicts between the theoretical and practical oppositions of Foreman's voice and body in the Rhoda plays.

1.5. The Disembodied Voice as Aural Hallucination

> I'll surprise you with a big hello, hello
> And you'll think I'm shouting from the upstairs window,
> But really
> It'll be in your OWN head.
> Foreman, *Symphony of Rats*

In the DSM-lV, the bible of psychiatry, the disembodied voice functions as one of the four topmost recognizable signs and symptoms of schizophrenia. But as an essential signifier, aural hallucinations have been long debated. Freud claimed that in hearing voices the subjectivity of the schizophrenic was "indefinite." The very fact that object voices overpower the subject's own voice and thus the subject's ability to contain otherness, was proof for Lacan that the schizophrenic was (at least in theory) treatable. If the disembodied voice is a sign of otherness, it is of the Other that resides inside all subjects.

This section identifies the central difference between Freud and Lacan's understanding of

the disembodied voice as an indicator of schizophrenia. Freud arrives at the conclusion that the patient who hears voices is not a valid subject for psychoanalysis and he thus casts the schizophrenic as unrepresentable. Lacan "brings him back into the fold." "Answering" Freud's lacunas regarding the schizophrenic, Lacan makes the diagnosis more approachable as a literary metaphor and, ultimately, more approachable for the Ontological-Hysteric Theater.

"Hallucinatory confusion" distinguishes for Freud the psychotic from the neurotic. In his analysis of Frau P.'s verbal hallucinations Freud describes hallucinations as "thoughts that had been said aloud."

> In Frau P.'s case the distortion was not so great; nevertheless, the words always had the character of diplomatic indefiniteness; the distressing allusion was usually closely hidden, the connection between particular sentences being disguised by a strange tone of voice, unusual forms of speech and the like.[50]

Whether Frau P.'s voices related harmless sentences, or recriminations by her neighbors, they were "projections" (a term first used in this context) of her own "self reproaches in regard to experiences which had a significance analogous to that of the trauma in childhood." Frau P. attributed the voices to others and distorted what was said by combining real-life dialogue, portions of a novel, and fleeting thoughts. The compromise is "between the resistance of the ego and the strength of the idea."

Just as with a hysterical symptom or the manifest content of a dream, Freud theorized verbal hallucinations as concealing unbearable knowledge (repressed memory) from

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50. Freud "Further Remarks on the Defence Neuro-Psychoses" (1896) in *Early Psycho-Analytic Writings,* trans. John Rickman (New York: Collier Books, 1963), 171.

consciousness. But, unlike the neurotic, the psychotic could not "convert" the unbearable idea into a physical symptom. If the transformation of an unbearable/rejected idea could not find its way to bodily symptoms, as it does in a neurotic subject, it would shift to disembodiment of thought and language: a much more "serious choice." For Freud, the absence of conversion in the psychotic revealed a lack of meaning and he relegates the psychotic to a world of the unspeakable, the unbearable, and the unrepresentable. "The ego rejects the unbearable idea together with its associated affect and behaves as if it never occurred to the person at all," by absenting himself as "person."[51]

For Lacan it is the speech of the schizophrenic that reveals the importance of speech of any psyche. Lacan's study of paranoia brought him to psychoanalysis and a re-reading of Freud's understanding of the "bridge" between neurosis and psychosis. In "On a Question Prior to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis," Lacan proposes that, "Not only can man's being not be understood without madness, but it would not be man's being if it did not bear madness within itself as the limit of his freedom."[52] Psychosis exposes processes and relations (to the analyst) that in neurotic patients had to be uncovered in order to be discovered, showing "à ciel ouvert" (to the light of day) the relation of the signifier to the subject, a process to which all subjects are prone. Verbal hallucinations are a prime example of the voice as object, in which the object is not hidden in the elsewhere.

Lacan regards the rearrangement of syntax that happens in the psychotic's assignment of

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51. Sigmund Freud, "The Neuro-psychoses of Defence," (1894) in *Early Psycho-Analytic Writings,* trans. John Rickman (New York: Collier Books, 1963), 78.

52. Lacan, "On a Question Prior to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis," *Écrits*, trans. Bruce Fink (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006), 479.

thoughts "elsewhere" as proof that psychotic language does not go beyond meaning any more than neurotic "unconscious" language. René Major encapsulates Lacan's formulation of this dynamic.

> Since [Lacan] thought that we are spoken when we speak, and that our speeches come to us from the Other, for him there was no longer any qualitative difference between speeches imposed by voices rising from the real and those the subject carries on by means of an internal voice. Lacan's presentation of patients was based on the axiom that there is no more madness in communicating with voices actually heard in the absence of an interlocutor, than there is in communicating with people when the essence of this communication is incomprehension.[53]

Psychosis is the *presence* of the object voice and not the absence of an observing ego. Psychosis includes those voices that we normally filter into the unconscious and makes of them "objects." Fink clarifies, "psychosis can be understood as a form of victory by the child over the Other, the child foregoing his or her advent as a divided subject so as not to submit to the Other as language."[54] If the voice of the Other is turned into an object then it has not compromised the self.

Lacan problematizes the assumption that psychosis can be defined as perceptions without objects; he focuses instead on the placement of the subject in relation to perception. Lacan explains that this placement, of the subject in her or his relationship to language, makes the

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53. René Major, "Lacan as Psychiatrist or: *Comment ne pas être fou*," *Journal of European Psychoanalysis,* No. 2, trans., Claudia Vaughn (Fall 1995-Winter 1996), accessed 21 March 2008, http://www.psychomedia.it/ Jep/number2/major.html.

54. Fink, *The Lacanian Subject,* 49.

psychotic's aural hallucinations as accessible as the neurotic's speech. "Like Freud, I hold that we must listen to the speaker, when what is at stake is a message that does not come from a subject beyond language, but from speech beyond the subject."[55] In identifying speech as the mark of the subject on language in neurotics, as well as in psychotic patients, Lacan establishes an approach in analysis that does not dismiss the language of the psychotic but instead can work with her or him by "listening."

Following a Lacanian interpretation, relational therapists and literary critics attributed importance to the content and forms of aural hallucinations. As poet and psychoanalyst, R. D. Laing was among the pioneers who combined literary and clinical approaches to schizophrenia. He believed that, "the experience and behavior that gets labeled schizophrenic is a special strategy that a person invents in order to live in an unlivable situation."[56] Hearing voices can only be thought of as pathological (and unbearable) if others perceive it as such.

A tenet in the critical approaches to schizophrenia treats it as a term to describe an aesthetic or society. Developing the case that schizophrenia is an appropriate metaphor for society, Julian Jaynes writes in *Origins of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind* that the whole of western civilization at one time possessed a schizophrenic core. The gods in Ancient Greece, he argues, were really externalizations of the consciousness prevalent at that time. Because the Greeks lacked words for consciousness and will, Jaynes writes, they also lacked such ideas and thus attributed inner voices to external bodies. According to Jaynes, the right brain sent signals to the left-brain that was part of our phylogenic development and so, he

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55. Lacan, *Écrits,* 478.

56. R.D. Laing, *The Politics of Experience* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1967), 172.

concluded, the schizophrenic is at an earlier stage of language development.[57]

Lacan, Laing, Jameson, and Jaynes had in common that they sought to recuperate the schizophrenic from her or his position as the alienated individual cut off from the world and each proposed that this was possible through recuperating disembodied voices. Providing a genealogy of the literary history of schizophrenia, Jaynes gives additional credence to schizophrenia as a descriptive term. The publication of *Origins* ushered in other literary studies that emphasized the "universal" aspects of voice hearing and schizophrenia, often identifying these as a purer form of humanity, tied to primitive man.

Critics of the universalizing of schizophrenia claim that, despite good intentions, such formulations do not allow the psychotic subject any more dignity than those that altogether reject the schizophrenic. In *Madness and Modernism* Louis A. Sass writes, "The effect of such theorizing is to welcome the schizophrenic back into the human fold, but only in the subordinate position of the child."[58] Sass reverses such formulations, to propose schizophrenia in neither positive nor negative opposition to the rational, but rather as a "hyper-reflexivity" that also stands as a symbol of our culture. Judge Daniel Paul Schreber, for example, was not devoid of an "observing ego," Sass argues convincingly; instead, his ego was so vigilant that it resembled 24 hour surveillance: his soul, a "panoptical" machine. Like Lacan, Sass holds that psychosis adds a presence (of surveillance by the Other) rather than an absence.

As the ultimate expression of schizophrenia's transformation from a largely psycho-physiological phenomenon to a literary one, Ivan Leudar and Philip Thomas demonstrate in

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57. Julian Jaynes, *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977).

58. Louis Sass, *Madness and Modernism* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 20.

Voices of Reason, Voices of Insanity the use of literary criticism as a form of treatment. They return to the cases of famous voice-hearers of Socrates, Achilles, Schreber, and Anthony Smith to evaluate whether verbal hallucinations had been (or ought to have been) perceived as indication of insanity.[59] They conclude that when examined within their context these voices proved constructive to their hearers. Socrates, for example, spoke to his own voices (his "Daemons") and used them, in much the same way that relational therapists advocate, as a means of "self-talk" to guide him. The lack of consciousness observed by Jaynes in *The Iliad*, they argue, is really a different type of consciousness, one informed by social action and community. Once we understand Socrates 's daemons in the context of the ancient world, his voices bind him to place.

Leudar and Thomas advocate the literary practice of contextualization in and as clinical practice: to test whether a reiteration of place and subjectivity can affect voice hearers positively. Thomas chronicles his treatment of a voice-hearer in which the analyst gives a hearing to inner voices, casting them not as feared or unwanted voices but mediating voices enlisted in the integration of the subject.

Throughout the history of the Ontological-Hysteric Theater, Foreman engaged the spectator in messages that deliberately contradicted one another, known in psychoanalytic terminology as the "double bind."

While I might not employ this strategy to drive people clinically crazy, I do find it useful to employ externalized double binds in my plays, because the frustrations they create

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59. Ivan Leudar and Philip Thomas, *Voices of Reason, Voices of Insanity* (London: Routledge, 2000).

demagnetizes the spectator from normal avenues of conceptualization.[60]

Directing the actor to perform contradictory signals with his or her body and voice, Foreman in turn directed the spectator beyond "normal avenues." An actor contradicted his or her articulated "motivations" or intentions with, for example, a passive facial expression, a position of the body, or a tone of voice. Foreman directed the actor to perform messages to contradict other messages in order to prod the spectator on to "demagnetize" her or his perceptions.

Although Foreman filled his stage with disembodied voices from the first Ontological-Hysteric production, only in later productions did he engage specifically with the poetics of schizophrenia to replace the poetics hysteria staged via Manheim's body and his disembodied voice.[61] In post-Kate Manheim plays, Foreman writes characters that actually "hear" voices as his most "human" characters. In *Symphony of Rats* (1986), the President communicates with otherworldly beings. Nietzsche's aural hallucinations in *Bad Boy Nietzsche!*, which are proof of his madness, make him human, as well as an *enfant terrible* of rhetoric. Disembodied voices in Foreman's theatre do not always point to aural hallucinations, but when his characters suffer from aural hallucinations they are privileged in that they are better conditioned to live in society within a state of ambiguity, as both an "I" and a "not-I."

The third section of the final chapter demonstrates Foreman's leap to the strategies of schizophrenia in the mid-eighties from the strategies of hysteria and normal neurosis and the ways in which this leap altered his staging of disembodied voices.

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60. Foreman, *Unbalancing Acts,* 8.

61. Foreman, interview with the author, New York, 24 September 24 2010.

Conclusion

This chapter has traced the genealogy of disembodied voices in early dynamic psychiatry and psychoanalysis and suggested links to Foreman's Ontological-Hysteric Theater, building toward the central argument of the dissertation: that Foreman's theatre fits within a genealogy of the disembodied voices of hysteria and the historical and neo-avant-gardes. Whereas Charcot put the hysteric before audiences to make visible the origins of the disease, Freud revealed his "discovery" of the unconscious while relegating schizophrenia and hysteria to the unrepresentable. Lacan took on speech directly, pointing to disembodied voices in the voice of the Other. Despite the length of the century and the psychoanalytic theories that have replaced one another, the dynamics of doctor and patient at Salpêtrière, intensified by the separation of voice and body, which Charcot already represented in theatrical terms, will appear throughout the avant-gardes and the neo-avant-gardes to inform an acting style and actual staging

The excitement provoked by the theatrical hysteria of Salpêtrière remains in the intermingling of psychoanalysis with performance. The poetics of hysteria and of schizophrenia, which are translated to the stage through the disembodied voice, gives Foreman access to that excitement. In Foreman's *Symphony of Rats,* the disembodied voice humanizes the otherwise remote President of the United States who hears voices. In Foreman's Rhoda plays, the disembodied voice sounds at times as it were engaging in a fair challenge with Rhoda's knowledge, which is not a mind-knowledge but an intuitive, body-knowledge. Yet, the disembodied voices of Foreman's theatre cannot help but appear to imprison the naked female bodies onstage. Foreman's scenarios in the Rhoda plays have often been read as feminist nightmares: a naked Manheim travels through the universe as little more than a composite of projections. Foreman's defense that the female body is the central preoccupation of western art,

from which we have not escaped indicates that he is conscious of the impression that this staging has made on his critics; he even sounds in *Pain(t)*, for example, as if he were addressing them directly. The hysterical behavior of the actors' bodies onstage in lieu of female characters unraveling their secretly hysterical personas might even be thought of as a form of liberation from narrative, called for by Cixous. If the naked body on Foreman's stage stills narrative and catches the spectator in her or his own objectifying gaze, how does the (almost always) male disembodied voice confirm, distance, or contrast with that stasis?

The next chapter demonstrates that a theatrical tradition, which was crystallized at Salpêtrière, comes down via the avant-garde's involvement in psychoanalysis. If in the Realist theatre, the hysteric was a character who *represented* excesses that were contained by the narrative, in the avant-garde theatre the hysteric provoked excesses that exploded narrative. Foreman's theatre follows in this tradition, as the final chapter shows: his world attacks its own walls, from the lettering on the sets and voices pumped through the speakers to the program notes that promise to explain.

Chapter Two: "Thought is Made in the Mouth": The Avant-Garde's Disembodied Voices.

> It's a kind of MUSIC that erases the act as meaningful. Turning language into a kind of music that erases the act as meaningful. Theater of nonacts. Speech act as nonact also.
>
> Foreman, *Lava*.

This chapter traces a genealogy of disembodied voices of the historical avant-garde that appear in Foreman's Ontological-Hysteric productions: amongst others, surrealist non-sequitors, dada wordplay, and futurist typographies. In Foreman's productions, recorded voices repeat phrases until they become "a kind of music," and typographies invariably paper the walls of his stage. In his essays and manifestos, he announces his intent to transform bourgeois poetics into gold, but also to remove himself from the fray to pursue "Speech act as nonact." Foreman aligns himself with modernist autonomy *and* avant-garde aggressiveness. Critics offer Foreman's impatient signifying from one movement to another as proof that his theatre is Postmodern.[1]

Foreman frequently does the work of placing his oeuvre in its aesthetic context. He explains, for example, in a *Performing Arts Journal* 1994 survey that asks artists to reflect on their place in the avant-garde, that his work has been modernist, never postmodernist, and most often avant-garde.[2] He distinguishes one from the other by his own treatment of the dissociated consciousness, as formalized in one of modernism's most oft-quoted lines, "The center does not

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1. For descriptions of Foreman's work as postmodern see Herbert Blau, *Take Up the Bodies: Theater at the Vanishing Point* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985); Jacqueline Martin, *The Voice in Modern Theatre* (London: Routledge, 1991); Nick Kaye, *Postmodernism and Performance* (New York: Macmillian, 1994).

2. Richard Foreman in "Ages of the Avant-Garde," *PAJ*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (January 1994): 9-57. Almost two-dozen other artists were invited to respond to Marranca's query.

hold." In William Butler Yeats's famous Post-World-War I poem, "The Second Coming" (1919), recognition of the abyss provokes a foreboding and terror of an imminent apocalypse. It is anxiety in the face of things falling apart that "generates," Foreman writes, "all our constructions and inventiveness." As a modernist, Foreman strips bare the dissociated consciousness to reveal the naked abyss. As an avant-gardist, he echoes the abyss aggressively. Foreman rejects any association with postmodernism on the grounds that it "dances the dance over the abyss…without paying homage to the terror of that abyss."[3]

We must not accept Foreman's self-analysis at face value, but perhaps his rhetorical gestures tell more about where to place him. In speaking to a prompt on the avant-garde, Foreman has directed his reader to Yeats's poem (often considered the very expression of the "spirit" of high modernism) as the constant against which modernism, postmodernism, and the avant-garde may be measured. Noting that they all converge on the disassociated consciousness, he draws the reader's attention away from differences and to the object of his own relentless return. Foreman "attacks" the disassociated consciousness from different perspectives. He distinguishes between these perspectives with broad strokes: the former consists of an aggressive echoing, the latter a stripping bare. At the end of the essay, Foreman resolves the tension by "allowing" that he is (or that he is perceived by audiences as) avant-garde.

The gestures that Foreman performs above form the backbone of this chapter, which traces a genealogy of the disembodied voice that ties the Ontological-Hysteric Theater to the avant-garde. The disembodied voice, which functions as a structure of the psyche in Foreman's productions, is a staging that is audible throughout the historical avant-gardes. This chapter identifies its staging in symbolist, futurist, dada, and surrealist texts in relationship to discourses

3. Foreman, "Ages of the Avant-Garde," 15.

of hysteria. Always already disavowed, the disembodied voice appears in a variety of forms: staged in symbolist theatre as no body, in dada performance as a fragmented body, and in futurist poetics as an inanimate object.

Foreman's pursuit of the voice with no body brings him again and again to the intersections of modernism and the avant-garde.[4] Where the disembodied voice arises in critical discourses, it troubles distinctions between the avant-garde and modernism; even when the sharpest minds in literary criticism try to address it, they become blurred. When Clement Greenberg refers to Mallarmé as one amongst those, "certain poets who are more radical than others, leaving aside those poets who have tried to compose poetry in pure sound alone," he leaves unexamined those "radical" ones.[5] While Renato Poggioli references automatic writing, "dream poetry," and psychoanalysis in *The Theory of the Avant-Garde* and describes automatic writing as a conscious staging of the unconscious, he resolves that these do not make up an aesthetic. Tracing the disembodied voice as a device in this chapter reveals how modernism and the avant-garde have long since "worked together," to assert autonomy *and* to transform.[6] While the greater focus of this chapter (and this dissertation) is on the disembodied voice in the avant-garde than in modernism, when the disembodied voice is staged, it blurs distinctions.

Setting oppositions, Foreman gestures towards the ideologies of American Post-War art

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4. Foreman, "A Conversation with Richard Foreman," Charles Bernstein, *TDR*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (Summer 1992): 103-30. Foreman tells Bernstein that he pursues a Keatsian "negative capability" and a dispersed self, a liberated consciousness.

5. Clement Greenberg, ""Avant-Garde and Kitsch," *Partisan Review*, Vol. 6, No. 5 (Fall 1939): 34-49.

6. Ástráður Eysteinsson, *The Concept of Modernism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 147. Eysteinsson suggests they can be re-acquainted under new conditions.

criticism: the context in which modernism and the avant-garde solidified into certain terms and made the charge of dissolving their differences risky. But recently critics have returned to the problem of reacquainting the avant-garde and modernism. In *A Singular Modernity*, Jameson focuses on this point of convergence largely through his problematization of absolute autonomy.[7] He re-visits the modernist's distance from the world as agonism, like that of the avant-garde artist, always modified by some attachment to the world. However, Jameson's critical focus has long favored modernism, and in *A Singular Modernity* he barely mentions the avant-garde, only seemingly nodding to it with familiar terminology. In *Stagefright*, Puchner revisits the differences of the avant-garde and modernism with terminology that better reflects how they are interwoven.[8] His terms, "pro-theatricalism" and "anti-theatricalism" suggest that the story was as complex for modernism, which had its own political urges, as it was for the avant-garde, which manifested an elitist autonomy and strove also to be accepted. Both rejected the theatre, namely the actor's body in the service of mimesis and both retained the theatrical. But the avant-garde reacted in its rejection, Puchner explains, with pro-theatricalism, a redoubled theatricality enlarged by uber-marionettes and extended by manifestos. Modernism responded with anti-theatricalism, re-orienting the space in which the actor formerly stood by filling it with absence. Puchner's terms are particularly applicable to the disembodied voice of this dissertation, as an impossible staging that approximates the unconscious in the avant-gardes and the poetics of hysteria.

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7. Jameson, *A Singular Modernity: Essay on the Ontology of the Present* (New York: Verso, 2002).

8. Martin Puchner, *Stagefright: Modernism, Anti-Theatricality, and Drama* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002).

Foreman's theatre returns to the staging of the dissociated consciousness at the end of the nineteenth century in hysteria and the historical avant-garde, at a point when the avant-garde is deeply immersed in the world's "radical cultural changes." [9] The body is gradually disappearing from the theory and treatment of hysteria, as it is from the stage. Erika Fischer-Lichte "surmises the causes" of its disappearance as threats by the industrial revolution that provoked a "crisis in identity."[10] The convergence of the "dissolution" of the subject's body as the focus in psychoanalytic discourses and in theatre would eventually free character from its captivity to the illusion of a whole speaking subject. This is lauded by Roland Barthes as the end of "bourgeois writing" and bemoaned by Jacqueline Martin in *Voice in the Modern Theatre* as an indication of the loss of meaning.[11] After an end to rhetoric, it is with the disembodied voice that the freed and fragmented character speaks.

Outlining the sites to which Foreman returns, this chapter demonstrates the staging that overlapped through burgeoning psychoanalysis and the early historical avant-garde. The two create an overlap that Julia Kristeva describes in her early formulations of the problematic.

> Freud himself considered writers as his predecessors. Avant-garde movements of the twentieth century, more or less unaware of Freud's discovery, propounded a practice, and sometimes even a knowledge of language and its subject, that kept pace with, when they

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9. Erika Fischer-Lichte, *Shadow and the Gaze of Theatre: A European Perspective* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1997), 4.

10. Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The History of European Drama and Theatre* (London: Routledge, 2001), 236.

11. Roland Barthes, *Writing Degree Zero,* trans. Annette Lavers and Colin Smith (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967); Jacqueline Martin, *Voice in the Modern Theatre* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1991).

did not precede Freudian breakthroughs.[12]

This chapter looks closely at that moment of overlap: when the historical avant-garde spoke to, against, and/or about the spectacle of hysteria, directly or indirectly, and when dynamic psychiatry likewise staged spectacles of disassociated consciousness. Symbolists and dynamic psychiatrists, for example, commented in the same issues of *Revue Philosophique*, on matters of somnambulism, the contents of dreams, and the unconscious. In the spectacle of hysteria and in symbolist theory the disembodied voice was an amalgamation of staging/text and presence/absence, and it acted as a resistance to the performing human body.

In mapping the genealogy of the disembodied voice in the historical avant-gardes, this chapter reveals "constructive omissions" that indicate the places to which Foreman's writing and productions return.[13] Constructive omissions, according to Hal Foster, are those areas where the avant-garde ostensibly "failed," or left a lacuna. If the historical avant-gardes that are traced in this chapter have to look forward to the future to be completed, so this chapter points out the places that the neo avant-gardes and Foreman will respond to lacunae. In some respects, Foreman repeats the historical avant-garde's staging of disembodied voices in, for example his uses of automatic writing experiments. But he maintains the "dispersed self" as a critique of the avant-garde's anxiety at the loss of self in which the disembodied voice could be read as a reaffirmation of the ego.[14] Foreman's staging is sometimes a realization of the disembodied

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12. Julia Kristeva, "The Ethics of Linguistics" (1974), in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art,* ed. Leon Roudiez, and trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 26.

13. Hal Foster, *Return of the Real*, 4.

voices of the historical avant-garde and often their negation.

2.1 Preface to Essential Concepts 1: The Hysterical Mouth

The emergence of the disembodied voice in the avant-garde is not an anomaly; there are historical antecedents. As Stephen Connor demonstrates in his history of ventriloquism, *Dumbstruck*, the trajectory reaches at least as far into the past as the ritual at Delphi, the site of a gaseous crevice; here, the changing bodies of Pythias served as conveyers of the ambiguous truths of the Oracle, speaking with temporary voices as if filled with originary ones. In the tenth century, the first liturgical drama (or trope), "Quem Quaeritis?" Jesus's disembodied voice marked the absence of his body.[15] While Judeo-Christianity shared an awe of the disembodied voice with the Delphic Oracle, it set such traditions that proposed truth as outside the body as antithetical to its own traditions.[16]

In these two historical antecedents, the voice without body proved useful to Christianity, according to Anthony Kubiak, to represent a distance from "paganism" and as a strategy to

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14. Foreman, "14 Things I Tell Myself when i fall into the trap of making the writing imitate 'experience,'" in *Reverberation Machines: The Later Plays and Essays* (Barrytown: Station Hill Press, Inc., 1985), 210.

15. Anthony Kubiak, *Stages of Terror: Terrorism, Ideology and Coercion as Theatre History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 51. The empty sepulcher and the voice of the risen Jesus has been a source of fascination in portrayals of the Resurrection—how to represent what is unfathomable? It is only by shock that this is possible. And that reminds gatherers to take from this spectacle his word and spread it through the world.

16. "A Western tradition which associated prophecy and profane arts of divination with ventriloquism, which is to say speaking with the voice of another or the voice of another speaking through oneself." Stephen Connor, *Dumbstruck: A Cultural History of Ventriloquism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 49.

provoke terror and awe in the listener. When, in the *Quem Quaeritis*, the Angel revealed to the three Marys who had come in search of Jesus's body that he was not there, the Angel did so partly by *showing* emptiness; unwrapping the cloths, he thus marked the Resurrection. But it is the sudden shift by the actor who sang as the Angel to Jesus's disembodied voice that provoked a shock, which reminded the parishioners to carry emptiness within them as and well after they left the Church. For Kubiak, the shocking absence/presence in the *Quem Quaeritis* represents a reminder to the spectator of his own and of the theatre's potential disappearance. Disembodied voices maintain this fearsome power until the Enlightenment, when science refuted centuries of superstitions and possessions. In the late nineteenth century, on the precipice of a myriad of recording inventions, threats to the supremacy of the living or "whole" subject reanimate the disembodied voice. A proliferation of disembodied voices follows and produces in its wake, Connor shows, a gradual loss of terror. Ears become habituated and what we experience is hardly a charge, but only, Connor writes, our sense of the "loss of a loss."[17]

With the advent of the late nineteenth century, there is a convergence of nascent recording technology with what would become the discovery of the unconscious.[18] With the

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17. Stephen Connor, *Dumbstruck*, 411.

18. Hysteria, the discovery of the unconscious, and the invention of recording are frequently intimately linked in literature, not only by chronology but also by imaginary. The dramaturgy of Sarah Ruhl's 2008 play, *In the Next Room (or the Vibrator Play*), gathers all these threads together. Hysteria and electricity are the author's specific objects, while the unconscious stands outside on the threshold. In the "other room" mid 19th century American doctor uses his home to treat hysterics with the early vibrator, causing surges in his own home's lighting. Meanwhile, in the parlor women live their lives (fall in love, play piano) and comment on Edison's new invention, on all things related to electricity and hysteria. Though they have a rough and distant knowledge of the last, the women, especially, demonstrate its most well known symptoms: fits, pains, or auto-hypnotic states provoked by weaving and knitting. In the Foundry's 2009 production of Ariana Reines's *Telephone*, the three characters that "hear" voices are Alexander Graham Bell, Thomas Watson, and the "madwoman," Miss St.

invention of the phonoautograph, which took the popular imagination in 1878 amid a flurry of other recording inventions, Thomas Edison reinvested terror and awe in a voice without a body. Advertised as a means of retaining a morsel of the deceased, Edison's recordings provoked both fascination and dread. Mark Twain complained that the phonoautograph not only failed to add anything to his work but also corrupted the work by association.[19] The implications of Edison's "voices of the dead" lead us beyond the territory of this chapter into the next when such voices proliferate. The present chapter depends on the elaboration of the disembodied voice *before* it can be fully realized by technology: that is, before Connor's "loss of a loss."

Gaining access to the unconscious, psychologists seemed able to separate out the parts of the split psyche. As Jonathan Marshall demonstrates in "Nervous Dramaturgy," Charcot's staging simultaneously introduced audiences to the excesses of madness and contagion in his spectacles as it offered them a modicum of safety and distance.[20] Janet proffered a double consciousness and a voice that, mostly hidden from the conscious mind, could be retrieved to tell secrets that the self kept from the self. The staging of disembodied voices in the avant-garde and early modernism that converged with those produced by the spectacles of hysteria came to stand

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19. Mark Twain, cited in John M. Picker, "The Victorian Aura of the Recorded Voice," *New Literary History*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Summer 2001): 769-86. Picker traces the great variety of writers' responses to technology of the phonograph.

20. Jonathan Marshall, "Dynamic Medicine and Theatrical Form at the *fin de siècle*: A formal analysis of Dr Jean-Martin Charcot's pedagogy, 1862–1893," *Modernism/Modernity*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (January 2008): 131–53. Marshall likewise notes the divisions of speech and spectacle and suggests that the non-theatrical ("absence") of Charcot's speech was a means of making palatable the discourses of hysteria (without fear of contagion). Marshall attends to Charcot's "dramaturgy" at Salpetrière, but he does not link the influence of his staging to the avant-garde theatre.

for an anxiety at the loss of the whole subject, of the abyss of the disassociated consciousness. The following two sections focus on the convergences in the shared imaginaries via theoretical likenesses, as well as on actual exchanges of symbolist anti-theatricality with the anti-mimetic staging of dynamic psychiatry.

A number of critics propose different relationships between psychoanalysis and the avant-garde. Poggioli cites Lionel Trilling's belief that both were the culmination of Romanticism.[21] Kristeva pinpoints a common staging of affect in psychoanalysis and literature.[22] In *Lacan & Co.,* Elisabeth Roudinesco sidesteps the problem of convergences by examining, instead, divergences.

> Although French writers acknowledged Freud's importance before the world of medicine, the notion of the precedence of the "literary channel" over the "medical channel" remains relative. Starting in 1914, in fact, an interest in psychoanalysis could be found in a large sector of French thought. In that sense, precedence is less important than the divergences through which the two modes of implantation of Freud's doctrine contrasted with each other. The literary and medical channels were part of a single process in which resistance to theories from Vienna was the sign of the effective progress they were making.[23]

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21. Lionel Trilling, cited in Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde,* trans. Gerald Fitzgerald (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 192.

22. Kristeva, *Desire in Language,* 27.

23. Elisabeth Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan & Co,* trans. Jeffrey Mehlman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 3. The historical convergences have enjoyed a resurgent interest in among other works, Mark S. Micale, ed., *The Mind of Modernism*: *Medicine, Psychology and the Cultural Arts in Europe and America, 1880-1940* (Stanford: Stanford

In France the oppositions between literature and psychoanalysis were less pronounced than between French thought (including literature and psychoanalysis) and Freud. Roudinesco identifies the culmination of the conceptual understanding of the psyche in André Breton and Louis Aragon, who "were performing as rigorous theoreticians."[24]

Apart from the views of these critics, I argue that the discovery of the unconscious and the avant-garde shared a staging: of a voice that seemed to know more than the writer, that betrayed an attempt to access that voice, and was an *impulse* to formulate the psyche as if without body.

2.1.2 Preface to Essential Concepts 2: Hysteric Aesthetics.

The anti-theatrical theatre attacks the real body/voice of the actor, and describes (in the sense of outlining in the air) his psyche. It is a battle in the nineteenth century that, Jonas Barish writes, "reflects an abiding tension in our nature as social beings," which appears onstage in

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University Press, 2003); Patrick Campbell and Adrian Kear, eds. *Psychoanalysis and Performance* (London: Routledge, 2001) and *The Dada Seminars* Washington: D.A.P., 2005). Psychological discourses have been applied to the problematics of individual works or movements. In Christine Poggi's "Folla/ Follia: Futurism and the Crowd," the author has used the theories of Gustave le Bon—extremely popular in F. T. Marinetti's time--to understand a disdain towards the crowd, that was also the target of the Futurist address (and whom Adorno has considered in looking at Hitler). In "See: We are All Neurasthenics!" Brigid Doherty applies Walter Benjamin's concept of the traumatophile to the Dadaist manner of re-presentation in the midst of its anti-art rhetoric. Michelle Bonduelle and Toby Gelfand, "Hysteria Behind the Scenes: Jane Avril at the Salpêtrière," *Journal of the History of the Neuroscience*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (April 1999): 35-42. Bonduelle and Gelfand trace Avril's life at Salpêtrière. Her accounts in her diary are useful, they argue, from the perspective of an objective (albeit young) observer more so than as a hysteric.

24. Roudinesco, 7. Roudinesco is referring here to the 1928 essay, "Le Cinquantenaire de l'hystérie, 1876-1928," by Aragon and Breton. The essay is discussed in this chapter's section on Surrealism.

the form of a "psychomania."[25] Barish's psychomania hints at the bourgeoning "dynamic psychiatry" that put "man's" theatricality on display. At Charcot's world-famous demonstrations at Salpêtrière, a psychomania was played out in excess through the hysteric in ostensibly unmediated form. Charcot pursued a path to a lesion in the brain that he hypothesized as the truth behind hysterical symptoms. To remove signs of performance in hysteria, a disease that was historically associated with performance, that prevented this truth from revealing itself, Charcot, paradoxically, created a dramaturgy of separate visual and aural signs. On display was Charcot's dramaturgy of the self at war with its own theatricality. This section demonstrates the parallel development of the hysteric aesthetic in psychoanalysis and the avant-garde as a mark of that war.

A hysteric aesthetic seemed to evolve "organically" from the stardom of hysterics in the late nineteenth century. Hysterics were practically media stars who appealed to a wide and disparate audience: as the main attraction for audiences of 500 or more that came from "tout Paris" to Charcot's Leçons du Mardi and Friday lectures and as the "pin-ups" in the *Iconographies photographiques de la Salpêtrière,* which advertised to the public at large the beauty of hysterics (to which, as we will see, the avant-garde paid homage). In turn, the public emulated a whole set of gazes, poses, and dress associated with Charcot's hysterics.

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25. Jonas Barish, *The Anti-Theatrical Prejudice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 349. Anti-theatricality has rarely been absolute, as Barish demonstrates. Passions against the theatre often intermingled with passions for the theatre. The two sometimes even lodged themselves in the same body. In St. Augustine, love for theatre intermingled with prejudice against it, cohabitating and famously torturing him. Elsewhere, Barish indicates the (unintended) productive force of censorship of the stage for theatre. In seventeenth century French non-monopoly theatres, for example, restrictions fueled numerous inventions in what Frederick Brown in *Theater and Revolution* calls "the speechless tradition."

Hysteric performances made their way into cabarets and cafés. In "From Charcot to Charlot," Rae Beth Gordon outlines the grimaces, shock, and nervousness in performances described by observers of the late nineteenth century.[26] Gordon suggests that gestures witnessed or gleaned in demonstrations of hysterics at Salpêtrière and in Charcot's photographic iconography became a vocabulary of acting styles that would appear in the Cabarets and in the early cinema of Chaplin and Eisenstein. Yvette Guilbert (painted by Lautrec and influential to the avant-garde), a self-named *diseuse*, represents a crossover of the hysteric aesthetic. She cultivated a disassociated performance style, telling stories and singing with "the ghost of a voice."[27] And others, such as Jane Avril, also carried traces of Charcot's spectacle into Cabarets, the home, according to Laurence Senelick, for "the most exciting innovations in twentieth century performance art."[28] In the Cabaret, an aestheticized hysteria and early avant-garde converged.

To Naturalism's "metaphorization" of disease, hysteria is fertile material as a mark of the "real" in late nineteenth century Paris. Naturalist authors appropriate the characters of the female hysteric as "readymade" personifications of heredity/influence. Emile Zola's *Nana* stood, for example, for degeneration: the progressive poisoning of a family line by the sins of the father. A

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26. Rae Beth Gordon, **"**From Charcot to Charlot: Unconscious Imitation and Spectatorship in French Cabaret and Early Cinema," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (Spring 2001): 515-49.

27. Gunold, cited in Laurence Senelick, ed., *Cabaret Performance: Europe, 1890-1920* (New York: PAJ Publications, 1989), 39. Freud met Guilbert when he had been urged by Madame Charcot to go see her perform at l'Eldorado. His friendship with her, established more than thirty years later, had been impeded by a psychoanalytic interpretation that Freud offered Guilbert of her performance and that she rejected.

28. Ibid., 9.

favorite in Naturalist fiction, degeneration had a proponent in Charcot. The lesion that he theorized as the cause of hysteria was left there, he thought, by degeneration. That is, a psychic ground was sown for hysteria by a pre-condition. Charcot himself served as a model for fictional characters, as the charismatic artist/doctor. Additionally, authors of Naturalist fiction mirrored in their writing what Charcot had lauded in his craft: the artist's genius for observation and the scientist's knowledge for diagnosing and categorizing. To give a greater level of authenticity to their literature, authors made frequent reference to the terminology/nosology of Charcot's scientific texts.[29] Realist dramas applied the insights of "dynamic psychiatry" to the psychological narrative. Namely, the character of the hysteric became an object for both audience and playwright to study and understand. As Elin Diamond shows in "Realism and Hysteria," the audience participated like students of causes, formulating their opinions of the *mal* of hysteric patients and characters by confirming what they heard in public debates over hysteria and in the plays that featured hysterics. Popular notions of the disease evolved from a debate that entered and crossed the stage.[30]

Hysteria was source material for Naturalists and Realists, but in the same period a

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29. In the wildly popular narrative of the epoch's romance with hysteria, *Trilby,* the threat of contagion/anxiety of influence is combined with the contemporary views of the hysteric. As a gamine, Trilby's sexuality is commensurate with her susceptibility to induction. In turn, her character spreads the contagion of hysteria both within the novel and in the world at large. The villainous hypnotizer, Svengali, seems to be a synthesis of the antipathies the public felt towards Charcot. Driven by his hunger for fame and influence, he turns Trilby into his performing object. He is in the end, however, as susceptible as the masses to her unconscious seduction/induction. When she ceases to perform, he dies. Georges du Maurier, *Trilby* (New York: International Book Publishing Company, 1894).

30. Elin Diamond, "Realism and Hysteria: Toward a Feminist Mimesis," *Discourse*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Fall/Winter 1990-91): 59-91.

hysteric aesthetic evolved that was neither imitation nor a library of curiosities. The hysteric aesthetic that evolved would become, instead, one that insofar as it approximated a staging of the psyche, resembled the anti-mimetic of Charcot's juxtaposition of morbid and living symptoms, the automatic writing of Pierre Janet's medium-hysterics and his theories of double-consciousness, and Freud's formulations of the symptom, the patient, and her narrative. The aesthetics of hysteria would be found in the avant-garde and modernist theatre through the device of the disembodied voice at war with the mimetic body.

The explorers of the unconscious, Charcot and Freud built their understanding of hysteria from visual and literary examples. Charcot organized the symptoms of hysteria via the long history of painting of the disease, and situated hypnosis and hysteria beside one another; even as he rejected mimesis, Charcot demonstrated with this dramaturgy the centrality of representation to hysteria. Freud drew, in his theories and practices, on literature with which he built on the implications of Charcot's demonstrations to show, Roudinesco explains, that "hysteria itself was a distorted work of art."[31] Initially, Charcot and Freud used the arts to develop their concept of the hysteric; and then, when the avant-garde aestheticized hysteria, artists like Maeterlinck were able to use this aesthetic to further understanding of the unconscious, in ways that neither Charcot nor Freud could have anticipated. In nineteenth century journals, such as *La Revue Philosophique*, we find essays and short stories by Maurice Maeterlinck on somnambulism side by side with Janet's findings from congresses on mediums and hysterics. Ten years before Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, Maeterlinck even theorized his own *psychologie des songes*.[32]

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31. Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan & Co.*, 6.

32. Maurice Maeterlinck, *Introduction à une psychologie des songes et autres écrits*

This overlap extends to tentative examinations of the influence of psychoanalytic theory on literature and theatre. The historical avant-garde spoke to, against, and/or about the spectacle of hysteria—directly or indirectly—and with the disembodied voice staged spectacles of the disassociated consciousness.

Even those artists who begrudged the territory of the imaginary that they shared with the psychoanalytic unconscious participated in the psychoanalytic development of the hysteric. The early avant-gardes were engaged in describing and naming it. While Maeterlinck adamantly distinguished his understanding of the unconscious from what he called "psychologie élémentaire," (or pop psychology) he also sometimes referred to *l'inconscient*.[33] Marinetti launched attacks against psychoanalysis, which nevertheless had a significant presence in his writing. From the Symbolists to the Surrealists and throughout the neo-avant-garde, the unconscious would be sought through practices and variations on automatic writing.

2.1.3 Preface to Essential Concepts 3: Symbolism's Anti-theatricality and Its Productive Forces.

The Romantics suggested a secret in the silence, by the inspirited, in which the body was a distraction from word, thought, and speech. In Charles Lamb's formulation of the theatre of the mind, "On the Tragedies of Shakespeare" (1811), the imagination of the reader produces a stage that is far superior to the physical one. Lamb opposes the intellectual to the sensory, to the eye and ear that are easily seduced. When he writes of reading or the reader, as opposed to the spectator, he describes the mind, the intellect, and morality. He stops short of suggesting that the

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1886-1896 (Bruxelles: Éditions Labor, 1985). Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* appeared almost a decade later in 1901.

33. Maeterlinck, "Essais," *Nouvelle Revue*, Vol. 94, No. 17 (May 1895): 509.

plays of Shakespeare never be performed, but damns performance as an inevitable diminishment of the plays themselves. They cannot help but replace in our mind written works. That Lamb's statement presented an enticing challenge to the century of poets to come is well known. How might a theatre be staged that protects, rather than diminishes, the text? Lamb hinted at an extant interiority in contrast with the body's exteriority.

Another condition that preceded the Symbolists and contributed to their rejection of the theatre was the mid-nineteenth century stage's pandering to audiences. The Symbolists' inherited "inwardness" converged with the contemporary conditions of the theatre, which was designed, according to Erika Fischer–Lichte, to distract the spectator from his threatened existence. The spectator went to the theatre not out of duty or pleasure, but to satisfy, she writes, "an addiction."[34] For the artist, a rejection of theatre and audience alike was the only dignified response to such addiction because, Barish writes, "any self-respecting artist who tried to conform to the requirements of the theatergoing public would probably have had to sell his soul in the process."[35]

Those symbolist poets who did not entirely abandon the stage discovered solutions via their own anti-theatricality. Unlike those for whom theatre had become impossible, symbolist poets wrestled with ever-widening gaps between text and spectacle, or poetry and theatre.[36] In

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34. Fischer-Lichte, *The History of European Drama and Theater,* 244.

35. Barish, 334.

36. Frantisek Deak, *Symbolist Theater: The Formation of an Avant-Garde* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 123. Deak disagrees with Barthes's position that late nineteenth century authors were at absolute odds with a bourgeois culture. For Deak, this is proved false by the Symbolist's will to connect with the society and use all that it has to offer, which, for Deak, qualifies symbolist theatre as avant-garde. Further, Deak disagrees with Barthes's reading of the death of the author and Mallarmé's will to disappear. Deak maintains

Symbolist Theater, Frantisek Deak proposes that stage-worthy solutions evolved from "negative commentary."[37]

> Initially this commentary was necessary because most of the contemporary theater and the new symbolist poetic were incompatible. These negative commentaries are also important because each of them, while discussing the "impossibility of theater" proposes ways in which difficulties can be overcome.[38]

Hidden within these commentaries are solutions, Deak contends, that were articulated even if what these poets yearned for what was not yet possible. Because they yearned within the context of artistic communities, there retreats were never complete. Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, who consciously rejected dramatic structure, represented the center of an idolizing community; Baudelaire struggled, Deak argues, to link literary elements to the popular stage.[39] For Deak, even Mallarmé, who touted his distance from the world, was concerned with the theatre as public space. His Tuesday Salons were evidence of this concern, as were his repeated attempts to make *Hérodiade* satisfying to his admirers at the Théâtre-Français. Deak shows how the "failures" of Villiers, Baudelaire, and Mallarmé in relating to a community give birth to the solution that Symbolists eventually arrived at in the "theatre of the voice."

Mallarmé's failure to find stage-worthy solutions led to his retreat from the theatre, which

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that Mallarmé was very concerned with society, as evidenced by his Tuesday circle and the role he cast for himself in *Le Livre*.

37. Deak, 45.

38. Ibid., 25.

39. Ibid., 22.

in turn produced solutions that existed solely on the page, but ultimately would lay the foundations of the enduring innovations in the avant-garde and modernist theatre. Puchner demonstrates in *Stagefright* that Mallarmé's anti-theatrical solution of stage directions, based in the setting of diegesis against mimesis, or the voice against the body is the most important of these.

> Stage directions do not have to be abolished; they can be used to reinvent dramatic form. Once a play is radically divorced from the stage and addressed to readers only, stage directions are no longer an awkward appendix to the primary text; they are free to realize themselves as a space for an independent narrative voice that not only describes hypothetical actors and actions but also manipulates this action at will. Stage directions offer a mode of speech that is not tied to embodied actors and that therefore can be turned against them. [40]

Mallarmé's use of stage directions suggests how the voice can work against the actor's body to minimize the actor's presence on the stage. Puchner shows in the evolution of *Hérodiade* (from an unsuccessful stage play to a closet drama) how stage directions become a means of frustrating the actor's embodiment. Mallarmé wrestles with stage directions as solution in other formulations. *Igitur* consists entirely of stage directions in which the reader/spectator's knowledge of who speaks when is sabotaged at every turn. Mallarmé's *Le Livre* exists between reading and performance; the Reader that sits under the shadow of a lamp is a half-presence--not an actor, not a friend--he opens the Book to the listener and lays the pages before him. Whether or not Mallarmé's persistent engagement with the popular culture was precisely what

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40. Puchner, *Stagefright* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 66.

brought the Symbolists to a stage-worthy solution, a "theatre of voice" evolved from Mallarmé's ambivalences and once it was established on the stage marked a place of anti-theatrical theatricality.[41]

2.2.1 Symbolist Disembodied voices: Where is Elsewhere?

Turning towards the néant, Mallarmé cast words to come from no body, no world, and no history. In *Un Coup de des n'abolira jamais la hasard* (*A Throw of the Dice Will Never Eliminate Chance)* Mallarmé performs a distancing that is, for Roland Barthes, not only of words from their proper spaces but also of poetry from bourgeois literature:

> Mallarmé's typographical agraphia seeks to create around rarefied words an empty zone in which speech liberated from its guilty social overtones may, by some happy contrivance, no longer reverberate. The word, disassociated from the husk of habitual clichés, and from the technical reflexes of the writer, is then freed from responsibility to all possible contexts; it appears in one brief act, which, being devoid of reflections, declares its solitude, and therefore its innocence.[42]

The blank spaces that surround Mallarmé's words are more than gestures towards pure abstraction; they guide the reader *away* from "social overtones," and their concomitant clichés and reflexes, which would otherwise tie words to a body and to the physical world. The words in

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41. Kristeva, *Revolution of a Poetic Language,* trans. Margaret Waller (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984). Kristeva specifies that pushing against such limits as the thetic (thesis), the poet (of who Mallarmé is the exemplar) struggles to represent the chora, nothingness, which Kristeva identifies as the womb.

42. Barthes, "The Grain of the Voice," in *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1971), 75.

Mallarmé's writing that pull the reader away from the world do so in order to relieve her or him of associations of literature with social class.

Onstage, the "elsewhere" or "Idée" was attainable only indirectly by suggestion, and the central conduit to it was also its greatest hindrance: the actor. Mallarmé fabricated an actor in his writing who would stand out of the way of the Idea. In "Mimique," included in his collection of essays *Crayonné au théâtre* (themselves positioned between performance and writing), Mallarmé described oppositions between the blank page and performance that directed the spectator to the unborn, and thus unspoiled, Idea. This unspoiled Idea could and *did* exist, Mallarmé writes, in the character of Hamlet.[43] An incomplete(d) adolescent when Hamlet dies, he leaves the spectator with the idea of him. In his closet drama, *Igitur*, Mallarmé pointed to a half-presence that *is* no-body: *is* not a character named in the text and *has* no physical body, and yet speaks. In the never completed and enormously influential project, *Le Livre,* Mallarmé imagined himself solemnly guiding, as a clergyman, the reader/spectator through ritual. A half-present actor could be evoked on the page, but the problem of evoking him on the stage remained.

Pierre Quillard transforms the aesthetic of speech and language in Symbolism through his painterly imagination, reformulating Mallarmé's problematic--"to paint not the thing but the effect it produces"—into a visual aurality.[44] The staging of Quillard's *La Fille aux mains*

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43. Mallarmé, *Stéphane Mallarmé*: *Selected Poetry and Prose*, ed. Mary Ann Caws (New York: New Directions, 1982), 69-71. "Mimique" is ostensibly Mallarmé's description of a performance by his nephew.

44. Mallarmé, "Letter To Henri Cazalis, 1864," *Selected Letters of Stéphane Mallarmé*, ed. and trans. Rosemary Lloyd (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 39.

coupées (*The Girl With Cut-Off Hands*, 1891) is the first successful example of the "theatre of voice," that Deak identifies. Quillard shows how this aesthetic is adapted to the stage in his article, "de l'inutilité absolue de la mise-en-scène" (The absolute uselessness of the mise-en-scene), which represents his challenge to Naturalist conventions of the stage. Quillard claims that speech and simple lines or colors on canvases allow the spectator to create a much more "marvelous palace" than could any of Naturalism's detailed illusions. The symbolist theatre's aesthetic of speech, language, and visual abstraction is synthesized in Quillard's dictum: "la parole crée le décor comme la reste" ("The word creates scenery like it creates everything else). [45] If Quillard's statement signaled to readers and audiences the main aesthetics of symbolist theatre, what then of the problem of the actor's body?

To create a new division of spectacle and words, speech and silence, Symbolists would redirect the spectator's eye to his ear. Actors in *La Fille* and other dramas of the symbolist stage were concealed behind scrims, like shadows, and from there they spoke in monotone. Georgette Camée was considered the truest interpreter of the symbolist aesthetic to the speech of the stage in her performance in Quillard's drama. If to some, her delivery sounded indistinguishable from antiquated declamation, its purpose was diametrically opposed. Declamation in the neo-classical theatre was meant to assert French-ness, purity, and clarity in the language of its greatest authors. In contrast, declamation in symbolist theatre, like Mallarmé's blank spaces, was meant to distance the voice of the actor from his or her nationality and from his or her body, so that these inevitable intrusions would not interrupt the

45. Pierre Quillard, "De l'Inutilité absolu de la mise-en-scène exacte" *Revue d'Art Dramatique* (May 1891): 181. Quillard directed this article to criticism by theatrical Naturalism aimed at *La Fille aux mains coupées.*

poet's suggestion. The Symbolists' use of declamation is driven by the *conscious* intent to remove the sound of the body in the voice.[46]

Maeterlinck formalizes the oppositions of the heard and the seen, resolving in theatres that he staged first in prose first the problem of the actor's body that stands in front of and obstructs the Idea. In his short story, *Onirologie* (1889), the unnamed narrator, a sickly and depressed young man, takes a trip with his only friend in the world. The narrator takes this trip as a curative, but his distance from his "normal" life at an orphanage, contributes (along with opium) to his falling into a trance-like state.[47] The narrator begins to have trouble distinguishing dreams and life, past and present. Images of the real countryside and of a real young woman, Annie, prompt a pre-verbal memory in the form of sleeping and waking dreams. The narrator dreams of a child drowning in a pool and when he tries to see himself in a mirror there is no face. He hears a scream. The narrator-dreamer receives messages, both aural and visual; the dream is

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46. Roland Barthes, "Grain of the Voice," in *Image, Music, Text* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1971). Barthes's sentiment that the, "grain is the body in the voice as it sings, the hand as it writes, the limb as it performs," borrows from Kristeva's definition of the text of the split speaking subject into genotext and phenotext. The pheno-song is the culture's standards of diction and corresponds to the symbolic; the geno-song is the body of the speaker or singer. Adjectives—the preferred tools of music criticism—have served primarily to reinstate the (hearing) subject and have failed to describe this quality of the body in the voice that causes the listening subject to 'lose himself.' Barthes asserts that the singer's body *is* or is *not* transmitted through the singer's voice, regardless of training. The transmission of this body determines the listener's attraction or repulsion to certain voices and does away with the music critic's reliance on adjectives. The geno-song is the *writing* of the singer's body on the song. The pheno-song represents standards of speech, diction, and communication of meaning; declamation corresponds to the politics of that culture. Those imprinted—in a Derridean kind of writing--on the body of the singer are conveyed through the voice.

47. Maeterlinck, *Introduction à une psychologie des songes et autres écrits 1886-1896* (Bruxelles: Éditions Labor, 1985): 25-36. Psychic distances from familiar territory through long voyages and drug use are central tropes in Decadent and Symbolist literature. My discussion focuses on how Maeterlinck, as the "practical" writer, found ways of formalizing these distances without emphasizing drug use.

trying to tell him something, but that something is obscured because the aural and visual messages exist on different planes.

Maeterlinck's narrator distills from his experiences a theory of dreams, theatre, hearing, and seeing that will come to resemble Maeterlinck's theories of drama. The entr'acte, between sleeping and waking, allows the narrator some distance to analyze their relationship. In such a state, the narrator claims he can ponder that the dream itself (not the dreamer) is egotistical, erasing the past and the present and including only that which is important to the dream. Like a backdrop in Shakespeare's dramas, the setting is always *utile,* only important in its "usefulness" to suggest a place. In contrast, the dreamer's ears are "inutile." While images appear before dreamers in a type of pantomime, they hear noises outside of their dreams. The dream has a secret to convey. This secret, the narrator explains, is transmitted, not by sound or image, but by telepathy.

The distances between a visible pantomime and sounds can only be bridged by the unknowable "grey area of the brain" to arrive at the secret. Maeterlinck presents a theatre in *Onirologie* in which, as in his dramas, the visible and audible exist side-by-side but are unable to interpenetrate. The separation of audible and visible signs of the dream is Maeterlinck's solution on the page before he has proposed it for the stage. This separation, which makes the secret at the core of the story elusive, engages the reader, like the narrator, in assembling the puzzle of aural and visual impulses.

Maeterlinck proffers *translation* as a concrete solution for accessing the secret, which he identifies as an "original text."[48] Maeterlinck later resolves that *translation* is the key to putting

48. Though Maeterlinck distinguished his own understanding of the psyche from that of the professionals that he called "elementary psychology," his disagreements had embedded in

this theory into practical theatrical staging. The "original text," which is only audible indirectly, can be found neither in a written text nor in a speaking body; it is thus an early example of the disembodied voice. It is neither/both text nor/and spectacle and is spoken by no body. In the essay, "Introduction à une psychologie des songes" ("Introduction to a psychology of dreams"), Maeterlinck writes of his frustration with re-presenting what he senses exists:

> Mais si je veux pénétrer non ce que cet homme ou cette femme paraissent être, mais ce qu'ils sont en réalité; si je veux lire le texte original de cette traduction qu'ils m'imposent; si je veux me les représenter tels qu'ils sont, et tels que je les ai compris dès la première regard échange…. Je sens que cela m'est impossible malgré toutes mes certitudes.[49]
>
> (If I want to get under not what a man or woman seems to be but what they are in reality; If I want to read the original text of the translation that they impose upon me and the one I understood at first glance; if I want to express a single true moment... it seems to me impossible despite all my certainty of knowing them through and through).

Anticipating Freud, Maeterlinck distinguishes the limits of what he, as writer, can know and

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them knowledge of contemporary discourses. Certainly, some of his understandings cannot be based on what was not yet discovered, such as the Freudian unconscious or Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* and so must have sprung from his own imaginary; others are clearly "mis-readings" in the best sense of the word. Hippolyte Bernheim and Ambroise Liebault of the Nancy School established during the Suggestion Debate (1892) that speech was at the core of induction and that all individuals were susceptible. The implications of this recognition were significant. It suggested first of all an unconscious, distinct from the one that Janet was already putting forward. A universal susceptibility pointed to a universal unconscious. Janet still maintained with his teacher Charcot that susceptibility to hypnosis and his theorized double-consciousness) was due always to pathology and degeneration.

49. Maeterlinck, "Introduction à une psychologie des songes," 91. Translation from hereon, my own, unless otherwise noted.

express through the conscious mind from the vast wealth of information of the unconscious mind--i.e., the "original text." Maeterlinck admits that he can know people or characters so certainly ("certitudes"), but as a conscious act, certitude fails him. There is still something missing, which, as an inaudible and unwritten text, can neither be read nor heard by the conscious mind.

Maeterlinck creates conditions for a translation in practical theatrical terms by distinguishing characters who can hear the original text from those who are distracted by the visible. The Grandfather in *L'Intruse* (*The Intruder*, 1890) is blind and has access to a harbinger of death. His blindness allows him to ignore distracting visibilities in order to attend to the invisible sensations communicated only to him. The Grandfather is so caught up in listening and relating what he hears to the audience and to the family seated beside him that he himself "fails" at representing what he senses. His blindness isolates him and his perceptions from the others in the stage world, even as it trains his ear to the sounds of death. He is positioned between the visible pantomime and the invisible audible, attempting to translate for his family and the spectator, both untrained in hearing the disembodied voice.

The Grandfather has no other role but as a translator of the "elsewhere," and as a result it is difficult for the audience to fall into predictable reactions of like or dislike or belief or disbelief. His lines do not express an internal life of character, but rather relate missives from "elsewhere." His children dismiss him as senile, anxious and irrational. Ostensibly, this does not distinguish him from a history of characters that are marginalized for the same reasons. However, the audience can never be certain that the sounds that the Grandfather relates to them actually exist. Nor can they be certain that the family is wrong in their estimations of their grandfather. This troubles the audience's sympathy with one character or the other. The central

tension of the play is not whether to believe one character, group of characters, or another, but rather to initiate the spectator as translator of a more ambiguous moral universe.

The spectator's initiation as translator occurs through the separation of hearing and seeing. The Grandfather-hearer, distracted by emotion, hears but does not see and those that see (the family) do not hear. They are the ears and eyes for each other. The blind men hear and tell, but what they tell is as muted as what the other characters see. No visible body makes the sounds that the Grandfather hears. The family relies on the Grandfather's keen hearing, and he in turn demands to know what they see, even though he rejects their interpretations. In other plays by Maeterlinck of the same period such as *l'Intérieure* (*Home)*, the cast is divided into two families: a family who can see and speak stands frozen before a family that moves and speaks inaudibly within the "home" and does not see. Characters who hear do not communicate what they have heard directly; hearing is not full presence. Characters who see are oblivious to the shadows before them; seeing is not full presence. The spectator as translator of the hearers and seers is the only one to put the two together.

Frequently referred to as the "theatre of silence," Maeterlinck's dramas are far too verbose to be considered silent. Deak refers to symbolist theatre instead as a "theatre of voice," and shows that the focus of the spectator is redirected from his eye to his ear.[50] Yet if Maeterlinck's characters speak a lot, it is not their words to which his theatre *trains* the spectator's ear. When characters are "listening to their souls,"[51] they are listening to something

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50. Deak, 117.

51. Maeterlinck, *The Plays of Maurice Maeterlinck*, trans. Richard Hovey (Chicago: Stone and Kimball, 1896), 181.

that is conveyed neither through text nor spectacle. Their secrets are inaccessible.

Maeterlinck made his characters listen to what was spoken by no body, or to what the audience could not hear. The translator of the dimly seen and dimly heard pointed to a good and evil more ambiguous than Melodrama's "mal sur terre," that is, towards the unconscious. Peter Brooks defines Melodrama's evil as one that appears as "evil on earth," a recognizable and, therefore, combatable component of life:

> Like the Gothic novel, melodrama discovers evil as a component of mankind which cannot be denied or ignored but must be recognized, combated, driven out…. Virtue stands opposed to what will seek to discredit it, misrepresent, silence, imprison, or bury it alive.[52]

In dividing his characters into hearers and seers and good and bad, respectively, Maeterlinck appears to make room on his stage for melodrama. The "plot" of *The Intruder*, if there is one, can be reduced to the detecting of a harbinger of death, as an evil. But Maeterlinck problematizes Melodrama through these characters by proving that their sight does not guarantee moral certainty. Seated throughout the drama, the members of the family in *The Intruder* are like disgruntled spectators accustomed to Melodrama, which represented the world in visible signs. In contrast with Melodrama's "Good" that usually came in the shape of a victim who was frequently a mute woman, the translator of Maeterlinck's play stands between the good and evil, pointing to the unconscious where they are not as precise. Maeterlinck's hearers are in ambiguous states of heightened awareness (perhaps dreaming, perhaps hypnotized), and this gives them access to the invisible original text.

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52. Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 33.

When the spectator is ultimately responsible for the translation of what occurs onstage, he or she becomes engaged by paralleling the playwright's process. Patrice Pavis's theorization of the *mise-en-jeu* as the translator's "setting into play" of ideas into words, gestures, and objects that belong to a "source text" and are directed to a "target text," has a wide application in this regard. Pavis suggests that the translator reveals through placement a process that always occurs but is normally hidden in the (non-translating) playwright. Titling one of his subsections, "Applying Freud to Translation Theory," Pavis compares the translation of source text into target text to the playwright's translation (in the writing-process) from the pre-verbal into the verbal.[53] Ordinarily, the writer's "translation" from another language or the pre-verbal remains hidden from the reader/spectator, and the reader/spectator receives only traces to greater or lesser degrees from objects, words, and gestures.

Pavis's theorization of the mise-en-jeu is most relevant to the genealogy of the disembodied voice when the mise-en-jeu *can not* be translated, for example, by the hysteric's psyche in which thoughts are dissociated from affect and from the body; the target text would never arrive at what Pavis calls "embodied language," which is a language (in the target culture's language) harmonized by the body. When the pre-verbal and verbal are kept divided, as they are on Maeterlinck's stage, into seers and hearers, the spectator gains a greater access to the moment when the writer translated his pre-verbal ideas into words. The spectator re-enacts a translation; in fact, the spectator "re-translates" the mise-en-jeu and thus the spectator of Maeterlinck's dramas parallels the creative process of playwrighting. The division of the aural and visual is one of Maeterlinck's solutions to the long-standing problem of the actor's body as obstruction to the elsewhere or the Idea, and this split also anticipates Freud's theories of the topographical model

53. Patrice Pavis, *Theater at the Crossroads of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1992), 146.

of the psyche.

The disembodied voice of the historical avant-garde represents an imperfect solution to the anti-theatrical theatricality with which the Symbolists wrestled and so a solution to which the avant-gardes and neo-avant-gardes, including Foreman, will return. F.T. Marinetti would attempt to make voices speak with no body audibly in a language that was as if transcribed directly. Tristan Tzara and the Dadaists would enact the disembodied voice through madness themselves, and André Breton and the Surrealists would proffer voices as disembodied to present the techniques of automatic writing as "tempting and easy." All of their solutions of the disembodied voice will be imperfect because, as we will see, the artist of the historical avant-garde continues to struggle with being bound to the world and to the body, despite, for example, the Futurist's attempt at violent ruptures between voice and body.

Historiographers often set Symbolism apart from modernism. Jameson asserts that, "organic forms and vegetal decorations--although certainly modernist in some sense--are evidently different from the machine-age violences and celebrations of futurism."[54] Puchner writes that Jean Moreas's symbolist manifesto is hardly aggressive enough to function within the genealogy of the avant-garde manifesto. But in *Theories of the Avant-Garde,* Poggioli points to the agonism in Mallarmé's writing as the embodiment of the avant-garde's attitude and thus to the device of the disembodied voice, which ties Foreman's Ontological-Hysteric productions to modernism and the historical avant-garde.

As I demonstrate in the first section of the final chapter, Foreman's aesthetic of his earliest productions owes much to the philosophies and practices of symbolist theatre. Reading,

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54. Jameson, *A Singular Modernity*, 150.

so central to Mallarmé and to Foreman's aesthetics, also represents a rhetorical quandary in the theoretical writing of both. In his comments in a discussion with John Cage and Richard Kostelanetz, Foreman evokes Mallarmé's dream as one of his own driving forces:

> As I have said many times, reading is the only thing that interests me. For a long time I was trying to figure out a theater event that would somehow be akin to what I felt when I was experiencing reading. I don't think I ever really succeeded.[55]

Foreman's sense that he never "really succeeded" at staging the experience of reading sounds like the rhetorical gesture in Mallarmé's failure; Foreman communicates a yearning in his theoretical writing to his *reader* and thus provides stage directions to that reader to engage in a certain mental activity, a "performance" under the lamp. In the theatre, Foreman certainly succeeded at creating an event that is like the experience of reading; his disembodied voices "read" to the audience (in his relatively small theatre that resembled a nineteenth century salon): through recorded voice, through the dispersal of written and incomplete words on the set, and the staging of pantomimes Foreman left the spectator's mental spaces undisturbed.

There is also a "practical" component to Foreman's symbolist tendencies that more resembles Maeterlinck's ability to solve theatrical conundrums by dividing his stage into discrete senses than Mallarmé's yearning. Foreman relegates the completion of his works to the spectator whose function is the same as that of the hearer in *The Intruder*: that is, as the ultimate translator. Foreman's division of speakers and actors rather than seers and hearers further destabilizes the importance of the actor, assigning greater importance to the "Idea." Whereas in Maeterlinck's dramas actors interpret, insofar as they are characters that hear and see, Foreman usually

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55. Cage, Kostelanetz, and Foreman in "Art in the Culture," *PAJ*, Vol. 4, Nos. 1-2 (January-May 1979): 79.

attempts to rid his theatre of characters. Because the spectator of Foreman's plays is a product of Freud's century and *not* a student of the unconscious, the disembodied voice does not represent a "shock." Foreman's disembodied voices challenge, instead, received ideas of the unconscious.

In the final chapter I demonstrate that the symbolist problematics of the Idea and the detriment of the physical actor represent Foreman's central preoccupations in his uses of the disembodied voice throughout his career.

2.2.2 The Disembodied Voices of Marinetti's "Wireless Imagination"

Futurists would continue to attempt to make voices speak with no body. Maeterlinck's hearers had been able to access the disembodied voices of souls or "elsewheres" by pointing to an "original text." And, although through this means, Maeterlinck conveyed *that* an original existed, he left the sounds and words of the original un-transcribed, a mystery to the audience. While hearer-translators referred to the elsewhere, in speaking about it, their language was syntactically correct. Aligning futurist poetics with the voices of objects and machines, Marinetti broke with the spiritualist and mystical disembodied voices of Symbolism and proclaimed the freeing of words from the body through the destruction of syntax.

The syntax of Marinetti's manifestos, contrary to his desire, would stubbornly walk with the feet of the "antique syntax we have inherited from Homer."[56] Like Maeterlinck, Marinetti would be bound to the body, which he would also persistently resist through staging. In plays, poems, and manifestos, Marinetti staged his resistance to bodies through voices of machines. It

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56. F.T. Marinetti, "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature," in *F. T. Marinetti: Critical Writings,* ed. Günter Berghaus, trans. Doug Thompson (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2006), 107.

was a propeller that "dictated" to Marinetti in *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature.* In his conventional dramas and futurist serate alike, the human bourgeoisie, deaf to the Buffet and Sideboard of *Toy Theater of Love: Drama of Objects* (1915), were a mere pretext for the audition of the voices of objects. Marinetti aimed these voices at spreading contagion amongst the masses of his audience or crowds to, in turn, "instill a warlike spirit in Italians."[57]

In his early theatrical representations, Marinetti used a juxtaposition of the bourgeois theatre against machines to instill the warlike spirit. In *Poupées électriques* (*Electric Puppets,* 1909), which is the production that coincides with the publication of the first manifesto, the bourgeoisie's natural bodies are brought to life by robots' mechanical bodies.[58] At a spa on the coast, husband and wife, John and Mary Wilson, and the couple, Paul and Juliette, pass most of their time onstage fretting over their embroilments. Does Paul love Juliette or Mary? Does John really hanker after Juliette? Even Juliette's suicide, which comes as the result of Paul's wandering eye, reads at first as only an exaggerated expression of unrequited love. Not until act two does the plot depart from the usual "hysteric typology" of romantic attachments, when the puppets named in the title, the Fantoche (or robots), Monsieur Prudent and Mere Prunelle, appear. John invented these robots in order to keep himself sexually excited by Mary. John gets excited, not only because the watchful eye of the staid robots makes his sexuality lawless, but also because, Mary protests, the natural body of his wife is not enough. The romantic attachments of the characters, which are linked to the outdated and impotent, are set in

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57. Marinetti, "A Futurist Theater of Essential Brevity," in *F. T. Marinetti: Critical Writings*, 200-7. Berghaus notes that this manifesto was written to coincide with the production in Milan of the sintesi version of *Electric Puppets, Elettricità sessuale: Sintesi futurista* (1915).

58. Marinetti, *Poupées électriques: Drame en trois actes avec une préface sur le futurisme* (Paris: E Sansot, 1909).

opposition to John's more irrational, spontaneous, and electric desires. The electricity of the robots becomes converted into John's human sexual electricity. By extension, the juxtaposition of human impotence and mechanical electricity (power) is aimed at the "passéiste" (has-been) theatre and passéiste audience; *Electric Puppets* is a play that is aimed at initiating this transference of energy and electrifying its audience.

Far from an anomaly in Marinetti's futurist poetics, *Electric Puppets* possesses the ingredients of his later and mature work. At the core of *Electric Puppets*, as in much of Marinetti's writing, is the portrayal of machines as the source of energy: for life, for renewal, of society, art, and literature. For an exchange of this energy, human bodies are required, and in order to stimulate responses in spectators, they must be attacked in some fashion. The play itself, which treated this exchange via the transference of sexual electricity between robots and humans, disturbed its viewers and caused a riot, further encouraged by the plants Marinetti placed strategically in the audience. In the midst of chaos, Marinetti welcomed their boos and read aloud the first manifesto of Futurism. It is thus that Marinetti used the circumstances of the not-very shocking play to parallel an exchange of electricity or energy in representation and life. The performance encompassed, Günter Berghaus writes, the "formula of art-action, of an art that invaded society and stimulated active responses from the spectators rather than serving as an object of contemplation or consumption."[59] In *Electric Puppets* Marinetti transmits energy through representation; however, the event's dependence on representation made it inefficient in its incitement of immediate excitement, agitation, and engagement of the audience.[60] For

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59. Berghaus, *Theatre, Performance, and the Historical Avant-Garde* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 99-100.

60. As his revision of the play into a sintesi demonstrates, Marinetti realizes the failings

Marinetti and the Futurists, the fuller expression of these ideas would be found in the manifesto and its futurist declamations.

The manifesto has an inherent theatricality with which Marinetti engages in order to address, incite, and attack the audience. In *Poetry of the Revolution*, Puchner traces a history of the manifesto that helps us to identify the theatricality that Marinetti employs as a function, sometimes dormant, of the political manifesto.

> The manifesto will be defined by this impatience, by the attempt to undo the distinction between speech and action, between words and revolution. This attempt contributes to the formation of the *Manifesto*'s distinct voice, although the notion of voice should be extended to include tone and even the rhetoric of the manifesto, its way of understanding the role of historiography and the philosophy of history, speech, and writing. The manifesto's tone or voice is not only a formal feature but one that describes the fundamental gesture or attitude orienting the manifesto toward the world it seeks to undo and redo.[61]

In the first phase of the manifesto, speech was aimed at immediate action and thus manifesto-makers distanced speech from theatricality, an empty speech that performs no action. As a

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of this indirect representation. Still, if couching the mechanized body in the physical quotidian life seems to run counter to the Futurist agenda, we need only look at *Toy Theater of Love: Drama of Objects,* which is more faithful to the brevity of the Futurist theatrical form. In this more exemplary play, the juxtaposition still holds: a romantically preoccupied family goes about their business while their objects speak to one another, in tune with the tension of the house. The objects—a cupboard and a Buffet—build suspense and intensity to which the characters remain oblivious. Onstage, Marinetti *represents* the exchange of energy between inanimate and animate objects, but the spectator is Marinetti's ultimate addressee. In the future, the spectator will be the addressee from the outset.

61. Puchner, *Poetry of the Revolution: Marx, Manifestos, and the Avant-Gardes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 22.

revolutionary tool, the manifesto maintained a direct relationship to action when it was employed to "usurp an authority it does not yet possess." With *The Communist Manifesto,* it shed the "poetry of the past," losing certainty (of action) and gaining "credo plus history," "agonism," and a political voice that, Puchner writes, expressed the impatience that is caused by delays between words and action. With Marinetti's appropriation of the manifesto, an aggressive voice takes the place of "certain" action in the manifesto's role in politics. Marinetti replaces theatrical representation with the manifesto and character with voice. Transmitted through the voice, futurist manifestos would be more efficient transmitters of electricity/energy than (theatrical) representations of this transmission.

Marinetti only partly reenacts the historical use of manifesto: to cause and announce social or political change; he also threatens its "action" by creating of it a detailed dramaturgy. In "The Foundation and Manifesto of Futurism" (1909), Marinetti lays out his program: his intention to free Italy from the "stinking canker of its professors, archeologists, tour guides and antiquarians." Marinetti parallels the attack on the banalities of romantic attachment in *Electric Puppets* by attacking the audience who paid to attend his performance. Declaiming the manifesto at the premiere of *Electric Puppets*, he staged "speech" in the context of drama and thus located theatre and theatricality *as* a place of action.

Marinetti inscribes his role as transmitter and the audience's part as receiver in the dramaturgy of the manifesto, but he does not fix these roles in cement. Marinetti adjusts his tone depending on his crowd. Christine Poggi identifies the sources of Marinetti's flexibility in her essay, "Folla/Follia: Futurism and the Crowd":

> Not surprisingly, the figure of la folla-the crowd-occupies a central place within the constellation of futurist topoi. Simultaneously flattered and reviled, desired and feared,

> the crowd is the necessary addressee of futurist rhetoric and the locus of its political and cultural aspirations. Indeed, futurism's fascination with la folla was deeply ambivalent, revealing an awareness of the masses as a powerful political force whose newly declared rights and demands were destabilizing traditional social hierarchies.[62]

The "constellation of futurist topoi" to which Poggi refers includes the recurrent, though malleable crowd, who are sometimes spectators, sometimes participants at a rally. The crowd evolves from the modernized city and like the city suggests a new and dynamic energy with which Marinetti wants to engage, at times by merging and other times by controlling. Poggi attributes this fluctuation to Marinetti's ambivalence. On the one hand, he writes in his manifestos of his distrust of the crowd; he abhors their clapping. On the other hand, he seeks their complete and utter engagement through rioting. Marinetti realizes that he cannot effect change simply through his small artistic circle and he needs the "masses as a powerful political force" to effect political and cultural change.

Marinetti's ambivalence vis-à-vis the imagined Other, which is spectator/audience/crowd of the city, evolves not only from the quirks of his own psychological make-up, but also from a deliberate reading of contemporary theories of the unconscious. According to Poggi, Marinetti's attitude towards his audience is a "performative interpretation of late-nineteenth century French and Italian crowd theory."[63] She points especially to Gustave Le Bon who theorized the manipulability and feminization of the crowd. Marinetti oscillated in his attitude of solicitation and antipathy towards the crowd and wrote these oscillations into the aesthetics, Poggi holds, of

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62. Christine Poggi, "Folla/Follia: Futurism and the Crowd," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Spring 2002): 711.

63. Poggi, 709.

the manifesto (and the Serate, manifestos, and parole in liberta). Marinetti inscribed his audience as his lover, seducible, controllable, and hysterical. Hysteria remained steadfastly bound to the woman's body despite repeated efforts to dislodge hysteria from the female body. Because Marinetti had this view of the crowd as feminine, he could use the provocation of hysteria to transfer energy/electricity. Marinetti provokes hysteria through deliberate means to arrive at art-action, both in the performance and writing of the manifesto.

The dissociated voice in Marinetti's writing both gives him access to and transmits into the crowd/audience an electricity/energy that exists with no organic body. In the preamble to "Technical Manifesto," Marinetti sets the stage, recounting his real-life 1909 flight that enabled an epiphany, which in turn, released him from "antique syntax":

> In an airplane, sitting on the fuel tank, my belly warmed by the head of the pilot, I realized the utter folly of the antique syntax we have inherited from Homer. A furious need to liberate words, dragging them free of the prison of the Latin sentence! Naturally like all imbeciles the latter has a wise head, a fat belly, two legs, and two flat feet, but it'll never have a pair of wings. The bare necessities for walking for running a few short steps and stopping almost at once, gasping for breath!
>
> This is what the spinning propeller told me, as I sped along, two hundred meters above the mighty chimneystacks of Milan. And the propeller went even further:[64]

The final sentence of this preamble is left hanging with a colon to suggest that the remainder contains the substantive literary instructions of the propeller's dictation to Marinetti. Marinetti's privileged status as airplane passenger in 1909 exposes him to the mechanical muse. Throughout

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64. F.T. Marinetti, "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature," *F.T. Marinetti: Critical Writings* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2006), 107.

the preamble, Marinetti emphasizes this direct physical experience, reminding his reader that it was his own body that was warmed by the fuel tank.

Directed to the concerns of the futurist poets-to-be, the fiction of the propeller's *dictation* in "Technical Manifesto" enables Marinetti to disavow the primacy of his authorship and displace authority onto the machines of the future. In "Propeller Talk," Jeffery Schnapp writes,

> A propeller, not a poet will do the talking, a propeller will dictate from on high the laws that are to govern modern poetic discourse and define the desublimated forms of individuality and subjectivity attached thereto.[65]

Marinetti, the author, then has both a privileged and indifferent position. The airplane's propeller dictates the project of Futurism to Marinetti, which suggests that the voice he summons is pre-existent and does not need to be translated, unlike Maeterlinck's voices, which required a translator to speak in their place. Dictation implies an immediacy that helps to define Futurism against Symbolism. Symbolists did not have access to the hum of the propeller or the view from above the "chimneystacks of Milan." In Marinetti's appeal to poets to overcome the "antique syntax of Homer," he directs his readers to listen to the disembodied voices of new objects.

The mechanism of the propeller teaches the poet how to tune his ear to the disembodied voices of objects, which although just newly acknowledged, are pre-existent to the poet's recognition of them. The propeller also teaches the poet how to write in this fragmentary language, which is the solution to the archaic syntax of the Homeric language. In the first and foremost of the eleven injunctions Marinetti instructs the poet to do away with syntax, "scattering nouns even as they come to mind," to get rid of the "I" (and thus concomitant

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65. Jeffery T. Schnapp, "Propeller Talk," *Modernism/Modernity,* Vol. 1, No. 3 (September 1994): 154.

psychology) and adjectives (that imply contemplation), and adverbs (that create a unity of tone). Nouns are to stand unadorned; verbs are to be used only in the infinitive, so that they are prohibited from expressing the I. Marinetti returns several times to the means of listening to and writing the voices of machines. These include emphases on analogies, not one grand analogy, but one upon another, randomness, and an absence of the I. The conceit that Marinetti has created is a contradiction: Marinetti tells his reader to listen to object's disembodied voices as a means of renewing poetry, but he creates a rhetorical manual that instructs *how* to create disembodied voices. In other words, there is a tension between listening and confabulating, control and absence of control, the "I" and the absence of the "I."

In ascribing instructions to the propeller, Marinetti persists in trying to access the "not I" of the disembodied voice, but by writing in rhetorical flourishes he is asserting the "embodied I." In the preamble, Marinetti describes a visceral experience of riding in an airplane: his belly is "warmed by the head of the pilot," and "the spinning propeller" tells him the utter folly of Homeric syntax. In this physical description Marinetti's (sexualized) embodied-I is at the center. And, here we come to the same problem encountered by Symbolists: the impossibility of summoning the disembodied voice to speak without the mediation of the physical body. Marinetti's whole body has to be invested, "warmed." and consequently made comfortable in order to be receptive to what the propeller has to say.

Automatic writing is the means, which Marinetti proffers in "Technical Manifesto," of staging a confrontation between the unavoidable centrality of the body and the voice with no body. In the final paragraphs of "Answers," Marinetti dramatizes the confrontation:

> The hand that writes seems detached from the body and continues for a long time detached from the brain, which also somehow detached from the body, having taken

flight, looks down from on high, with an awesome clarity of vision, upon the unexpected expression coming from the pen. [66]

Marinetti weaves his flight into the project of futurist literature: his experience in the sky replicates the dynamics almost word-for-word of automatic writing. Just as in an airplane, the passenger regards the world below "detached from the body" in the automatic writing process the consciousness and the unconscious might regard one another. Marinetti's revelation in the clouds of the process of automatic writing provides a solution to the problem of the writer's body. Automatic writing gives Marinetti access to a voice without a body, that "somehow" comes from "elsewhere" and that provides an alternative syntax, different from the "antique Homeric syntax."

If automatic writing had been a means of healing a split in Janet's experiments, for Marinetti it was a means of provoking a split. In the instructions to the poet-reader in "Technical Manifesto," the fragmented state of a traumatized speaker represents an ideal. Marinetti directs the poet to perform fragmentation as a means of provoking the state of fragmentation to, in turn, write in fragmented sentences spontaneously. Refusing psychology as a means of understanding, Marinetti embraces an "intuitive psychology of matter," which through the automatic writing technique permits abandonment of logic and of the "I." [67]

While Marinetti's *parole in liberta* sounds like a return to Mallarmé's project to free words from the page, it is this theoretical abandonment of the I that distinguishes the two movements. "Battle + Weight + Stench," which comes at the end of the manifesto, appears as an

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66. F.T. Marinetti, "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature," in *F.T Marinetti: Critical Writings*, 115.

67. Ibid., 112. Bold typeface and gaps in the text are reproduced as in the original.

exemplar of the writing that Marinetti has been proposing to his readers.

> Noontide three-quarters flutes groans summer-heat **tumbtumb** alarm Gargaresh crashing crackling march Jingling rucksacks rifles hoofs nails cannon manes wheels cases Jews unleavened bread oil-bread dirges trading shacks whiffs polishing rheum stench cinnamon mold ebb and flow pepper scuffle.[68]

In this exemplar of parole in liberta, Marinetti (like Mallarmé) creates unexpected empty spaces between verbs and nouns, which are meant to follow each other without logic. The lengths of words and the systematic repetition of onomatopoeia set the rhythm of the poem, which Marinetti intends as its most defining element. The theoretical difference between his poetry and Mallarmé's vers libre, Marinetti maintains, is that parole in liberta exists without syntax. Freed words, or words-in-freedom, unlike free verses, point towards the voices of objects and not the lyrical self. The words are free insofar as they are not linked to human characters/bodies. Yet the words indubitably evoke an "I" through the verbs and nouns that describe the impressions of a Jewish neighborhood. It is Marinetti who *does* project an "I" into bodies of objects and into the bodies of his audience.

If with parole in liberta, Marinetti destroys the body to provoke disembodied voices, ultimately the theatrical context of the *serate*, or soirée, gives the fullest expression of this attempt because the voices that are liberated in the poem from the body simultaneously act upon a mass. The best exponent of this attempt is Marinetti's most famous poem, "Zang-Tumb-Tuuum." In both the performance and composition of "Zang- Tumb-Tuuum" Marinetti attacks the body. The poem describes carnage on the battlefield, where screams seem to emanate from

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68. Marinetti, "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature," in *F.T. Marinetti: Critical Writings*, 117.

nowhere; in performance Marinetti imitated the sounds of machines and artillery, producing a disjunctive performance, composed of a crazy body (fisicofollia) and declamatory, rhythmic speech. The serate functioned as the ideal context for futurist writings, just as Tuesday Salons had for symbolist poets, but the goal of the serate was, Berghaus writes, unlike the symbolist soirées that proffered a refined performance of a poem. "The text functioned as a score, the reciter as a conductor, and the audience as the orchestra." [69]

Futurist painter Luigi Russolo takes up the praxis of parole in liberta and applies it specifically to sound, which he attempts to free from real-world contexts. In the manifesto, "Art of Noise" (1913), Russolo calls for disembodiments of ears from their listeners, of instruments from musicians, and of noises from their contexts.

> IT IS NECESSARY TO BREAK THE RESTRICTED CIRCLE OF PURE SOUNDS AND CONQUER THE INFINITE VARIETY OF "NOISE-SOUNDS." Everyone knows, moreover, that each pure sound carries with it a tangle of fore-known worn-out sensations that predispose the auditor to boredom in spite of all the power of all the innovative musicians.[70]

Russolo attempts to disrupt the context of music in the way that Marinetti challenged the Homeric syntax of language; the "circle of pure sounds" is the equivalent to Marinetti's syntax. Boredom is the enemy and Russolo turns towards the renewal of music through the noises of technology, establishing that as machines are a part of modern life so their noises cannot be

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69. Berghaus, *Theatre, Performance, and the Historical Avant-Garde* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 102.

70. Luigi Russolo, "Art of Noise" (1913), Michael Kirby, *Futurist Performance,* trans. Victoria Nes Kirby (New York: Dutton, 1971), 168.

omitted. However, if Russolo ties Marinetti's project to his own in his inclusion of the "noises of modern warfare" of "Zang-Tumb-Tuuum," he more fully distances the syntax of music from the ego of the performer/creator.

With his project, Russolo, more fully than Marinetti, distanced the work from the body and from the ego of the performer and composer. His own invention of the intonarumori (or noise-intoners) pulled noises from their physical-origin/context, allowed them to be reproduced at will, and in any combination. Thus, even though all traces of Russolo's intonarumori were lost in a fire, and he struggled with a sense of failure in his project, his manifesto "Art of Noises" has proved central to the trajectory of the disembodied voice. As I will demonstrate in the next chapter, Russolo's manifesto has remained the touch-point for generations of sound artists in experimental music, sound texts, installations, and theatre.

Marinetti repeatedly addresses the contradictions inherent in Futurism, but he does not resolve them. I read disembodiment as a loss of self, projected outwards in the problematics of Marinetti's Futurism. In "Technical Manifesto" Marinetti instructs his poet-readers to produce a language that abandons the self. The self-abandonment that Marinetti hopes to provoke in poet-readers (and also listener-spectators) is an "as-if" consciousness, one that is projected in the imagined voice, separated from context, from the page and from its syntax. The voice of Marinetti's manifestos is defined by this disembodiment that is a combination of power and impotence. Not holding hysteria, wanting to provoke it in others through disembodied speech, deprived of the "I," Marinetti himself inevitably recuperates to a militarized voice and is always an embodied I.[71]

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71. Jobst Welge writes that the disintegration of the subject—its fragmentation—in Futurism is not Marinetti's ultimate goal; rather, his long-term goal is to empower the (Italian)

Foreman returns to futurist aggressions, critiquing Marinetti's agendas but not his tactics. From his earliest Ontological-Hysteric productions, Foreman employed a variety of forms of psychic aggression against the spectator. He has used loud sounds and blaring lights as "framing devices," and these devices show how Foreman is aligned with the futurist tradition of aggression. However, Marinetti used aggression to wake the spectator to art and to culture's passéisme (traditionalism) through direct physical address and attack; Foreman uses his strategies to interrupt the spectator's own habits of consciousness. Foreman wants the spectator to notice, not only that, "art is made," but also that "art is being made."[72] In the Ontological-Hysteric Theater Foreman applies aggression to this end and puts process at the center of the spectator's engagement.

In Foreman's manifestos, which function less as exegeses than as extensions of his productions, Foreman continues to reveal that art is being made. Foreman does this, as Puchner has shown in "Manifesto=Theater," by setting up rhetorical "tricks."

> The boundaries between manifesto and theatre become increasingly porous, so that some of the sketchily drawn scenes that appear amidst the text are labeled "manifesto," while the more straight-forward manifesto parts are called "theater." It is as if this unusual manifesto sought to make visible and manifest through its own structure the fact that theatre and manifesto are firmly entangled in each other, if not mathematically the

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subject through distance and extension. Welge, "Marinetti and Italian Futurism," *Modernism*, Volume 2, eds. Ástráður Eysteinsson and Vivian Liska (Amsterdam: John Bejamins Publishing Co., 2007), 548.

72. Foreman, cited in Kate Davy, "Foreman's *PAIN(T)* and *Vertical Mobility*," *TDR,* Vol. 18 (June 1964): 26.

same.[73]

Unlike Marinetti, who wanted to force action by making selective use of the theatrical, distancing it and employing it in his use of the manifesto, Foreman uses the manifesto to distance his theatre from theatre. Likewise, the disembodied voice distances Foreman's spectator from the audience.

Foreman distinguishes his attack on the audience from his appeal to the individual spectator. Towards the end of Foreman's play *Pearls for Pigs*, the character Maestro addresses the audience directly, to explain why he is protecting them from a "Mind Attack:"

Is it because I love you?

Or is it because I don't love each one of you in particular—

But just one of you,

I won't say who,

Who sits there in the darkness in front of me,

Whom I have looked at, seen, registered in my heart,

secretly.

And loved.

This means of course that the rest of you—strangers to

me—are beholden not only to me, but to the one my love

has secretly selected—though that one, that "other," has no

idea that "he" or "she" is the one chosen by my love.[74]

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73. Puchner, "Manifesto=Theatre," *Theatre Journal* Vol. 54, No. 3 (October 2002): 449-50.

Maestro reveals the writer's attachment to his audience in general terms: is there perhaps a lover in the audience? But he strips this potential lover of "personality," when he refers to the "one" as "other" and "he" or "she." This Other, within the audience but not inclusive of the entire audience, shares authorship with Maestro: the rest of the audience is beholden to him/her/other. This is an expression of Foreman's audience of one. Although *Pearls* is performed without recorded voices, it might well be taken as a *raison d'être* for Foreman's use of disembodied voices: that is, to address each spectator's individual psyche. If Foreman's technological solution of dividing the voice and body appears to solve Marinetti's quandary for extending the human body in the speaking machine/body, there is a gap between the solutions: Foreman's addressee is not the "folla," the mass, crowd, or collective. Rather, Foreman uses the disembodied voice to speak directly to a single audience member, to the "audience of one."

The audience of one and the disembodied voice in Foreman's theatre are related because the voice that dictates without body can speak through any one and to any one. When, in the seventies, Foreman began crossing out names of characters before lines of dialogue and then frequently erased all indications of speakers, he did so because "Kate wanted more dialogue."

> As far as I was concerned life's contingencies were the most productive raw materials available for making art, so if Kate wanted to have more lines, I gave them to her, and in the process discover something in the play I hadn't been aware of before. [75]

Kate Manheim revealed to Foreman the interchangeability of his own "lines." In turn, Foreman

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74. Foreman, *Pearls for Pigs* in *Paradise Hotel and Other Plays* (New York: Overlook Press, 2001), 243.

75. Foreman, *Unbalancing Acts: Foundations for a Theater* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1992), 88.

was content with assigning Manheim the additional lines that she requested because, as a great believer in contingency, he was (in principle) consistently attempting, in contrast with Marinetti, to abandon authorship. Like the problematic that Maestro outlines, the text that any actor speaks is not particular to any character-body, even when the author's own specified addressee, Manheim, spoke it. Foreman used recorded voices to detach the voice from the body so that voices did not seem to emanate from even an imaginary live presence (either as offstage speech or "inner" thoughts) and could not be said to belong to anyone.

The analyses of Foreman's productions in the last chapter reveal that the aggressive strategies of Marinetti's Futurism play an important role in the aesthetics, if not the theory or politics, of the disembodied voices on the Ontological-Hysteric stage.

2.2.3 Dada's "Thought is made in the mouth."

Dadaists "negated" Marinetti's causes and ideas, in favor of pure letters, but in pursuit of the Dada *rien* they would stage the disembodied voice in ways that would confirm their connection to Symbolism, Futurism, as well as to subsequent historical and neo-avant-gardes. If in Futurism, the staging of voices without bodies was central to its attack on the bourgeois body, Dadaists use performance to act out trauma themselves. Dadaists determine that to do away with "guilty social overtones," they must attack their own productions: that is, the world in themselves.[76] Through staged self-attacks, they produce disembodied voices.

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76. Historians of the avant-garde have long wanted to wrest dada from its identity as either an extension of Futurism or as uniformly nihilistic. The associate curator of the sprawling 2005/2006 exhibit, Leah Dickerman, embodies this drive in her mission to re-represent dada's complexities:

> For fundamentally, Dadaism is about producing art in changed historical

Dadaists would free words by ridding them of the world. Hugo Ball, a student of Max Reinhardt, and one of Dada's founders, explains that he founded the Cabaret Voltaire as a space to negate the "humiliating age."

> Our cabaret is a gesture. Every word that is spoken and sung here says at least one thing: that this humiliating age has not succeeded in winning our respect. What could be respectable about it? Its cannons? Our big drum drowns them. Its idealism? That has long been a laughingstock, in its popular and academic editions. The grandiose slaughters and cannibalistic exploits? Our spontaneous foolishness and our enthusiasm for illusion will destroy them.[77]

The "things" that words "say" in and of themselves distance them from journalistic debasement, as well as from "cannons," "idealisms," "slaughters" and "cannibalistic exploits." Like Marinetti, Ball is here equating freed words with freedom from society, but rather than staging a resistance to the bourgeoisie in its performance, Ball uses the Cabaret as a "gesture" to cordon-off words from the "humiliating age," as a sacred space; Ball's negation of the world in the word is a cathartic process, a purification of words that renders them into gestures.

> circumstances. Given Dada's commitment to the production of works, and its knowing engagement with cultural tradition, its iconoclastic diatribes are better read as a critique of both modernism and a more traditional art than as a wholesale jettisoning.

Dickerman provides "stages," according to the six cities within which there was most activity: Zurich, Berlin, Hanover, Cologne, New York, and Paris. Through this organization, Dickerman hoped to demonstrate dada's overwhelming abundance of art making (as opposed to anti-art) and to assert the characteristics particular to place and historical moment, as multiple as they were (and thus also clarify boundaries between Dada and Futurism and Surrealism). Leah Dickerman, *The Dada Seminars* (Washington: D.A.P. 2005), 3.

77. Hugo Ball, *Flight Out of Time: A Dada Diary*, ed. John Elderfield, trans. Ann Raimes (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 61.

Freeing words from meaning implied also distancing them from Art. With the manifesto, Ball enacts a disruption of meaning from words, and, by implication, from Futurism. Ball performs an unraveling in the first manifesto:

> Dada psychology, dada Germany cum indigestion and fog paroxysm, dada literature, dada bourgeoisie, and yourselves, honoured poets, who are always writing with words but never writing the word itself, who are always writing around the actual point.[78]

Ball uses Dada as a pejorative adjective, setting it before the nouns that Dadaists reject: "psychology" and "Germany." Marinetti also purported to liberate words, but he *made* them speak in the service of an agenda. As much as Marinetti resisted Homeric syntax, he enacted it because of the importance to him of conveying meaning. Ball demands a more absolute freedom than Marinetti, whose rhetoric, if not grounded in libraries and academies, was still rhetoric concerned with persuasion, under the guise of contagion. Associating himself with a movement from the outset that he lampoons, Ball demonstrates that in Dada words function not logically as an argument, but as sonority and rhythms. In fact, the Dada manifesto (in all its hands) will come to represent, according to Puchner's genealogy in *Poetry of the Revolution*, the decisive division of word from action. Ball divides the manifesto's performativity from its theatricality, or its action from its speech. It cannot, will not, act in the world, but it will enact and re-enact this refusal.

Dadaists opposed the madness of their age with madness; they "mimed" glossolalia and echolalia with their own voices and bodies. Certainly, some Dadaists *had* gone mad or had aped madness to avoid military service, but in his performance of his *Verse ohne Worte* (or Verse

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78. Ibid., 220.

without Words), *Gadji beri bimba* at Cabaret Voltaire, Ball deliberately disabled himself by performing in a constrictive body-length cylinder. This costume further displaced Ball's body from the audience's mind and centered their attention on his verse without words.

While references to Dada's psycholinguist madness abound, Ball reveals the most about playing at madness in his description of his recitation of *Gadji beri bimba* at Cabaret Voltaire.

> Everyone was curious. I could not walk in the cylinder so I was carried onto the stage in the dark and began slowly and solemnly:
>
> Gadji beri bimba
>
> Glandridi lauli Ionni cadori [79]

Within Ball's verse without words, the verse-*form* (or syntax) persists even as the poet does away with words. While such performance would appear to qualify Ball as Dadaist an instigator of his audiences as much as the Marinetti as Futurist, Ball did not include onstage the bourgeois as Marinetti had in his plays. Instead, Ball attacked his own words, the work of art, and *himself* with gestures of trauma and madness.

In his attack on himself and his art, the Dadaist re-*enacted* trauma as, Brigid Doherty shows, a means of identification.

> The Dadaist's own body is to be bloodied inside and out (leaking from the hand as from the heart, in pain both physically and emotionally) and shattered in a way that will allow him--perhaps compel him--to comprehend the frenzy and the specific intellect of his age because he can identify with them, because, we must suppose, both the frenzy and the

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79. Ball, 70.

intellect, both the madness and the consciousness will be his own.[80]

It matters little, Doherty writes, whether the Dadaist simulated or had a true encounter with trauma. What is at issue is that the artist attacked his own body in order to witness his or her own (real or feigned) trauma. For Doherty, this acting out of trauma *was* protest and required a splitting. Doherty's analysis points to ways of examining the dada poetics that produce the disembodied voice.

As a poet Ball mangles his own body like the visual artist, and he portrays his experience of witnessing his own trauma and the effect on him as if from afar:

> The stresses became heavier, the emphasis was increased as the sounds of the consonants became sharper. Soon I realized that, if I wanted to remain serious (and I wanted at all costs), my method of expression must not be equal to the pomp of my staging…. The heavy vowel sequences and the plodding rhythm of the elephants had given me one last crescendo but how was I to get to the end? Then I noticed my voice had no choice but to take on the ancient cadence of priestly lamentation, that style of liturgical singing that wails in the Catholic churches of East and West.[81]

In Ball's description of listening to his own voice, he iterates the disembodied voice. His voice, as if of its own volition, makes "choices" and words become "sharp" things, coming from no body. Listening to his own voice, Ball provokes an anxiety in himself. The anxiety reaches a crescendo in which Ball's "miming" of a disembodied voice returns him to an awareness of his

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80. Brigid Doherty, "See: We Are All Neurasthenics!" or, the Trauma of Dada Montage," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Autumn 1997): 89.

81. Ball, 71.

body "in sweat" and, in turn, traumatizes him, for he recounts in his diary his life's trajectory following the recital of his sound poems at Cabaret Voltaire, as if his conversion to devout Catholicism and his self-exile from Dada were the immediate outcomes.

Although Tristan Tzara was one of the four founders of Dada with Ball, his approach to negation and self-attack through a joyful fragmentation represents a distinct tendency through which he comes to be known as the "spokesman" for Dada. In *Dada Manifesto 1918*, Tzara bluntly distances the manifesto from Futurism:

> To put out a manifesto you must want: ABC to fulminate against 1, 2, 3, to fly into a rage and sharpen your wings to conquer and disseminate little abcs and big abcs, to sign, shout, swear, to organize prose into a form of absolute and irrefutable evidence, to prove your non plus ultra and maintain that novelty resembles life just as the latest appearance of some whore proves the essence of God.[82]

Tzara is opposed to the futurist manifesto of "rage" (argument) and "irrefutable evidence." Yet he is here writing a manifesto, which is crafted to apparently present an argument, to "show that people can perform contrary actions together while taking one fresh gulp of air." Tzara is less concerned than Ball with the purification of the word than with continuous contradiction." If for Ball it was too much to act out the rejection of the artist in his own body, Tzara puts his own personality as artist under stress and holds within himself the two poles of Dada in its joyful productiveness and negation.

Tzara rejects Marinetti's "rage" but proposes, as Marinetti had, the "wireless" to free

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82. Tristan Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," in *The Dada Reader: A Critical Anthology*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 36.

the human consciousness. In his homage to Francis Picabia's line drawings, "Pensées sans idées" ("Thoughts without Ideas"), he inscribes an apparent refutation of Futurism's actions *and* this lineage to the "wireless."

> Ideas poison painting; if the poison bears the sonorous name of a big philological potbelly, art becomes contagion and, if people rejoice at this intestinal musicality, the mixture becomes a danger for clean and sober men. It is only negative action that is necessary. Picabia has reduced painting to a simple structure; everyone will find therein the lines of his own life,
>
> Which go with time by railway and by wireless telephony.[83]

Tzara claims that the only resistance to an art poisoned by ideas and spread by contagion is "negative action." But negative action does not mean no action or a turning away from art entirely, despite the profession of an anti-aesthetic. Instead, it means clearing art of ideas, thus allowing those who rejected art on the grounds of its "philological belly" to return. Tzara's poem helps to illuminate the disembodied voice's performance. As one of the modern metaphors that carry one's life, wireless telephony bares the special status of the disembodied voice in the avant-garde to explode constraints, paradoxically reducing them to "the trajectory of a word, a cry, thrown into the air like an acoustic disc." Tzara acts out the refusal of the artist in his self, but carefully orchestrates two things at once.

Fragmentation, taken to a physical level, enables Tzara to free the word from the body to, in turn, allow words to do many things at once. In his play, *Le Coeur à gaz* (*The Gas Heart,*

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83. Tzara, "Francis Picabia: Pensées sans langages," *Seven Dada Manifestos and Lampisteries,* trans. Barbara Wright (New York: Riverrun Press Inc., 1992), 83.

1921), in which each of the parts of a face (eye, ear, nose, neck, and mouth) is a character, a fragmented production begins from the very stage directions that introduce the play.

> It is only the greatest three-act hoax of the century; it will satisfy only industrialized imbeciles who believe in the existence of men of genius. Actors are requested to give this play due a masterpiece such as Macbeth or Chantecler, but to treat the author—who is not a genius—with no respect and to note the levity of the script which brings no technical innovation to the theatre.[84]

Tzara establishes from the outset that the play is a product of a fragmentation that exists in the performing and viewing of art in a commercialized society. The "imbeciles" who will be satisfied by this hoax are not seeing the play but beyond it to the marketing scheme of a genius. The actors must perform as if the play were a masterpiece because they are in on the hoax and thus subservient to it. But the actors must also ignore the author who, as far as the more important task of the hoax is concerned, does not exist. In other words, no part of the body is permitted to know what to think according to its own standards (or the conceits of an integrated personality).

Tzara's introductory statement represents a critique of the business of art, and proposes (as does the play itself) a freedom from the absence of a controlling "body." While the Heart of *The Gas Heart* wanders about the stage saying nothing, each of the other parts of the face, detached from the whole, wanders on and off the stage as it pleases, speaking in automatic language.

EAR: The eye tells the mouth: open your mouth for the candy of the eye.

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84. Tzara, *The Gas Heart* (1921), trans. and eds. Michael Benedikt and George E. Wellwarth in *Modern French Theatre* (New York: E.P. Dutton Paperbacks, 1966), 133.

NECK: Tangerine and white from Spain

I'm Killing myself Madeleine Madeleine.

EYE: Upon the ear the vaccine of serious pearl flattened to mimosa.

EAR: Don't you think it's getting rather warm?

MOUTH (who has just come in again): It gets warm in the summer.[85]

It is possible to interpret the parts of the face as characters and read sense into the lines they each recite, as does Robert Knopf in noting the sanity of Mouth's sentences as compared with the others; Knopf reads Mouth as the arbiter of sense in the play.[86] Neck is long and graceful, and recites ditties. I read throughout the play an analogy with experiments on the psyche. By isolating the parts of the body, as dynamic psychiatrists did, Tzara disables the controlling consciousness. Fragmenting the face is analogous to automatic writing experiments because the parts of the face are no longer subservient to the Mouth (where "thought is made"). Disembodied, the parts are freed from the monopoly of consciousness (or the mouth), and thus dissenting voices may be heard.

Tzara demonstrates his devotion to fragmentation, as sense or non-sense, in the "recipe" that he offers his readers for mastering the automatic poem:

Prenez un journal. Prenez des ciseaux. Choisissez dans ce journal un article ayant la longueur que vous comptez donner a votre poème. Découper l'article.

Découper ensuite avec soin chacun des mots qui forment cet article et mettez-les dans un sac. Agitez doucement. Sortez ensuite chaque coupure l'une après l'autre dans l'ordre où

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85. Ibid., 135.

86. Bert Cardullo and Robert Knopf, *Theater of the Avant-Garde* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 266-71.

elles ont quitte le sac. Copiez consciencieusement. Le poème vous ressemblera. Et vous voila, « un écrivain infiniment originale et d'une sensibilité charmante, encore qu'incomprise du vulgaire. M. L'antiphilosophe et Tristan Tzara.[87]

(Take a newspaper. Take some scissors. Choose from this paper an article the length you intend to make your poem. Cut out the article. Next carefully cut each of the words that make up this article and put them in a bag. Shake gently. Next take out each cutting one after the other in the order in which they left the bag. Copy conscientiously. The poem will resemble you. And here you are—"an infinitely original writer of charming sensibility, even though you are misunderstood by the vulgar peoples.")

Tzara's recipe proposes a means for readers to free their own disembodied voices. If, in the avant-garde the voice is disembodied to free the word from the control or contamination of the actor's body and the world, Tzara's recipe, which seeks an impact *on* the world, returns the poet *to* the world. In *Theory of the Avant-Garde* Bürger identifies Tzara's recipe as an exemplar of the "liberating life praxis," that links Dada to Surrealism by a tendency other than aggression.[88] When the Surrealists turn to the automatic poem, which resembles Tzara's recipe, they will maintain that we all hear disembodied voices, whether we know it or not, and if we could access

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87. Tzara, "To Make a Dadaist Poem," http://sdrc.lib.uiowa.edu/dada/litterature/15/pages/18.htm, accessed 6 November 2007. Originally published in *Littérature*, No. 15 (July/August 1920).

88. Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 53-4. This praxis is "dangerous," according to Bürger, because it leads to solipsism in which a rarefied group of artists confirm one another, and leads ultimately to Bürger's condemnation of the avant-garde and premonitions of doom for the neo-avant-garde: that is, that they failed at liberating the world and that their prolonged failure is inevitable in a bourgeois society.

such voices, we would have access to an innate (and liberating) creativity. Such is the pursuit of the absolute that Jameson identifies in *A Singular Modernity* that ties the negating artist back to the world.

Foreman displays his ties to Dada most specifically in playing at the destruction of art. He stages a pleasurable destruction that lets the spectator know at every moment that he, as writer, director, has doubts about his own production. In his early productions, Foreman destroyed the stage with dissociation and disembodiment. Impeding the progress of action onstage with loud sounds and recorded voice, he forced spectators to confront the stage, to see it and hear it again. Later, he speeded up the pace of his productions forced brutal confrontations of the spectator with his or her own processes of spectatorship. For Foreman, as for Tzara, the stage held and was the representative detritus of art and culture.

Furthermore, Foreman seeks, as Tzara did, to give voice to negations and assertions, the thoughts and counter-thoughts that exist simultaneously. To this end, Foreman sometimes uses the device of the disassembled body. As Kate Davy explains, "Often, a line spoken by a character is actually Foreman's reaction to a line he has just written":

Voice: Oh, it says what happened to Max's red feet.

Rhoda: ---Why am I thinking about it now.[89]

Davy interprets Foreman's formulations as evidence that Rhoda's text springs directly from Foreman's psyche and that all Ontological-Hysteric actors are representative figures, not beholden to their own unified or consistent line of reasoning. Yet, with Tzara's *The Gas Heart* in mind, I suggest another interpretation; like Tzara, Foreman frees voices from a controlling

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89. Foreman, cited in Kate Davy, "Richard Foreman's *Vertical Mobility* and *Pain*(*T*)," *TDR,* Vol. 18, No. 4 (June 1964): 28.

consciousness that ordinarily keeps hidden the voices that occur and cross each other's wires simultaneously all the time. Foreman displaces these voices from the internalized context of the writing of his individual body and puts them onstage in an associative context with actors' actions.

The dadaist disembodied voice, which staged the art and its own critique, plays importantly in Foreman's attempts to create distances between the controlling consciousness and its associative contexts. In his first manifesto, Foreman announced his intention to dismantle the stage. "The stage. Destroy it carefully, not with effort but with delicate maneuvers."[90]

2.5 The Disembodied Voice of André Breton's Automatic Messages

> We are built to 'take pleasure in'. But the effort must be made to try and insure that pleasure will feed not the 'I' (which is the developer of the will) but rather the disassociated not-I within us.
> Foreman, "The Carrot and the Stick."[91]

This chapter has traced the disembodied voices of the avant-garde that *converged* with those traced in dynamic psychiatry and psychoanalysis. At the same time that dynamic psychiatrists were theorizing access to the unconscious, avant-garde writers were staging disembodied voices. In Symbolism, Futurism, and Dada, writers lay claim to a voice that came from elsewhere, not from a body, not from a live presence. Writers not only claimed these voices for their own writing processes, for dictations, they created theories (of *vers libre*, *parole in liberta*, and *Verse ohne Worte*) that validated and promoted the disembodied voice. Staging in texts and on the

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90. Foreman, "Ontological-Hysteric Manifesto I" in *Plays and Manifestos*, 68.

91. Foreman, "The Carrot and the Stick" (1976) in *Reverberation Machines*, 219.

stage served as proof of the independent existence of voices without bodies and presences.

André Breton finally and explicitly links that which had been implicit for decades: the literary pursuits of the disembodied voice and the pursuits and discovery of the unconscious. In "The Automatic Message," Breton reconstructs his trajectory.

> The application of psychoanalytical investigative procedures made this route particularly attractive, in the post-war years, it had necessarily to pass via the little group of poets we had formed so that once we had set off along it, we could hear it rumbling ad infinitum both before us and behind.[92]

The route that Breton refers to is of automatic writing experiments, which Janet used as a means of relieving the hysteric's symptoms, and the avant-garde applied, under different names and with different degrees of intent. Mallarmé distanced words on the page from their contexts; Maeterlinck, Marinetti, and Tzara sought approaches to writing without the obstruction of the conscious mind, but the Surrealists applied *specific* psychic experiments systematically as a means of accessing the "verbal impulses" for their creative work.[93] This section demonstrates that Breton's direct discourses with psychoanalysis through his experiments with automatic writing led him to gesture more definitively (with the disembodied voice) than the previous historical avant-gardes against theatre.

The term, "surréalisme," which Apollinaire coined in the context of his play *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* (*The Breasts of Tirésias*, 1917), was theatrical and non-programmatic in

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92. André Breton, "The Automatic Message" (1933) in *The Automatic Message, The Magnetic Fields, The Immaculate Conception,* trans. Paul Gascoyne, Anthony Melville, and John Graham (London: Atlas Press, 2001), 26.

93. Breton, "What is Surrealism?" 1934 in *What is Surrealism? Selected Writings*, ed by Franklin Rosemont (New York: Pathfinder, 1978), 183.

comparison with the meaning that Breton would give to his movement five years later. Apollinaire's concerns, as specified in his introduction to the play, are with theatre's verisimilitude but are not directed toward "local color." Instead, his representation of "nature" gives "free rein to fantasy," which suggests a merging of nature and fantasy that includes an important emphasis on dissociated voices.[94] In the text of the play, stage directions indicate that, "Radio placards enter" and recite in the genre of telegrams, with stops and starts (that had been also so compelling to Marinetti). Some characters are directed to shout their speeches at the audience through a megaphone. If, with this technique, Apollinaire does not exactly disembody voices, he distances them from bodies and alters them, using the technologies of early twentieth century *reality*. The ways in which these tools alter reality provide alternatives to the verisimilitude of conventional drama. The megaphone distances and mechanizes the speaker's voice from his ears.

Voices distanced from "bodies" become intrinsic to a new theatre and writing of the early twentieth century. In seeking to refine the "poetry *of* the theatre" rather than "poetry *in* the theatre," Jean Cocteau replaces "literature" on the stage with visual and aural images such as the "human phonographs" in *Mariés de la Tour Eiffel* (*Wedding on the Eiffel Tower*, 1922).

> Like the classic chorus, like the compère and the commère who act as masters of ceremonies on our music-hall stage, [they] describe, without the least "literature," the absurd action which unfolded, danced and mimed between them.[95]

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94. Apollinaire, *The Breasts of Tirésias* (1917), in *Modern French Theatre*, trans. and eds. Michael Benedikt and George E. Wellwarth (New York: E. P. Dutton Paperback, 1966), 56-91.

95. Cocteau, *Wedding on the Eiffel Tower* in *Modern French Theatre*, trans. and eds. Michael Benedikt and George E. Wellwarth (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1966), 95. Cocteau

For Cocteau, this representation of an altered relationship to sound was important, as his collaborations with adventurous composers Erik Satie and Les Six demonstrate. However, rather than replace the body, Cocteau's preoccupations led him to stage a disembodying technology that transforms bodies. Attributing classical roles of the chorus to megaphones and phonographs, Cocteau fulfilled conventional theatrical expectations while simultaneously representing technology onstage. In *Parade* (1917)*, La Voix Humaine* ("The Human Voice," 1930), and his film, *Orphée* (1950), Cocteau makes bodies absorb the technologies of the phonograph, the megaphone, and the radio, which have the effect of extending the range and power of bodies and voices.

Although Breton wrote two plays with Phillipe Soupault early on in their collaborations--*S'il vous plait* (*If You Please*, 1919) and *Vous m'oublierez* (*Forget Me Not*, 1920)--Breton repudiates the stage, eventually turning against many of the members of Surrealism for the crime of participating in theatre. Breton rejects theatre for reasons that seem like variations on the theme of anti-theatricality of Symbolism; that is, the stage inevitably forces "silent phrases," which Breton claims in "The Automatic Message" as the originary impetus for Surrealism, into bodies. The stage and its characters were in conflict with Breton's approaches to automatic writing and presented challenges that, according to Annabelle Melzer, Breton could not resolve:

> It is difficult to understand how one can write a play by a method of gratuitous pen-pushing. How does one acknowledge the end of one section of dialogue and the beginning of another, the division into acts or scenes? Do the character's names spontaneously enter the consciousness of the playwright and what makes them speak,

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is drawn to a different path to the unconscious from Breton, not towards automatic writing, more towards automatic images, against which Breton rails.

> first A, then B, then A again? When the writing is a collaborative effort, when does one author write, when the other?[96]

Characters contradicted, for Breton, the politics of collaboration, by artificially fixing the boundaries that he and Soupault meant to blur and by creating a hierarchy of the stage and of audiences. Theatre and the stage put into question the validity of Breton's argument that silent phrases were accessible to anyone. Theatre would seem to force silent phrases that came from no one in particular into individual and elevated bodies.

Even though Breton rejected the stage, the two plays he did write evolved "organically" from his collaborations with Soupault, and the foundations of Surrealism lie in Breton and Soupault's automatic writing experiments between 1919 and 1921, on the cusp of Breton's association with and histrionic rejection of Dada. According to Breton's exegesis of Surrealism, *Les Champs Magnétiques,* (*The Automatic Message,* 1933), the process was suggested to him when he noticed a silent phrase that seemed to be "Knocking on a window-pane" of his consciousness.

> I took as examples only what I would call *silent phrases*, which I would quote without speech marks since the personality expressing itself had up until then seemed scarcely distinct from my personality at the time; phrases, which, without my having to dress them up in any way, seemed to fit my voice without difficulty.[97]

Breton recognizes that these phrases are both separate and not separate from their author(s).

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96. Annabelle Melzer, *Dadaist and Surrealist Performance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 170.

97. Breton, *The Automatic Message, The Magnetic Fields, The Immaculate Conception*, 15.

Breton attributes the phrases to a "personality expressing itself" and thus not separated from the author(s). Yet, if the personality "fits" "his voice without difficulty," Breton disavows that personality as his own. Breton suggests that the phrases produced by automatic writing read in and of themselves as dialogues with the writer's hand or with other silent phrases, implying an internal staging.

Reenactments within the confines of a *private* theatre (and thus in conditions that were close to those of Freud) produce the first phase of surrealist writing. Breton, at first with Soupault only and soon after with an ever widening circle of participants, sat down to produce self-induced trance states.

> Soupault et moi nous songeâmes à reproduire volontairement en nous l'état ou elles se formaient. Il suffisait pour cela de faire abstraction du monde extérieur et c'est ainsi qu'elles nous parvient deux mois durant, de plus en plus nombreuses, se succédant bientôt sans intervalle avec une rapidité telle que nous dûmes recourir a des abréviations pour les noter. [98]
>
> (Soupault and I dreamed of reproducing in ourselves the state out of which [automatic sentences] emerged. In order to do this we only needed to disregard the world outside and thus they came to us through two full months, one after the other, so rapidly that we finally were forced to write shorthand.)

Breton and Soupault "disregard the external world," and put themselves into the trance states of hysterics in order to produce writing that is, *like* the writing of mediums or hysterics, automatic. Like Dadaists, the Surrealists re-enacted madness, but they did not do so before an audience.

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98. Breton, "Entrée des Mediums" in *Les Pas perdus* (Paris: Nouvelle Revue Française, 1924), 149.

Their adamant privacy might also be interpreted as a signal of a separation from the world, an elitism that Breton was loath to admit.

Breton's elitism revealed itself in his relationship to the hysteric. While with automatic writing Breton and his group tapped into the inherent creativity of the hysteric and the medium, Breton aligned himself more with the doctors of hysteria than with hysterics or the avant-garde. Looking back on the evolution of Surrealism, Breton asserts an ambiguous position in the history of thought.

> Some of us have been known to claim that responsibility for a large proportion of the research that has called upon it goes back to Charcot and the beginnings of the wonderful debate on hysteria which still continues and was prompted by his teaching, however dogmatic it may have been.[99]

Asserting himself as a versed proponent of discoveries of the unconscious, Breton blurs the line between the goals of Surrealism and those of dynamic psychiatry. When Breton refers to "some of us," it is difficult to know whether he is indicating the medical scientific world or the avant-garde. Breton seems to be taking credit for the "research that goes back" inscribing his research in the trajectory articulated here and distinguishing Surrealism from the previous avant-gardes.

Breton and Aragon performed as saviors of hysteria and hysterics from a trajectory that had, since Charcot's downfall, buried the disease. Marking the fiftieth anniversary of the discovery of hysteria, Surrealists demonstrate their "mad love" of hysterics.

> (Nous, Surréalistes, tenons à célébrer ici le cinquantenier de l'hystérie, la plus grande découverte poétique de la fin du XlX[s] siècle et cela au moment même ou le

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99. Breton, *The Automatic Message*, 16.

démembrement du concept de l'hystérie parait chose consommée… L'hystérie n'est pas un phénomène pathologique et peut, à tous égards, être considérée comme un moyen suprême d'expression)

We, Surrealists, mean to celebrate in these pages the fiftieth anniversary of hysteria, the greatest poetic discovery of the end of the century, and at exactly the same time that the dismemberment of the concept of hysteria seems to be complete.... Hysteria is not a pathological phenomenon and can, in every respect, be considered a supreme vehicle of expression.

Breton's "celebration" of hysteria (also enacted in his novel *Nadja,* 1928) was based in the belief that hysterics were artists and their symptoms, not evidence of pathology but an act of creation. For Breton, the debate on hysteria was "wonderful" because it tapped into the innate creativity therein, "the artistic value of expression stemming from hysteria and hypnosis."[100] If Breton and his small group of poets who subjected themselves to the processes of induction were male, the hysteric on whom the aesthetic was based was always female. The erotic was so written into Breton's Surrealism as an attempt, Bürger writes, to allay the danger of solipsism; it is a means of writing the Other in at every moment.

Breton's outspoken emphasis on automatic writing reveals a gulf between his and the Symbolists' relation to their elsewhere, the Futurists to objects, or the Dadaists to madness, in his relationship to the Other. Surrealists relied on the Other for access to silent phrases, which are not exceptional but instead constants in normal life and are normally inaccessible. Access to the unconscious and to the taboos that impeded it suggested to Breton, as it had to Freud, a means

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100. Louis Aragon and André Breton, "Le Cinquantenaire de l'hystérie, 1876-1928" in *La Révolution Surréaliste*, Vol. 4, No. 11 (15 March 1928), 20.

for freeing society's innate creativity. In "The Automatic Message," Breton outlines this mission:

> We propose to bring automatic writing, which is tempting and easy within reach of everyone by freeing it from the intimidating and unwieldy apparatus of hypnosis because we think this writing can achieve without all its disadvantages what Shrenk-Notzing saw in hypnosis: "a reliable way of allowing psychic facilities to flourish, especially artistic-creative talent, by concentrating consciousness on the task at hand and freeing the subject." [101]

Crucial to the popular usage of automatic writing is the withdrawal of hypnosis. If like Charcot, Breton puts the hysteric on display, like Freud he proposes doing away with hypnosis. By suppressing the impeding consciousness, hypnosis enabled access to automatic thoughts and writing. But concurrent with Charcot's downfall was the repudiation of hypnosis and a return to its former association with seduction/theatre. Distancing himself from associations with the theatre, Breton maintains that automatic writing does not require hypnosis; the act of writing itself can alter the writer's state.

Implicit in Breton's project, as in Foreman's project, is the greater access they offer the world to silent phrases, or voices without bodies; to this end Foreman imbeds instructions in his writing processes, which like the surrealist recipe, are to free the reader/spectator and his creativity. In his foreword to *Paradise Hotel and Other Plays*, Foreman writes,

> To the extent that impulse is policed and suppressed (by society or by the superego) we suffocate. Ah—do I propose that a good society (or a good way to live one's personal life) is to let impulse run free? No, I do not. But I do propose that the most desirable

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99. Breton, "The Automatic Message," 27.

> human condition is that where one is able to avoid stasis—spiritual and emotional—by continually subjecting oneself to the nonstatic unbalanced state, where impulse is continually permitted to introduce a creative wobble to the straight and narrow of well-disciplined mental life.[102]

Foreman extends his access to impulses in his own writing processes to his spectator as a recipe not only for writing, but also as a recipe to "avoid stasis." Part of Foreman's life liberating praxis, as it had been for Breton, is to perform a critique of logic that translates to the reader or spectator as more than a personal aesthetic. Foreman hints that if the spectator ceases to suppress or pathologize her or his disembodied voices as neurotic/schizophrenic symptoms according to a "policing" society, in turn she or he will lead less static lives.

The avant-garde lacuna to which Foreman most obviously returns is surrealist. Harries points to those aspects of Foreman's theatre that return to Surrealism with a difference.

> Nowhere is the link between Foreman and Surrealism more visible than in his dedication to automatic writing. And nowhere is the contradictory nature of this link more visible than in the paradox of repeating, through performance, this "dictation from paradise."[103]

Like Breton, Foreman embraces the poetics of hysteria as an important strategy of his writing processes. Also like Breton, Foreman rejects the theatre, but where Breton could not imagine a way of putting on stage the fruits of his automatic writing without sabotaging the very principles that drove the practice, Foreman discovers solutions. Foreman's "repetition" of the gesture of

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102. Foreman, *Paradise Hotel and Other Plays* (New York: Overlook Press, 2001), 7.

103. Harries, "The Ends of the Avant-Garde," *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (March 2004): 95.

"dictation" onstage for the theatre distances him from Breton. The recorded, disembodied, voices of Foreman's plays, which are staged to resist "controlled language with rational pretensions," *repeat* the poetic strategies that occur in his writing processes. The recorded voices of actors' flattened affect undo intention; staged interruptions between the voice and the body make them seem hardly related to one another. The character Voice has a privilege over bodies; it can inhabit whomever and for however long it chooses. Breton repudiated the theatre because he thought, Jacqueline Chénieux-Gendron writes, "dialogue and all controlled language with rational pretensions fell foul of the critique of logic."[104] To some degree, Foreman is able to extend the disembodied voice thanks to the technology of magnetic tape. In the final chapter I demonstrate the solutions that Foreman, unlike Breton, but with as much outspoken animosity towards the compromising effect of theatre on the psyche, found towards the problem of putting automatic writing onto the stage.

Conclusion

Foreman is tied to a century-long genealogy of avant-garde pursuits of the disembodied voice. Symbolists pointed to the disembodied voice through the Idea, the elsewhere, and translation. While Maeterlinck found practical theatrical solutions with the model of translation, this model only gestured towards the disembodied voices of the unconscious. In Futurism, Marinetti created oppositions to make objects speak through parole in liberta, but he was continually drawn back to his own body-ego. Dada's self-attack provoked the disembodied voice; the body,

104. Jacqueline Chénieux-Gendron, *Surrealism*, trans. Vivian Folkenflik (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 122.

beaten, mangled, or amputated by war was also still, silent, and frozen and out of this state it spoke. Madness was a performance that produced new literature. Breton realized the Symbolists' "elsewhere" or "Idea" and democratized them, proclaiming automatic writing as the means to a psychic liberation. Breton tied Surrealism and the poetics of hysteric specifically together through the "silent phrases," that spoke to him as disembodied voices.

That the staging of the disembodied voice represented impossibility drew diverse movements to its approximation. Mallarmé's "failures" to make *Hérodiade* "stage-worthy" and to realize *The Book* drew artists to try and try again to find answers to the most salient features of his work. Just as Mallarmé's gaps compelled writers, so Russolo's failure to realize the projects he articulated in "Art of Noise," compelled post-war avant-garde composers to his project of severing sound from representation. Composers return to the manifesto as a source of inspiration for noise and electronic music, even up to the present day.[105] Insofar as the very dream of the disembodied voice is "impossible" for the historical avant-gardes, so Foreman's theatre maintains this impossibility. The impossibility is represented in the hysteria at the core of Foreman's theatre in a voice that wants to be spoken by no body but cannot.

Foreman aligns himself with avant-garde aggression and "agonism," setting language on the body and the world, sacrificially and brutally. Yet, Foreman distances himself from the avant-garde in his proposal of the obliterated ego.

> The organization of the composition should dis-organize the ego (which is what it wants a theme to be-at-home-in) and evoke in the self the dispersed self (in which ALL themes are). (Simple dada & Surrealism don't do that. Nonsense, irrationality, don't do that, they

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105. The starting point of the next chapter is post-war returns to Russolo's manifesto.

> don't dissolve the ego, they are rather anti-bodies which, injected, strengthen the ego. They wall themselves in from the world as non-sensical or supra-sensical, which only increases the need and ability of the ego to define its territory as against external, irrational territory.)[106]

Maeterlinck, Marinetti, Tzara, and Breton were still bound to the world, the body, and to their own egos. Foreman applies their practices, but the "dispersed self" is *his* expression of the disembodied voice. Foreman argues that the avant-gardes do not succeed in dissolving the ego but rather only in strengthening it by creating "walls" between themselves and the "world." If one draws lines between irrational and rational, one is constructing a wall. Coming from a Lacanian perspective, Foreman holds that all themes of rationality and irrationality, for example, are "always already" dispersed everywhere. In other words, drawing on his "bad" knowledge of Lacan's theories, Foreman tries to further disembody the disembodied voice.

106. Foreman, "14 Things I Tell Myself," in *Reverberation Machines: The Later Plays and Essays,* 210.

CHAPTER THREE: **The Musical Theatricalization of the Anti-theatrical Prejudice.**

Oh what did I do!
Wake up Mr. Sleepy! Your Unconscious Mind is Dead!

This chapter establishes Foreman's use of magnetic recording within the context of the practices of the neo-avant-garde(s). Foreman gives two reasons for turning to recorded voice: as a solution to the problem of relying on non-actors to memorize lines and also as a reflection of the experimental music scene that surrounded him at Jonas Mekas's Cinematheque.[1] The story, which has only been touched upon by Foreman or by the critical discourse on his work, has a greater theoretical and practical framework. In the late 1960's when Foreman began to incorporate recorded voice into his productions, the second wave neo-avant-garde was returning to tape practices that had been established at the end of the Second World War, driven largely (though not solely) by Pierre Schaeffer's *musique concrète* and John Cage's writings on indeterminacy. Post-war composers had, in that earlier period, reacted to and against the historical avant-garde's celebrations of noise.

This chapter traces the problematic returns by the neo-avant-gardes to the disembodied voices of the historical avant-gardes. According to Hal Foster, the avant-gardes do not simply repeat or negate their predecessors' devices. Enacting the logic of the Freudian concept of *Nachträglichkeit* they move, instead, forwards and backwards.[2] The events of the historical avant-gardes, for example, are like traumas, which "failed to signify," as they shocked, and so

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1. Foreman, *Unbalancing Acts: Foundations for a Theater* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1992), 33.

2. Hal Foster, *The Return of The Real* (New York: October Books, 1996), 29. In one translation of *Nachträglichkeit*, a trauma can only be understood the second time around, and in a divergent translation, it can only be understood in hindsight.

looked forward to being understood in future realizations. Conversely, the neo-avant-gardes looked backwards, transforming the "originary" trauma, with theory and technology, into the "historical avant-garde."[3] According to the logic that Foster proposes, the dreams of the avant-garde were only registered in language and consciousness in the later neo-avant-garde. Consequently, only in hindsight can we understand the historical avant-gardes.

All that was omitted from the historical avant-gardes vis-à-vis the disembodied voice *cannot* be fully realized in the neo-avant-gardes because the very device is hysterical (and not only the act of returning). The device of the disembodied voice frequently signaled the artist's yearning for technology to fulfill his or her dreams, and the unavailability of technology was sometimes the reason that the disembodied voice "failed to signify." But the post-war availability of technology to realize these dreams did not necessarily mean that the neo-avant-gardes filled in the gaps. They sometimes performed conscientious "omissions," re-staging the yearning rather than providing an answer to it.

This chapter takes as its starting point the technology that allows the neo-avant-gardes to succeed insofar as Per Bäckström contends: that is, in doing away with the work of art.[4] If we apply Bäckström's formulation, the disembodied voice *is* realized by the properties of magnetic recording but not in the sense of "completion." When the historical avant-gardes staged voices

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3. This is an analogy with the hysteric, who by telling her or his story, places it in the past. See Peggy Phelan, *Mourning Sex: Performing Public Memories* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

4. Per Bäckström, "One Earth, Four or Five Words: The Peripheral Concept of 'Avant-Garde,'" *Action Yes*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Winter 2008), accessed 10 November 2008, http://www.actionyes.org/issue7/backstrom/backstrom1.html.

without bodies, they staged the "joyous intensities of anxiety and alienation."[5] When post-war neo-avant-garde composers, who are the primary subjects of this chapter, returned to the sites of these intensities they returned with the trauma of the Holocaust to a specific absence. The work of art, which is sometimes the score or text, but also frequently the speaker/singer, made invisible or even non-existent by techniques of disembodying, points not only to a gap or lacuna but also to this trauma.

This chapter traces the genealogy of the post-war neo-avant-garde's recorded voices that directly inform Foreman's disembodied voices. Though neo-avant-garde composers return to many of the suggestions by the historical avant-gardes, the first section shows how with the advent of tape, they distance themselves from the violences of Russolo's manifesto. The second section outlines the projects of Schaeffer and Cage, who use magnetic tape to undo the connotations of war and to recover and/or re-imagine a soundscape that had been filled by Hitler's voice. The third section demonstrates that the predominance of disembodied human voices in late fifties' tape experiments of minimalist music and New Music Theatre represents a critique of the earlier generation's distance from politics. In the late sixties, the anti-theatrical theatricality of post-war composers is refracted into the environment; tape composition could be heard everywhere in popular music, as well as in minimalist music, and sound-texts. At this juncture Foreman is one of the few theatre practitioners to introduce magnetic tape into theatre. The next and final chapter traces Foreman's place in this as well as the previous two genealogies.

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5. Jameson, *Postmodernism or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), 29.

3.1. Glorious Noises of Modern Warfare

The genealogy of the disembodied voice converges with the history of noise in Luigi Russolo's manifesto, "Art of Noise" (1913). The human voice appears in two of the categories of the six families of noises that he plans to "achieve mechanically:" "3. Whispers/Murmurs/Grumbles/ Buzzes/Bubblings" and "6. Voices of animals and humans: Shouts, Shrieks, Moans, Yells, Howls, Laughs, Groans, Sobs."[6] Russolo identifies such voices in his vocabulary as noises *because* the listener hears them randomly, as one hears other noises of the "modern capital." Voices, though "natural," are like mechanical noises that are relevant to new music because, "coming confusedly and irregularly from the irregular confusion of our life [noise] is never totally revealed to us." That is, the voices that Russolo lists, like noises, signal beyond representation and beyond signification in words. These voices, as well as those of "shouting crowds" that Russolo praises elsewhere in the manifesto, remain for successors a fixed entry in the vocabulary of noises.

Russolo's text erupts without any apparent means of immediate realization, but with this text he lays out the work ahead: that is, to follow the machine in its early twentieth-century forms towards a new music.

> THIS EVOLUTION OF MUSIC IS PARALLELED BY THE MULTIPLICATION OF THE MACHINE, which collaborates with man everywhere. Today, the machine has created many varieties and a competition of noises, not only in the noisy atmosphere of

6. Russolo, "The Art of Noise" (1913), trans. Victoria Nes Kirby, in *Futurist Performance,* Michael Kirby (New York: Dutton, 1971), 171.

the city but also the country.[7]

Russolo equates the evolution of music with the evolution of the machine, not only because new technology would separate the instrument from the virtuosity of the musician, but also because, keeping pace with technology, noise would define the future. As the machine created more noises, music demanded more means for collaboration with machines. Using the available technology of loudspeakers, sirens, and phonographs, the avant-gardes *did* incorporate disembodied voices into sound/noise and performance texts. In *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* (1912), Apollinaire stages the loudspeaker; in *Parade* (1917), Erik Satie incorporates the siren and typewriter; in *Imaginary Landscapes 1* (1939), John Cage orchestrates two variable speed turntables; Edgard Varèse brings the Martenot and the Theremin into his works. None of these inventions allow for the types of collaborations with technology that Russolo announced. Composers actively sought the technology that would allow them to realize their dreams, and Russolo's manifesto provided them with suggestions.

When the technology that corresponded to the avant-gardes' dreams became available after the Second World War, composers, to varying degrees of exactness, applied Russolo's suggestions: to sever instruments/voices from musicians/speakers, to distance voices from their contexts, and to generate voices or voice-like sounds with every type of machine. Composers would accept Russolo's invitation to "walk through a large modern capital with our ear more attentive than our eye," to redefine what constitutes sound and noise. Varèse, Cage, and Karlheinz Stockhausen each engaged their projects with the idea that the musician's work was not to *invent* sounds, but to *hear* them and to "organize" them. Russolo's families of sounds

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7. Ibid., 167.

pointed to a new mode of composition: one that was based largely on organization.

When neo-avant-garde composers turned to Russolo's text they were, however, confronted with his celebration of the sounds of modern warfare as "glorious" and the fact that modern warfare was responsible for the technology that would make it possible to realize Russolo's dreams. Russolo had demonstrated his allegiance to Marinetti's poem, "The Battle of Adrianople" when he included a large excerpt of it in his own manifesto; he also listed the sounds of fighting machines and exploded bodies in his initial project. Enlisting his project in the service of Marinetti's proto-fascist rhetoric, Russolo tied a poetics of noise to the theatre of war.[8] Realizing Russolo's dreams, the war would set his futurist argument within this determined context.

Magnetic recording had presented a conundrum for almost half a century ever since Valdemar Poulsen invented the Telegraphone in 1898; it was not until Nazi propagandists recognized the importance of the disembodied voice that tape was improved in the interest of perfecting and disseminating Hitler's inner voice.[9]

I am now and then aware that it is not I who is speaking, but that something speaks

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8. There is an unresolved debate over Russolo's sympathies after the First World War. In his introduction to *L'Art des Bruits,* Giovanni Lista writes that Russolo exiled himself in Paris *because* he was anti-fascist. Russolo, *L'art des Bruits*, trans., Nina Sparta (Paris: Éditions Allia, 2003). Russolo becomes anti-fascist but he never becomes, according to Douglas Kahn, anti-war. *Noise, Water Meat: A History of Sound in the Arts* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999), 66.

9. In 1898, Valdemar Poulsen invented the Telegraphone, which consisted of a stretched wire that picked up magnetized sounds. The advantages of magnetic recording were audible from its inception. Providing the operator with control over his material by permitting replay, the magnetic recorder allowed corrections to be made to the "original." But after an initial excitement following its introduction at the Paris International Exposition and patent in 1900, the fact that it was unwieldy and dangerous to operate caused its distribution to be delayed some fifty years.

through me. On such occasions, I frequently feel as if there were some mistake in human logic or as if it had limits of which it was not aware. Now and then, ideas, concepts, views occur to me that I read nowhere, heard nowhere and never before thought, nor can I justify them by logic and they do not seem capable of being logically justified. [10]

In his fantasies of being spoken to, Hitler shares traits with the dreams of the historical avant-garde. Like Marinetti's aesthetic argument for a literature freed of logic based in the fiction that a propeller spoke/dictated to him, Hitler's argument validated the practice of disseminating the irrational by the conceit that some *thing* spoke to him. Both pretended to diminish their own importance in order, in turn, to increase it. That these two hearers described the voices *as if* without bodies supplied them with justification for disseminating their own voices.

Wartime lab technicians and engineers worked urgently to extend the reach of Hitler's voice. Joseph Goebbels considered, "radio to be the most modern and most crucial instrument that exists for influencing the masses."[11] The new technology would enable a seamless trajectory from the voices in Hitler's head to the voices that Germans heard.

Sound reproduction revolutionized by magnetic tape has rendered orders unnecessary. Storing, erasing, sampling, fast-forwarding, rewinding, editing, inserting tapes into the signal path leading from the microphone to the master disc made manipulation itself possible. Ever since the combat reports of Nazi radio, even live broadcasts have not been

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10. Hitler, cited in David Redles's *Hitler's Millennial Reich: Apocalyptic Belief and the Search for Salvation* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 149.

11. Joseph Goebbels, cited in J. Noakes and G Pridham, *Nazism: A History in Documents and Eyewitness Accounts, 1919-1945* (New York: Schocken Books, 1983), 385.

live.[12]

With the sound editing capacities of magnetic tape, flaws in Hitler's speeches were erased.[13] The perfection of hi-frequency biasing and the new capacity to loop and edit meant that taped programs were now indistinguishable from (and frequently sounded even better than) live broadcasts.[14] The dramaturgy of the "live" was elaborated by the co-presence of the audience at the rallies. While Hitler's image was perfected, the chaos of the crowds was encouraged and preserved to give the illusion of immediacy. Crowds at rallies sounded perpetually ecstatic to increase the effect of the mass upon the masses. Replay and looping were weaponry in the hands of the Nazis, helping to cause confusion and dread in the allied forces.

Radio and the loudspeaker made the disembodied voice inescapable. The Nazi propagandist, Eugen Hadamovsky promoted the radio as, "the ideal propaganda instrument because it brings the human voice to every ear."[15] Radios were distributed to more than 70

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12. Friedrich Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter,* trans. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young and Michael Wutz (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 108.

13. "After delivering an address, [Goebbels] could leisurely listen to the recording and make the changes that he felt would heighten the speech's propaganda effect. Then the propaganda ministry would issue a press release containing the edited text, or parts of it, which German newspapers would publish as if they were presenting the text of the original speech." Cited by United States National Archives and Records Administration, *Joseph Goebbels, Goebbels-Reden*, ed. Helmut Heiber (Düsseldorf, 1971-72): xxii-xxiii.

14. This change caused confusion between the live and the mediated: listeners associated scratches with the recordings of a phonograph (the only known technology); live broadcasts were the only ones that sounded less flawed. Major Herbert Orr, who was instrumental to bringing the technology to the United States, commented that these radio broadcasts seemed strangely so exact as to sound like transcriptions.

15. Eugen Hadamovsky, "Die lebende Brücke: Vom Wesen der Funkwartarbeit," in *Dein Rundfunk* (Munich: Zentralverlag der NSDAP, 1934): 22-6, accessed 17 July 2009, http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/hada3.htm.

percent of the population, with access to only one station. Propagandists guaranteed their listeners' attention when Hitler spoke by making mandatory listening schedules and community listening sites that were monitored by "Radio Wardens." Giving a milder justification for the presence of the wardens, Hadamovsky wrote that they were the physical bridges between the radio and the people. Sealing up the silence, Hitler filled all ears with his voice.

Hitler's disembodied voice made orders unnecessary because a listener merely needed to hear its sound, which was projected over loudspeakers and across continents. To Otto Strasser in 1939, Hitler's voice had a special power over his body that did not require Hitler's visible presence.

> Hitler responds to the vibration of the human heart with the delicacy of a seismograph or perhaps a wireless receiving set, enabling him with a certainty with which no conscious gift could endow him to act as a loudspeaker proclaiming the most secret desires.[16]

Hitler not only used technology to distribute his voice, his voice *was* the technology that "acted" upon its listener, not as part of a human whole, but as a machine on its listener's mind. Strasser recalls Hitler's aural image as more efficient than his unified visual image because radio removed the limits of visible space. Hitler's voice could be projected into places that his image could not reach. With his voice, Hitler could project himself into the mind's eye of his listener.

If post-war composers greeted magnetic recording as a long awaited instrument, it was not a neutral instrument with which they could realize the dreams of the historical avant-garde. Post-war composers had been "children of the radio," for whom Hitler's voice had become a constant noise of the modern city. There was no more identifiable noise in the worldwide

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16. Strasser, *Hitler and I*, trans. Gwenda David and Eric Mosbacher (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1940), 74.

soundscape than Hitler's (frequently howling and ranting) disembodied voice.[17] Listeners from everywhere, unable to differentiate between the recorded and live, heard classical the speeches of the Fuhrer punctuating the 24 hour "live" performances of classical music. This soundscape conformed to Russolo's families of noises and human voices: technologized and organized.

The Nazi ideology that perfected magnetic recording and was distributed by it marked the technology. This marking is exemplified in tape's journey from Signal Corps John T. Mullin's discovery of reels in post-war Frankfurt to his delivery of "the same 50 reels of German magnetic tape" to Bing Crosby. Crosby hired Mullin and "his German machine to start recording his Philco show…" on the spot.[18] Not only were these particular reels marked in a concrete way, by the Nazi broadcasts that could be heard under the re-recorded portions, but in less concrete ways, all tape had been marked by its refinement by and service to Nazi propaganda and now mainstream American entertainment.

Technology altered the way people heard and created a disorder in hearers, which R. Murray Shafer named "schizophonia."

> Since the invention of electroacoustical equipment for the transmission and storage of sound, any sound, no matter how tiny, can be blown up and shot around the world, or

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17. "We tend to think of World War ll as a highly visual war, experienced by Americans back home primarily through pictures […] but the way we have come to remember the war—through this visual record—misrepresents how people followed and imagined this war on a daily basis. This was a war people listened to […] World War ll was a radio war." Susan J Douglas, *Listening In: Radio and the American Imagination* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 162.

18. John T. Mullin, "The Birth of the Recording Industry," *Billboard* (18 November 1972): 56-9, 77.

> packaged on tape or record for the generations of the future. Sounds have been torn from their natural sockets and given an amplified and independent existence.[19]

Separations of sounds from their origins had been manipulated for centuries, but their elaboration by recording technology produced, according to Schaeffer, schizophonia.[20] Everybody with access to a radio or loudspeaker was subject to this disorder. Returns to the disembodied noises of the historical avant-garde, in light of Second World War, would, by necessity, be "conscientious returns." The equations of split sound/origin and voice/body played in the minds of those artists whose imaginations were fueled by the advent of tape. The haunting of the disembodied voice resounds in Foreman's productions, especially, as we will see, in those texts where Foreman theorizes its power.

3.1.2 Conscientious Returns: Varèse, Cage, and Schaeffer

In the hands of Varèse, Cage, and Schaeffer, Russolo's manifesto becomes a palimpsest, written over in their practices and exegeses. Schaeffer proved the closest in spirit to Russolo; more of an enthusiast than a composer, he was an *engineer* who brought his expertise into his fantasies of sound. By Schaeffer's own admission, his processes of cutting sounds from their sources were violent and thus maintained this element of Russolo's project. However, Schaeffer's very first broadcast composition, "Études aux chemins de fer" (1948), in which he recorded the sounds of

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19. R. Murray Schaefer, *The Soundscape*: *The Tuning of the World* (Rochester: Destiny Books, 1977), 34.

20. Jonathan Sterne writes in *Audible Past* that Shafer's take on sound recording, as a cut from the original, presumes the idea of the original, which in post-structural criticism can no longer hold. Sterne, *The Audible Past*: *Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

steam engines onto shellac records and looped their sounds, points to his theoretical passion for a recuperative phenomenology. This passion suggests that through the processes of musique concrète, Schaeffer was intent on *undoing* the violence associated with the sounds of the world, beginning with the trains of post-war Europe. The looping and cut-and-paste techniques that evolved in his experiments suggested the means for liberating sounds and realizing a hope, articulated by Varèse, that the *end* of the "inferno" would produce a "spiritual and aesthetic renaissance."[21]

Varèse's pursuit of a machine that, like Russolo's intonarumori, would incorporate modern technology and produce noises that could not be produced by traditional instruments, was so consuming that in its absence he temporarily abandoned composing. Nevertheless, Varèse kept abreast of every new technology and congratulated Russolo for his inventions (completed in exile in Paris):

> C'est avec le plus vif intérêt que j'ai entendu et étudié le "Russolophone." Je suis sûr que les possibilités qu'il offre et la facilité de son maniement lui assureront dans un bref délai sa place à l'Orchestre. [22]
>
> (It's with the greatest interest that I listened to and studied your "Russolophone." I am certain that with all it offers and the ease with which it is played, its place within the orchestra is soon to be assured.)

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21. Varèse, cited in "Varèse: A Sketch of the Man and His Music," Chou Wen-Chung, *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol 52, No. 2 (April, 1966), 167.

22. Varèse, cited in the introduction to Luigi Russolo, *L'Art des Bruits* (Paris: Éditions Allia, 2003), 36.

Varèse was dedicated to the same cause as Russolo: that is, to the inclusion of new instruments in the orchestra. Like Russolo, Varèse urged a parallel evolution of the machine and music, but he found the everyday noises of machines of the world boring and so was a harsh critic of the sounds enumerated in the "Art of Noises" and of those reproduced with noise-intoners. Varèse pleaded, "Why Italian Futurists, have you slavishly reproduced only what is commonplace and boring in the bustle of our lives?"[23] The answer to this question is Varèse's own music in which the emphasis is on the *organization* of noises *synthesized* by the composer's imagination.

Varèse's vision differed most from Russolo in his fantasies of utopian human voices: a world unified in a myriad of languages and the sounds of planets in total acoustical space. In his never completely realized masterpiece that he wrestled with for over a decade, *Espace*, Varèse imagined voices, "colliding, crashing."

> Phrases, slogans, utterances, chants, proclamations. China, Russian, Spain, the fascist states and the opposing Democracies all breaking their paralyzing crusts. …I suggest using here and there, snatches of phrases of American, French, Russian, Chinese, Spanish, German revolutions like shooting stars, also recurring words pounding like hammer blows or throbbing in an underground ostenato, stubborn and ritualistic.[24]

Varèse proposes here a utopian melding of languages. "The paralyzing crust" of democracies and

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23. Varèse, "Verse," *391*:*05,* New York (1917), accessed 12 June 2009, http://www.391.org.

24. Ferdinand Ouellette, *Edgard Varèse*, trans. Derek Coltman (New York: Da Capo Press, 1981). Because Varèse freely communicated his dreams, versions of this passage have appeared in several other texts, including Henry Miller's *The Air Conditioned Nightmare* (New York: New Directions, 1948), 163-4.

fascist states would be broken by this utopian synthesis, and human voices would be distanced from fixed national bodies and identities. Varèse distances his voices from Russolo's violences, which were notated at the limits of signifying: screaming, howling, and hysterical laughing.

The machine that Varèse pursued was not one that would create the noises of the everyday but would instead allow creation to spring directly from the composer's imagination. Varèse described this ideal instrument in the American Dada journal *391*:

> Je rêve les instruments obéissant a la pensée—et qui avec l'apport d'une floraison des timbres insoupçonnés se prêtent aux combinassions qu'ils me plaira de leur imposer et se plier a l'exigence de mon rythme intérieure.
>
> (I dream of instruments obedient to my thought and which with their contribution of a whole new world of unsuspected timbres will lend themselves to the exegesis of my inner rhythm.)[25]

The technology that was available before and during the war did not lend itself to one of the important aspects of Varèse's imagination, an "inner rhythm." Varèse wanted to be inside the machine, *of* it and wanted the machine to function as an extension of his mind. He took (in a gesture of private protest) a hiatus from composing, which would last more than a decade.

When Varèse returned to his own unrealized masterpiece *Espace* with tape as a close approximation of the technology he had long awaited, he was unable to realize his vision to his satisfaction. With the advent of magnetic tape, he did compose along similar lines, *Poème Electronique* for the 1958 Brussels World's Fair with and at the behest of Le Corbusier. Close in

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25. Ibid., 1. Electronic instruments, such as those Varèse would incorporate as they were invented, the Theremin and the Martenot, could do only the one thing they had been designed to do.

spirit to *Espace*, *Poème* is an eight-minute piece featuring disembodied voices, projected through 425 speakers. Simultaneously, Le Corbusier's images are projected on the walls of the Phillips Pavilion that he had the composer Iannis Xenakis build especially for the project.[26] Yet, *Poème Electronique,* as well as other of Varèse's later compositions, hardly approximates the scope of ideas he had had before the war. Varèse's visions of acoustical space were tied to a time before the confirmation of the "inferno" of the Second World War that Varèse feared; in that more innocent period Varèse's problematic relationship to the technological possibilities of composition impeded him from realizing the many fantasies he penned. By the time the war was over, the utopia that was central to his vision of his music no longer seemed possible.[27] Varèse's uncomfortable position between two worlds led Cage, who otherwise revered Varèse, to describe him as the composer who at one and the same time fathered forth noise and was stuck in the past.

Cage clarifies the convergences/divergences of Russolo's ideas and Varèse's practices by his readings of both. Cage demonstrates his allegiances to and differences from Russolo's ideas in "The Future of Music: Credo" (1938). Where Russolo writes, "every manifestation of our life is accompanied by noise," Cage maintains, "Wherever we are, what we hear is mostly

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26. While it is possible to see clips of the performance on youtube, a virtual reconstruction of the site gives a good sense of the evolution of the creative process and exhibition, accessed 1 June 2010, http://www.edu.vrmmp.it/vep/.

27. Most interesting is *Astronome*, Varèse's planned collaboration with Artaud that was never realized. A production by the same name was the result of a collaboration (long in the works) between John Zorn and Richard Foreman in 2009**.** While Foreman claims not to have known of the Artaud/ Varèse project, in the opening credits of Henry Hill's filmed version of the production there is a still of the two at work, ostensibly on *Astronome*. CF, Frances Dyson, *Sounding New Media: Embodiment and Immersion in the Arts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 33.

noise. When we ignore it, it disturbs us. When we listen to it, we find it fascinating."[28] Cage reiterates Russolo's statement that noise always exists. But, whereas Russolo describes a fixed situation of "accompaniment," Cage emphasizes the impact that listener's projection has on the noise as "disturbing" or "fascinating." Cage's definition of noise is dependent on the direction of the listener's focus.

Cage shows his indebtedness, particularly to the energy of Russolo's manifesto, not only in his comments on noise but also in the very typography, which is almost identical to that of Russolo's text.[29]

> I BELIEVE THAT THE USE OF NOISE TO MAKE MUSIC WILL CONTINUE AND INCREASE UNTIL WE REACH MUSIC PRODUCED THROUGH THE AID OF ELECTRICAL INSTRUMENTS.[30]

Cage weaves his message, which sounds a bit like a threat, between paragraphs, demonstrating the consequences of technology to music's future. Like Russolo's manifesto, the tone of Cage's "Credo" is aggressive, in the style of the prose and of the typography. Returning to Russolo's suggestions, Cage urges a radical change in the processes of art and in the relationship of art to the world through his manifestos and practices. For Cage, Russolo's text represented a point of departure to which experimentation must, paradoxically, return. Listing it as a central text in his

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28. Cage, "Future of Music: Credo" (1938), in *Silence* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), 3.

29. David Nicholls, *American Experimental Music: 1890-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 190. Nicholls points out the remarkable similarities of the two works, except for the fact that the upper case text, such as the one cited above, forms a "continuous line of thought."

30. Cage, "Future of Music: Credo" (1938), 3.

library, Cage bemoans its absence in post-war theory and practice.[31] Cage upholds Russolo's text as an example of the slow progress of experimental music in the United States.

More relevant to Cage's own thoughts about noise than Russolo's text is the reading that Varèse provided of Russolo's text. Cage claims Varèse as the composer and theorist who "established the present nature of music."

> This nature does not arise from pitch relations (consonance-dissonance) nor from twelve tones nor seven plus five (Schoenberg-Stravinsky), but arises from an acceptance of all audible phenomena as material proper to music. While others were still discriminating "musical" tones from noises, Varèse moved into the field of sound itself, not splitting it in two by introducing into the perception of it a mental prejudice.[32]

Varèse organized sound without Russolo's dividing lines between noise and music. But a more important difference is, for Cage, that Varèse disrupted the prejudices of the past by challenging the habits and tastes of convention in the orchestra. Because Varèse undermined this challenge with his emphasis on his individual imagination in relation to noise, Cage felt he was also damned as a composer of the past. Unlike Varèse and Russolo, Cage proceeded towards indeterminacy, which displaced the composer's tastes and the concept of the "work" to focus instead on process. Further, Cage distanced himself from the historical avant-garde in his consistent concern with space and silence.[33]

Schaeffer was the most specifically invested in solving Russolo's conundrum of

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31. Cage, "The Dreams and Dedications of George Antheil," *Modern Music*, No. 23 (January 1946): 78-9.

32. Cage, "Edgard Varèse," in *Silence*, 84.

33. Cage "History of Experimental Music in the United States" (1949), in *Silence*, 70.

transforming noises into music by subjecting them to a process of de-signification. An acoustic engineer at Radiodiffusion Télévision Française throughout the war, Schaeffer had been collecting sounds on records for radio dramas when, he writes, he was surprised more than anyone else to find *music*. Thus, he began his experiments on shellac records, with filters, synchronizing discs, a disk-cutting lathe, an echo chamber and four turntables. Schaeffer's invention of musique concrète, which will evolve into a continuous reformulation of his modulation of sounds, makes its most important advances with the advent of magnetic recording.

The magnetic tape recorder will be treated as the embodiment of the new technology that, as Russolo imagined, would speed the progress of music's development. Varèse, Cage, and Schaeffer will embrace tape as a means of producing, playing, and organizing sound and creating disembodied voices. But returning to the suggestions of the historical avant-gardes, they return to an unanswerable yearning, which they re-inscribe with the hysterical split that follows the trauma of the Second World War.

3.2.1 "Unsplit the split": Post-War Concrete Disembodiments

In 1950, when tape became accessible, it not only promised a new means of making music but also a liberation from the Nazi soundscape. "Whether one uses tape or writes for conventional instruments," Cage writes, "the present musical situation has changed from what it was before magnetic tape came into being."[34] At first an unknown quantity, tape lent itself to an "experimental action," which Cage defined as "the outcome of which is unforeseen."[35] Schaeffer

34. John Cage, "Experimental Music," in *Silence*, 11.

35. Ibid., 69.

believed that "new technology implied new thinking."[36] The excitement over magnetic recording can certainly be ascribed to the historical avant-garde's prolonged anticipation of a new means of producing sound. The fulfillment of this anticipation gave tape the aura of proof of, for example, Russolo's prediction that music would parallel the evolution of machines and of answering Varèse's fantasy of a machine that would generate sounds obedient to his thought. Tape represented for composers and technicians a means, according to Schaeffer, of "liberating" sound from "Austrian 12-tone music," and of distancing noise from what had been a dangerous *jouissance*.[37]

Schaeffer's project evolved within the context of the electronic revolution, which prompted exchanges between sound engineers and composers in radio stations and labs and prompted also the founding of studios dedicated to exchanges in electronic or electro-acoustic music. In 1942, Schaeffer united the Studio d'Essai and Radiodiffusion Française; the physicist Werner Meyer-Eppler and composer Herbert Eimert founded the rival post-war studio at Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk, which became Cologne Radio where in 1951 Eppler and Eimert founded a studio for electronic music. Important studios grew out of Milan, at the Studio di fonologia, and in the United States, the University of Illinois.[38] Within these studios, engineers and musicians had access to the newest technology, which enabled them to analyze, modify, and

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36. Palombini, Carlos, "Pierre Schaeffer, 1953: Towards an Experimental Music," *Music & Letters*, Vol. 74, No. 4 (November, 1993), 557.

37. Pierre Schaeffer, interviewed by Tim Hodgkinson, "Interview with Pierre Schaeffer--Pioneer of Musique Concrète," *ReR Quarterly Magazine*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (1986).

38. Robin Maconie, "Through the Looking Glass: Robin Maconie revisits *Hymnen*, Karlheinz Stockhausen's electroacoustic classic of the 1960s," *The Musical Times*, Vol. 139, No. 1863 (Summer, 1998): 4-11.

create new sounds.

Schaeffer's invention in 1948 of musique concrète is based, according to his own mythos, on a moment in which a needle got stuck in a groove, provoking in Schaeffer a violent epiphany.[39]

> À force d'accumuler des bruits en studio, pour rechercher des effets dramatiques, que je me suis avisé qu'ils excédaient les textes qu'ils étaient censés illustrer. Ils se sont mis à parler de musique. Je cherchais le contraire de la musique, elle m'est revenue dessus. Avec violence. Et sans que je m'y attende.[40]
>
> (In the process of collecting sounds for the dramatic effects for radio, I realized that the sounds I had collected surpassed the texts that they were supposed to illustrate. The sounds spoke to me of music. I was looking for the opposite of music, but music kept coming back. Violently. And when I least expected it.)

Schaeffer heard a mistake that in turn "spoke to him of music" and revealed to him the techniques of musique concrète. In its primitive stages Schaeffer attempted to bring forth the sound's "itself" through a technical practice of the "Closed Groove technique," or "looping" of records. The closed grove was a forced looping that disrupted continuity. Looping modified sound by repeating it and identified the properties of sound by isolating it. Looping distanced

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39. "That historical 'ur-loop' did not occur at a chosen place within the record, it was produced within the sustained resonance of the sound of a bell (and not during the attack), so the result was a bell-sound to which the beginning and the end were missing. To Schaeffer's great surprise what he perceived was not a bell, but an oboe-like sound, which resulted from the absence of the attack" Daniel Teruggi, "Technology and musique concrète: The technical developments of the Groupe des Recherches Musicales and their implication in musical composition." *Organized Sound,* Vol. 12, No. 3 (November 2007): 213.

40. Schaeffer, "De la musique concrète à la musique même," *La Revue musicale***,** Nos. 303, 304, 305 (1977): 170.

sound from "signification" (what Schaeffer called its "event"). Schaeffer was, in other words, unraveling the parts that were taken to be of a whole: what the object was and the sound it made (its "sonority").

Immersed throughout the war in the process of *creating* representational sounds for radio dramas, Schaeffer pursued de-signified sound, and he unwittingly created an anti-theatrical drama of the disembodied voice. Schaeffer was determined to undo drama and literature in sound because he believed that they doomed sounds to representation and signification, leading the listener away from new music. He writes in *À la recherche d'une musique concrète*:

> Any sound phenomena can be considered (as well as the words of language) through its relative signification or through its own substance. As long as signification is predominant, and that we play on it, we have literature and not music. But how can one possibly forget signification, isolate the "itself" of a musical phenomena?[41]

Any sound or language can be used, if only parenthetically, for concrete music. Schaeffer puts into question not the sounds that are used but how one "plays" a sound in order to distance it from "signification." He proposes a type of playing that is not aimed at demonstrating the musician's virtuosity, but on releasing the inherent sound (the "itself") of an object. Instead of *playing on* the signification of the sound of a creaking door with metaphors or puns, or playing an instrument with virtuosity, Schaeffer insists that the "operator" (as opposed to musician) *jouer* ("play with"), which he (paradoxically) indicates is more like playing/playfulness in

41. Schaeffer, P. *À la recherche d'une musique concrète* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1952): 230.

theatre.

The "ur" moment when a new music was revealed to Schaeffer suggested to him the opposition of music to drama; musique concrète is, however, largely his attempt to recreate that "drama," as the Pythagoras metaphor that governs his project demonstrates. He outlines his application of the metaphor in a conversation with Frank Malina:

> In usual communication, when one hears something, its origin is usually easily verifiable (whether it be a bird singing, a violin playing or someone speaking). Acousmatics was the basis of Pythagoras' teachings. The Master had his disciples listen to him without seeing him. Thus, they concentrated on what he said without his person visually distracting them. Vision can, indeed, be a distraction. When I listen to a violin being played, my attention is drawn to the gestures of the violinist and to the technical aspects of his instrument for producing sounds-my understanding of the music he makes is affected by what I see. But when I listen to the radio or recordings, I am forced to modify my listening, to penetrate into the sounds alone.[42]

"Acousmatics" were the disciple-listeners of Pythagoras who, blinded, did not attempt to confirm what they heard with a visual reality. This made them better listeners, according to Schaeffer, than those who "looked" for a source. Schaeffer proposed that radio and concrete music were situations comparable to that of Pythagoras and his students that would suppress dramatic connotations, so that listeners would hear, as if for the first time. Contradicting his own theory, Schaeffer proffered a situation that was a drama in which a listener (as performer) was faced

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42. Frank J. Malina and Pierre Schaeffer, "A Conversation on Concrete Music and Kinetic Art," *Leonardo*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (Summer, 1972): 255-56.

with the choice of correcting a mistake *or* relinquishing the familiar. Schaeffer's project was driven by the faith that, reenacting the drama the listener would choose to let go of her or his desire to access the source of the sound in order to be surprised by it. Furthermore, Schaeffer's attempt to distance object-sounds (as Mallarmé had done with words) from their inherited meanings makes of his project an anti-theatrical theatricality.

Schaeffer's rejection of/dependence on theatre is especially evident in his most admired work, *Symphonie pour un homme seul* (1950).[43] *Symphonie,* the product of his collaboration with Pierre Henry, consists of twelve movements, sonorous objects and human voices create a "play of representations." Some of the movements begin with objects establishing a rhythm. Human voices hum, whistle, laugh, sigh, and crowds shout. Voices are repeated and manipulated by looping, and speeding up or slowing down. An entire episode is dedicated to a woman's sighs and cooing, and the voices go beyond representation into what sounds like variations on the theme of jouissance. In another section, phrases and dialogue overlap in the word "travaille" (work). Schaeffer subjected all the elements of the composition to an approach to and distance from the familiar and the abstract with the hope that the strangeness would be more important than the familiar. On the contrary, *Symphonie* was disappointing to Schaeffer *because* the traces of the object in the world--pots and pans, a woman's laughter, or the actor Sacha Guitry's voice--that are "isolated," create what Daniel Teruggi describes as, "the enchanting effect on the listener of lost contexts,"[44] were still *too* familiar or "dramatic." Schaeffer had hoped to minimize the

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43. Puchner identifies this rejection/dependence on theatre in his formulation of Mallarmé's anti-theatricality. *Stage Fright: Modernism, Anti-Theatricality*, *and Drama* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002).

44. Teruggi, 215.

"enchanting effect" on the ear to focus the listener's attention on the act of listening. This struggle, so intrinsic to concrete music, resembles the tensions in Foreman's own sound scores between the still-inscribed theatrical of the disembodied voices of actors and the "organizer's" anti-theatrical desire to suppress signification.

With the advent of magnetic tape, Schaeffer attempted to further distance sounds from their signification through cut-and-paste, which was a less violent technique of looping.[45] Daniel Teruggi traces the early evolution of the techniques of concrete music.

> The "axe-cut junctions" were replaced with…"micro-editing," in which tiny fragments of sound, representing milliseconds of time, were edited together thus creating completely new sounds or structures.[46]

Unlike the looping record, which is the result of an accident even when repeated intentionally, the tape loop is created through an active cutting and splicing. It is also easier to distance a sound on tape from its identity/source than it is to a distance sound on a record. The organizer of sound removes tiny pieces of tape from their "events" and incorporates them into other tiny pieces of tape. The sound thus no longer bears any relation to an originary object, and it becomes (not the tape itself, but the sound) a new *objet sonore*.

Collecting and organizing sounds on magnetic tape led Schaeffer away from composing to an analysis of listening that would prove, together with Schaeffer's accidental stagings of an anti-theatrical drama in theory and practice, the most salient contribution to the genealogy of the

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45. Tape had been available for several years, but it was only in 1951 that the French National Radio rewarded Schaeffer and Pierre Henry for their successful collaborative composition-performance of *Symphonie pour un homme seul* with the first ever electro-acoustic studio and brand new equipment.

46. Teruggi, 217.

disembodied voice.

> *Listening* means listening to someone, to something; and through the intermediary of sound, aiming to identify the source, the event, the cause, it treats the sound as a sign of this source, this event (Concrete/Objective)… *Perceiving*, means perceiving by the ear, to be struck by sounds, it is the crudest level, the most elementary of perception; so we "hear," passively, lots of things, which we are not trying to listen to nor understand (Concrete/Subjective)…. *Hearing*, here, according to its etymology, means showing an intention to listen, choosing from what we hear, what particularly interests us, thus "determining" what we hear (Abstract/Subjective)… Comprendre, means grasping a meaning, values, by treating the sound like a sign, referring to this meaning as a function of a language, a code.[47]

Schaeffer's delineation of four different modes of listening--understanding, listening intentionally, listening to identify a source, and reduced listening--suggests multi-dimensional layers of the drama of divided voice and body. In this drama the subject is *cast* in the most important role of a "focused" or "reduced" listener who passively waits and listens (on an elementary level) to be "struck" by sound. These theories of listening point to Stockhausen's innovations that would put the listener at the center of the unidentifiable sources of blurred voices and sounds. Schaeffer's theories equally suggest soundscapes in which spaces will be defined by sound.

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47. Michel Chion, *Guide to Sound Objects, Pierre Schaeffer and Musical Research*, trans. John Dack and Christine North, accessed 12 November 2010, http://www.ears.dmu.ac.uk/IMG/pdf/Chion-guide/GuideSectionI.pdf. Chion wrote and published his exegesis of Schaeffer's *Traite des objets musicaux* in 1983, but Chion's work has only been translated into English for the ElectroAcoustic Resource Site (EARS) since 2009.

Schaeffer brought listening to the forefront of electronic musical activity. If in 1913 Russolo healed a schism between the "musical and non-musical kingdoms," Schaeffer's musique concrète addressed the threat to the aural environment, with the knowledge that listening had become a more specialized activity. Schaeffer sought to protect the sounds of the world from the world that threatened their destruction by collecting, identifying, and organizing sounds and training the new ear to listen. Thanks in large part to Schaeffer's theories and practices, a musician was now, according to R. Murray Schafer, "one who listened with seismographic delicacy in the music."[48] That is, Schaeffer forged a new listening sensibility, so that a musician was now someone who listened.

Schaeffer's desire to free sounds from representation and connotations created, like Mallarmé, an impossible theatre. He telegraphed his frustration with his technology from the start, and reinforced frustrations through "spatial" ordering in the model of Pythagoras. The story of Pythagoras, as the central metaphor of Schaeffer's praxis, presents a teacher (speaker) who uses his voice to represent ideas to his students (listeners). The teacher not only makes meaning (significance), he heightens it by depriving students of seeing him. The analogous listener of Schaeffer's formulation is not freed from attachments to representations to hear the train as a sound in and of itself, but is instead like the Other in relation to the hysteric, struggling with the ear and the self to make sounds move beyond fascinating/horrifying phenomena. Schaeffer's "failure," lies in the fact, I believe, that he was able to represent a voice without body through this staging but was haunted by the fact that he could not make the voice (*objets sonores)* speak without bodies in the Real.

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48. Schafer, *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (New York: Destiny Books, 1994): 111.

Schaeffer consistently pronounces his failure and his critics faithfully acknowledge it, yet it is difficult, considering the import of his invention, to accept Schaeffer's assessment of his project. His frustration haunts his recordings certainly, so that we may listen to them with his same frustration, as fascinating sounds that *should* be music, and listeners have not ceased comparing Schaeffer's music to something else: to abstract painting, a "cinema of the ear" or "sound poetry." Schaeffer's "focused listening" is a controlled utopia based on deprivation. His lacunae in realizing this utopia made musique concrète find firmer ground elsewhere. Composers who visited Schaeffer's studio in Paris, for example, returned to their own studios to create combinations with concrete practices. Stockhausen returned to his studio in Cologne, which would soon stand for electronic practices opposed to Schaeffer's practices, to create concrete pieces that forged connections between electronic music and Total Serialism. New Music Theatre, a hybrid that developed from exchanges in the centers of tape activity and experimental music, combined concrete music with concrete poetry. The techniques that Schaeffer established of looping, backwards playing, sound modulation, morphology, and listening analyses, would have great import in Scratching, Sound art, Concrete poetry, and Sound texts in the work of other composers, in language-based experiments, and in the Ontological-Hysteric Theater.[49]

Foreman's early productions, like Schaeffer's project, enacted a rigorous and sometimes violent separation of the voice and sources. Like Schaeffer, Foreman attempted to disrupt the listener/spectator's usual habits and attachments to objects in order to refocus attention on the experience of seeing and/or hearing. Foreman directed attention to the moment of hearing by de-

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49. Schaeffer's techniques are enjoying yet another resurgence, thanks perhaps to a combination of nostalgia in the age of exponentially sophisticated technologies and to the technologies themselves. Such recent developments will be treated in the conclusion of this dissertation.

orchestrating "speech and activity," so that the spectator would ask himself: What is the act of hearing? Am I hearing now and now? It matters little whether the voices that Foreman disembodies represent those of a god, the author, or the spectator's own magnified inner voices. His disembodied voices maintain very tenuous (often non-existent) relationships with visible objects (bodies, props) so that the listener will be "struck" or, in Foreman's lexicon, "buffeted" by sounds and language. Foreman maintains, as did Schaeffer, that the spectator's own perceptions of hearing are at the center of his performances more than the performance itself or the meaning of those objects. The final chapter demonstrates through an analysis of his productions how Foreman faced the challenge of making spectators into hearers.

3.2.2. "Exterior to his mind": Disembodied Voices in Cage's Nature

Cage's formulations of theatre contrast with Schaeffer's rejection of theatre and in turn points to the import of each in the post-war genealogy of the disembodied voice. Schaeffer emphasized the similarity of his and Cage's experiment; he maintained that musique concrète and Cage's prepared piano were engaged in making the listener hear sounds in themselves. Schaeffer compared Cage's "polyvalent instrument that would do anything and sound like anything," to the soundboard. Yet Schaeffer held that the piano was less able than the soundboard and other percussive instruments to be non-representational. If Schaeffer was grateful to Cage for "establishing a link between the traditional musical language and a possible *langue* of concrete sonic objects," he was opposed to the piano because it always sounded *like* something, "the

strings quickly becoming gamelans, the form swinging between a tom-tom and the sonata."[50] Whereas Schaeffer treated uncooperative technology as the source of lifelong frustration, Cage welcomed the indeterminate aspects of materials, their "uncooperative" aspects and representational-sounding noises as well. Also, in contrast with Schaeffer's rejection of drama, Cage pointed to theatre (albeit, an anti-theatrical one) as the art that most closely approximates "nature in her manner of operation." [51]

Theatre suggests a direction for experimental music, Cage writes, not in opposition to music, but "relevant" to it. In "Experimental Music," he proposes theatre as the direction forward for experimental composers.

> Where do we go from here? Towards theater. That art more than music resembles nature. We have eyes as well as ears, and it is our business while we are alive to use them. The reason is that we are not just ears and that "focus" must pertain not only to listening but to seeing as well.[52]

If, to release the "itself" of sound, Schaeffer (to whom Cage here implicitly refers) gestured toward cutting the violin from the violin player and sound from theatre, the world, and significations, Cage posed nature as a theatre in which hearing and seeing happen all the time and in which the listener/observer is responsible for assembling or disassembling what he hears

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50. Schaeffer, "Vers une musique expérimentale," cited in Carlos Palombini, "Pierre Schaeffer, 1953: Towards an Experimental Music," *Music & Letters*, Vol. 74, No. 4 (November 1993), 542-55, accessed 10 March 2010, http://www.rem.ufpr.br/_REM/REMv3.1/vol3/Schaefferi.html.

51. Cage, *Silence*, 155.

52. Cage, "Experimental Music" in *Silence,* 12.

and what he sees.

Cage's growing interest in magnetic tape corresponds to a shift in his attention from music as structure to music as process, and music as process is what makes it like nature in her manner of operation. In 1951, Cage formed with other composers of the New York School, the Music for Magnetic Tape Project, which lasted three years.[53] Beyond the Project's brief life, Cage noted tape's suggestions for experimental music. A "situation [is] made available," Cage writes, by the very fact of tape.[54] The situation includes both what tape offers through material and how it changes the composer's approach. Time itself is altered by tape because the length of tape corresponds to time-15 inches per second--meaning that a composer need not follow known rhythms. Further on in "Experimental Music," Cage puts forward the transformative possibilities of tape.

> Cautious stepping is not characteristic of the possibilities of magnetic tape, which is revealing to us that musical action or existence can occur at any point or along any line or curve or what have you in total sound space: that we are, in fact, technically equipped to transform our contemporary awareness of nature's manner of operation into art.[55]

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53. The New York School included composers Morton Feldman, Earle Brown, David Tudor, and Christian Wolff.

54. Cage, "Experimental Music" (1957), in *Silence*, 7. If the radio had successfully challenged a composer's means of controlling sounds by habits and by taste, it had not provided the means of "imitating" nature. At first, Cage disliked the radio but gradually he used this inherent dislike to interrupt his own intention and incorporated radio consistently in his performances. It was only with the "striking coincidence" of magnetic tape at the end of the Second World War, Cage wrote, that composers might use the products of nature (which includes, for Cage, technology) to imitate nature. Cage, "Experimental Music" (1957), in *Silence*, 8.

55. Ibid., 9.

Cautious stepping is counting in music, which reveals intention; in nature, as in music, it rings of a controlling mind. As a machine without intention that could capture all sounds from anywhere, the tape recorder is a disembodied listener and a disembodied voice that requires no counting, makes no choices, and produces sounds from no body. This does not mean, however, that tape is left to its own devices.

The tape recorder approximates nature's manner of operation by doing away with the habits and intention of the composer. In "Composition as Process," Cage proposes that tape exposes the composer and the listener to what is already there: "With tape and music, synthesis, action with the overtone structure can be less a matter of taste and more thoroughly an action in a field of possibilities."[56] To hear what is already there is not simply a question of listening; habits and taste interrupt that capacity. For Cage, the composer's control is dictated by incidental taste, which causes the composer to use one sound and not others. Tape provides access to structures that are fields of possibilities that get us beyond matters of taste. If it is used properly, tape makes it possible to hear what is already there.

Williams Mix (1952), Cage's first tape composition and, according to him, the first performed in the United States, best exemplifies the ways that Cage used tape to outfox intention, habits, and taste. He engaged several different groups of musicians, under the auspices of his Project for Tape Composition, for the construction of the piece. Bebe and Louis Baron collected 900 sounds and over a period of nine months, Cage, Earl Brown, and David Tudor assembled eight tapes and catalogued the sounds:

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56. Cage, "Composition as Process," in *Silence*, 31. This is the first part of a three-part lecture delivered at Darmstadt in 1958. It caused an enormous divisiveness because some questionable translations made Cage's writing seem more radical than he intended.

A (city sounds), B (country sounds), C (electronic sounds), D (manually produced sounds) (including the literature of music) E (winds-produced sounds), F (small sounds requiring amplification to be heard with others).

They are further catalogued in terms of pitch, timbre and loudness. [57]

Eight separate tracks of collections were created, in order to invite as many different collections of sounds as possible. In this way, Cage distanced various processes from the composers' wills and intentions. Like Russolo, Cage organized sounds but by categories of environmental sounds, not by dividing noise from music. Unlike Russolo *and* Schaeffer, Cage proposed to welcome all sounds. Of all the processes specific to tape involved with composing and assembling *Williams Mix*, cutting proved the most indeterminate (and thus to Cage the most intriguing) of operations. Chance operations with the *I-Ching* determined the modifications and durations of spliced segments. Brown and Cage spent a year cutting and splicing sounds according to these determinations, altering their attacks and decays. Cage noticed that he and Brown had a different sense of the measurement of an inch and that a cut in the tape would affect the sound according to the cutter's own "hand" and the rate of decay. The "score" of *Williams Mix* re-presents the cuts that Cage and Brown made *with* "mistakes." Although there has never been another realization of the score, others interested in using the score would have to lay the pattern over the tapes of their own collected sounds and cut "on the scale of one to one." [58] With "dress-makers patterned" cutting and splicing, Cage attempted to outfox the determinacy of tape technology.

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57. Cage, *Williams Mix* in *John Cage: an Anthology,* ed. Richard Kostelanetz (New York: Da Capo Paperback, 1970), 109.

58. Richard Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage* (New York: Limelight Editions, 1994), 163.

For the performance of *Williams Mix,* Cage's dispersal of eight loudspeakers and the separation of sounds onto separate un-synchronizable tracks produced discontinuities or delays that he welcomed. The tape recorders played at different speeds, so that even if the spectator's attention was directed only at the loudspeakers, such discontinuities represented a dramaturgy of total acoustical space, which would resound in future tape works, from Stockhausen to Foreman.

With *Williams Mix*, Cage set in motion a work that attempted to get around habits and taste on as many levels as possible, but the fact that it existed as an object-work would eventually lead Cage to be dissatisfied with the possibilities for indeterminacy realized exclusively with tape. Cage concluded that because *Williams Mix* was built of pieces assembled and constructed by numerous musicians, he had created a "Frankenstein."[59] The piece still reflected traces of intention, even sounding at times like a response to Schaeffer and Henry's *Symphonie.* A central motif that it shares with that earlier piece, for example, is a woman's laughter. What is distinct in *Williams Mix* is Cage's *effort* to create indeterminacy with respect to composition; the lengths of the individual sounds (pieces of tape) are barely long enough to be recognized and to have any independent existence, creating rhythms that are more dominant than any individual voice and seem to evolve by themselves. With *Williams Mix*, Cage realized that tape holds onto its identity as object and is limited in terms of his formulation of theatre; this led Cage to abandon the use of tape on its own. As Cage turned towards indeterminacy in performance in addition to composition, magnetic tape proved too fixed.

Cage did incorporate tape in tandem with live performance, when he turned towards indeterminacy with respect to performance. His use of tape in this context functioned as a logical extension of the aural and visual phenomena without intention that he performed *and* described

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59. Cage, "Indeterminacy," *Silence*

in his collaboration with Merce Cunningham, *How to Pass, Kick, Fall, Run*:

> Once when several of us were driving up to Boston, we stopped at a roadside restaurant for lunch. There was a table near a corner window where we could all look out and see a pond. People were swimming and diving. There were special arrangements for sliding into the water. Inside the restaurant there was a jukebox. Somebody put a dime in. I noticed that the music that came out accompanied the swimmers, though they didn't hear it.[60]

The listener in Cage's narrative sees and the seer listens, and both must put the sights and sounds together, which, in their "natural" state, happen all the time but are discontinuous and exist without fixed bodies. The absence of continuity is paralleled in such absences of continuity between Cage's narrative and Cunningham's dances, which allow the audience to intervene by assembling the elements according to her or his perspective. The absence of continuity is an important aspect of Cage's practice and theory and it points to his contribution to the genealogy of the disembodied voice; voices and sounds are only embodied if and when the listener puts sound and body together; the otherwise natural state of voices is as dis-embodied.

In his staging of simultaneous "theatre" events, Cage shared the philosophy, processes, and devices of Dada, but his *returns* to its procedures are distinct, he maintains, by the space and the silence he deems "necessary" responses. Cage points to the gulf between his processes and Dada. "What makes this action unlike Dada is the space in it. For it is the space and the

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60. Cage, "How to Pass, Kick, Fall, Run," *A Year from Monday: New Lectures and Writings by John Cage* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1969), 133. *Roratorio* (1979), which consisted of Cage's Mesostics, *A Reading through of Finnegan's Wake* and sounds and music collected from all over the world onto 64 16-track tapes, represents another of Cage's returns to tape composition with disembodied voice as a central preoccupation.

emptiness that is finally urgently necessary at this point in history."[61] Cage re-enacts the urgency that defines the historical avant-gardes, but he injects that urgency with space and silence as necessary responses to the Holocaust.

Connected to Cage's distance from Dada is his antipathy for emotion, which begins to reappear in the Minimalist composers compositions. His comments in "The Future of Music" thus have the ring of a warning.

> We know how to suffer or control our emotions. If not, advice is available there is a cure for tragedy. The path to self-knowledge has been mapped-out by psychiatry, by oriental philosophy, mythology, occult thought, anthroposophy, and astrology. We know all we need to know about Oedipus, Prometheus and Hamlet. What we are learning is how to be convivial. "Here comes everybody." Though the doors will always remain open for the musical expression of personal feeling, what will come through more and more is the expression of conviviality (as in the music of Terry Riley, Steve Reich and Phillip Glass). And beyond that a non-intentional expressivity, a being together of sounds and people (where sounds are sounds and people are people). A walk, so to speak, in the woods of music, or in the world itself.[62]

Cage ties emotion to theatre in the characters of ancient tragedy and of Shakespeare, of which we have, ostensibly, had enough. Cage's references to tragedy imply the violences of the recent past and include the music of the recent past that in their urgency and aggression turned listeners and composers towards trauma. For a music of the future, Cage inscribes silence, space, and nature

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61. Cage "History of Experimental Music in the United States" (1949), in *Silence*, 70.

62. Cage, "The Future of Music" (1974), in *Empty Words: Writings '73-'78 by John Cage* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1981), 179.

and conviviality as a means of turning away from these violences and formulates a clear conception of his displacement by the younger generation, as requiring a different type of relationship to the world. Cage knows that these composers reject the detachment in his and other post-war composers' polemics, so he prescribes a behavior. If they want to return to emotion, then Cage calls for "conviviality." He equates "being together" musically with being together in the world. Cage sounds an injunction for conviviality to the younger generation of composers: Terry Riley, Steve Reich, and Phillip Glass.

The anti-theatrical prejudice against tragedy and emotion that is evident in Cage's statements are also present in Foreman's desire to rid the stage of the "emotional habits" of actor and spectator. Just as tape had been a means for Cage to attempt to distance sound from the tastes of the body, so for Foreman, tape is a means to distance the actor's speech from habits.

Many of Foreman's early aspirations read as if they were tailored from Cage's definition of theatre as hearing and seeing, which occur in the same space but not necessarily in synchronicity. In his first manifesto Foreman describes an experience of nature that reads like a synopsis of Cage's indeterminacy.

> 1971--Lenox, summer. I sit, at sunrise, and stare out into the trees, listening to the birds—i.e. 100 invisible birds in counterpoint. My head, savoring the interweaving of themes, performs in a good way—performs in a way that heretofore I have felt art should make it perform. But suddenly (drama!) that often-before entertained notion crystallizes in my head in such a way that a chapter ends, the book closes, and I have no more interest (no more risk, no more "unknown") in such an art based on counterpoint and relationship. What can replace it? Don't know…. The painters have discovered "shape." What can the

theater discover?[63]

Foreman hears birds and watches trees and wonders why, if in nature we hear one thing and see another, in art we create an artificial harmony? This is an echo of Cage, who states that the only good use of counterpoint is to teach it. What might be produced if all these parts were kept separate, as they are in nature? Like Cage, Foreman extends his experience of nature to formulations of his aesthetics, and he speculates on why this separation is already possible in the "discovery of shape" of the visual arts and not in theatre.

The concept of the "open field" is important to the answers that surface in the work of both Cage and Foreman. With the open field the spectator is provided no single point of entry but many, which means that the spectator chooses her or his perspective(s) in the work. In Foreman's productions, the spectator can listen to the recorded voice and ignore the movements of the actors and still have a relationship to the work. The spectator is not going to miss out on important events in a plot or a text.

While both Cage and Foreman sought the "natural," or naturalness, it was not a naïve and unmediated natural presence, but one that came from shards/fragments of the performer when important parts of his or her capacity to perform were suppressed. With nature as his model, Cage uses the tape recorder to free sound from domination by taste, habit, and intention; Foreman uses the tape recorder to force the natural to show itself. The natural in the works of both Cage and Foreman is mediated by operations of the tape recorder.

While Foreman insists on his distance from Cage, the final chapter will analyze the traces

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63. Foreman, *Plays and Manifestos,* ed. Kate Davy (New York: New York University Press, 1976), 69.

of Cage's practices in the minimalist composers that Foreman admits as influences: namely, Phillip Glass, Steve Reich, and, most importantly for Foreman, La Monte Young.

3.2.3. Stockhausen's Serialized and Disembodied Voices

Post-war composers used tape to remove familiar connotations from noises. Ears filled with the disembodied voices of propaganda were traded in for, in the words of Cage, "new ears."[64] A recording technology that had been bent to Hitler's will was erased, overdubbed, and re-arranged. Varèse envisioned languages from the world, slogans, and phrases for his never satisfactorily realized *Espace*. With Schaeffer's invention of musique concrète, tape documented the loss and recovery of the phenomenological world. Schaeffer answered to threats to the aural environment by collecting its sounds and meticulously describing them. He redefined magnetic recording technology so that musique concrète still represents for many the tuning in of the non-intrusive anthropological ear. Cage equated the process of art with nature's operations, writing, "Music as I conceive it is ecological. You could go further and say that it IS ecology."[65] The *attitude* towards the "sounds of the world" helps to urge an eco-acoustic movement, led in the 1970's by R. Murray Schafer, who used technology to this advantage. And the impulse to capture sounds of the everyday will resound in Foreman's use of everyday speech and noises in his phenomenological pursuits of early Ontological-Hysteric productions. In Germany, where it was a sometimes-stated injunction to distance sounds from the Nazi soundscape, post-war

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64. Cage, "Happy New Ears," *A Year From Monday* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1969), 30.

65. Cage, *For the Birds: John Cage in Conversation with Daniel Charles* (London: Marion Boyars Press, 1981), 229.

composers would also find solutions in the praxis of the disembodied voice.[66]

It is not surprising that the first "masterpiece" of tape composition that uses disembodied voice as its primary source material, *Gesang des Jünglingen* (*Song of the Youths,* 1955), is created by a composer who was at the heart of the rivalry between Schaeffer's musique concrète and German Elektronische Musik. Stockhausen had participated in investigations into sound phenomena under the auspices of Schaeffer's Groupe de Recherche between 1952 and 1953 but came away agreeing with his teacher Meyer-Eppler that musique concrète was the fruit of obsessive amateurism. Whereas Schaeffer had approached the human voice as a sonorous object by manipulating rhythms in speech through looping, playing backwards, and side-by-side with other objects, Stockhausen sought the common component of the human voice and any other sound under one structural principle of physics. If, through Stockhausen's experience in Paris with Schaeffer, he found the project of musique concrète unproductive to this end, he was nevertheless encouraged by it in his pursuit of the differences between sounds and voices and of producing them through a singular means.[67] However distinct were Stockhausen's studies in Germany in phonetics and physics, they were a continuation of what he had learned with Schaeffer, and *Gesang* is frequently seen as a rare instance of an almost happy marriage of (or compromise between) musique concrète and its rival, Elektronische Musik.

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66. A special "Information Control" post was created, "to eject the Nazis from German musical life and license those German musicians (giving them the right to exercise their profession) whom we believed to be "clean" Germans," and to control the programmes of German concerts and see to it that they would not turn into nationalist manifestations." Frances Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the Word of Arts and Letters* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1999), 13.

67. Stockhausen, *Stockhausen on Music*, ed. Robin Maconie (London: Marion Boyars, 2000).

Stockhausen was exposed to electronic music experiments in centers at Bonn and Cologne, which, in contrast with experiments in Paris, came through research into speech recognition and automatic translation. Pioneers in wartime "speech recognition" such as Meyer-Eppler had been drawn to melody and tone for their analyses of the voice, and composers such as Herbert Eimert had been drawn to the physics of sound for their experiments in electronic music. Robin Maconie, the foremost scholar on Stockhausen's music, traces this exchange.

> As a result an experimental electronic music studio was set up, initially within the radio drama department, to develop and implement procedures of analysis and synthesis of complex tones that might also contribute to the development of new arts of music and drama for radio.[68]

The overlaps of sound, music, and voice in speech analyses proffered Stockhausen a means of discovering a common basis of sounds and voices.

Stockhausen pursued his version of the disembodied voice through his knowledge of musique concrète and his experiments with elektronische musik. He discovered through combining the experiences of both what he considered the "basis of all sound multifariousness: pure vibration, which can be produced electrically and which is called a sine wave." He explained in an interview:

> Every existing sound, every noise, is a mixture of such sine waves - a spectrum. Proportions of numbers, intervals and dynamics of such sine waves determine the

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68. Maconie, "Through the Looking Glass: Robin Maconie revisits *Hymnen*, Karlheinz Stockhausen's Electroacoustic Classic of the 1960s," *The Musical Times*, Vol. 139, No. 1863 (Summer 1998), accessed 20 January 2007, http://www.jimstonebraker.com/maconie-looking_glass.html

> characteristics of each spectrum. They determine the timbre. And thus, for the first time, it was possible to compose--in the true sense of the word--the timbres in a music, i.e. to synthesize them from elements, and by so doing, to let the universal structural principle of a music also affect the sound proportions.[69]

With the sine wave, Stockhausen had believed he had come to understand the shared elements of all sounds and as a result could create a utopia. He shared with Varèse a dream of total sound space, which in his utopian fantasy, extended to all sound and all voice.

Stockhausen grasped a single unifying feature of all sound and possessed a sine wave generator that could translate and produce sound from a single means, but he was not yet able to create a total synthesis of the human voice and sound. Stockhausen describes his solution:

> The desired blending of discrete sound elements into a continuum (in hindsight especially in the case of timbres) was unrealizable, as it would be for instruments, for example; simply because in order to manipulate the extremely complex phonetic structure (German in this case) in the terms of serial composition, it is necessary to allow for an indefinite number of transitional stages between (say) one vowel and another vowel or between a vowel and half-consonant or consonant. In principle that can only be achieved by electronic means.[70]

Sine waves provided Stockhausen with an imperfect solution to creating voices; where he could not manipulate them, he thus turned to "realistic alternatives" of scales to modify human-

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69. Stockhausen, cited in *Stockhausen: Conversations with the Composer,* ed. Jonathan Cott (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973): 37-38.

70. Stockhausen cited in Maconie, *Other Planets: The Music of Karlheinz Stockhausen* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, Inc, 2005): 167-68.

produced voices and synthesize them with sounds. As realistic alternatives, Stockhausen's solutions resemble those traced in this dissertation so far: they are theatrical solutions to the problem of staging a voice without body.

Stockhausen's incomplete synthesis of the voice and his approximations of that synthesis are his solutions that contribute to the genealogy of the disembodied voice. Stockhausen wanted to make the human voice come as if from nowhere, but as with Varèse, the technology was not yet available for him to realize this dream. Stockhausen combined musique concrète, pure electronic sound experiments, and the principles of total serialism that he discovered as a student at Darmstädter Ferienkurse für Neue Musik (Darmstadt's Summer Courses for New Music) to create synthesized and recombined voices to proffer a solution of sounds that could sound like voices and voices that could sound like sounds.

Total serialism offered Stockhausen a means of modulating every characteristic of sound and its performance, not just pitch, to scales; total serialism also corresponded to the single process he had discovered through physics in which "the material and the structure of the work could be one."[71] Stockhausen would apply his understanding of physics of "numbers, intervals, and dynamics" to the voice as compositional material. With "Songs of Youth in the Fiery Furnace," from *The Book of Daniel* as the text for *Gesang*, Stockhausen subjected the voice of a 12-year old choirboy to a "scale of comprehensibility," from 1-7, to a tone-noise continuum, and to a sense-nonsense continuum. Some words were combined—layered with other words or

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71. Stockhausen became most familiar with total serialism at the school, which had been established immediately following the war with the imperative to free German music from the Nazi regime; he studied with Theodor Adorno and, "heard for the first time a recording of Messiaen's Mode *de valeurs et d'intensité* ("Mode of Durations and intensities"), a piano piece that established scales not only of pitch but also duration and loudness." Paul Griffiths, *A Concise History of Avant-Garde Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 142.

sound--and thus made incomprehensible, but words praising God were always understood.

> At certain points in the composition, the sung tones are understood as words; at other points, they have only the value of sounds. Between these extremes are reached different levels of word-related clarity.[72]

By subjecting the singer's voice to scales of comprehensibility, Stockhausen made the boy's voice *sound* instrument-like and electronic sounds sound voice-like. As a result of scales, the two sometimes met in the middle, and the boundaries between them became blurred.

Fusing all these practices in *Gesang* and applying a series to space and the voice that broke both down into common principles, Stockhausen created an anti-theatrical drama of the disembodied voice. While Stockhausen used the voice of only a single singer, the source of the one choirboy's voice cannot be said to exist anywhere, not even within the loudspeaker. Sounds and the voice, recorded onto five channel tracks, were played on four banks of loudspeakers while the last was played from the stage. When listening to the piece in a concert space, "correctly," the voice does not emanate from one loudspeaker; it cannot be located in any one. Instead, voices move around the listener, clockwise and counter-clockwise. The listener, like the boys in the narrative of *The Book of Daniel*, is encircled, not by the fire of the story, but by electricity, electronic music, and by the (sometimes comprehensible) splintered voice of a single choirboy. Composers before Stockhausen had made space a central factor by surrounding the audience with instruments, but with *Gesang*, Stockhausen was the first composer to serialize space. *Gesang* spurred many imitators to attempt the spatialization of voice with a series; spatialization is the aspect that most influenced the genealogy of the disembodied voice.

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72. Stockhausen, *Texte zu eigenen Werken und zur Kunst Anderer Aktuelles II (1952-1962)* (Köln: DuMont Schauberg, 1964), accessed 10 June 2010, http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/works/gesang-der-juenglinge/.

Stockhausen's *Gesang* is an example of an anti-theatrical drama of new music. For its composition, Stockhausen exploited the implications that with electronic music there is no separation from the medium to its performance. There are no objects and no human performers to create dynamics in rehearsal or in performance, no accidental gestures or relationships to distract the spectator's eye or ear; this leaves the spectator/listener confronting only space and him or her self. As art becomes spatialized, according to Jameson, perspective is lost and the spectator in turn loses his ability to orient himself (without any objects) in space. This is detrimental to art's autonomy, leading eventually to a complete commodification of the art and the artist.[73] Foreman similarly spatialized disembodied voices, most notably in *Pandering to the Masses* (1974) and, like Stockhausen, sought to dissolve boundaries between art and life. If Stockhausen's aims would largely lead him to a spiritualization of space, Foreman (though hardly neglecting the spiritual) spatialized voice as a means of externalizing the creative processes and the psyche.

Foreman manipulated the spectator's orientation in reference to both the visual *and* aural performance, as Stockhausen manipulated the aural through spatialization. Stretching strings across the stage ever since *Hotel China* (1971), Foreman redirected the audience's eye so that it must enter into a struggle with the direction of voices that are played through several loudspeakers. With directed perspectives and disembodied voices, Foreman consistently pulled the spectator into a bubble of consciousness, much as Stockhausen's spatializations situated the audience in a utopia of sound. Stockhausen's utopia and Foreman's consciousness are united by this impetus of the disembodied voice, which is to get away from a body-oriented

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73. Jameson, *Jameson on Jameson: Conversations on Cultural Marxism*, ed. Ian Buchanan (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 47.

performance.

Schaeffer's project had revealed that the human voice could be treated as one of many sounds and showed how by slowing down and speeding up tape, the voice could release its identity. Cage formulated sounds and voice as always already disembodied, requiring only certain operations to make them audible. In *Gesang* Stockhausen revealed that a single musical idea could drive even the human voice. The next section traces the composers of new music and early Minimalism who would re-combine the elements of serialism, electronic music, and speech to investigate patterns of "natural" speech, even as they gestured to a rejection of principles that informed such compositional techniques.

3.2.4 New Music Theatre in Darmstadt and the United States

A form of new music-theatre, which incorporated recorded voice and sound and was neither opera nor musical theatre, arose almost simultaneously but for different reasons in the United States and Europe. In 1952, Cage and Cunningham's *Theater Piece* at Black Mountain College, which included various independent performance elements but not tape, functioned as "the model for the wave of happenings and related performance events that swept the art world in the late 1950s and early 1960s."[74] In Darmstadt, a new music theatre evolved in reaction to the rigid atmosphere at the Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik, Darmstadt (Darmstadt International Summer Courses for New Music) and was further prompted by "the wake of John

74. Marvin Carlson, *Performance: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 95.

Cage's arrival in the 1950s."[75]

The Institute that took shape at Darmstadt in 1946 was part of the de-nazification of sound and music designed to initiate rebirth and renewal. Theodor Adorno taught at the Institute and Stockhausen attended courses. There were returns to works of Schoenberg and Webern, composers whose works had been designated degenerate by the Nazis. These returns prompted a return to serialism, which became the Institute's official language. In fact, Pierre Boulez insisted on distance from politics and adherence to Total Serialism. Cage's residency in 1958, during which he delivered his famous lectures on indeterminacy, later published in *Silence*, prompted a war, which Cage explains was partly due to a translation into German that sounded more radical than the original English. At Darmstadt, many European as well as American composers heard Cage's music and ideas for the first time. La Monte Young was one, for example, who came away with an altered sense of mission after hearing David Tudor play Cage's pieces in 1959. Luigi Nono and Luciani Berio had been tending towards theatricalized variations of serialism, which functioned as forms of political protest. Mauricio Kagel, who came to Cologne from Buenos Aires at the prompting of Boulez, like Cage, used performance, but for Boulez it represented a pointed means of critiquing the academicism of the European experimental music scene.

Kagel created a radically independent theatre of music that, often labeled Surrealist, was a critique of the systems that drove the compositional practices of his contemporaries. In his genealogy, *The New Music Theater*, Eric Salzman indicates how in the midst of strictures in composition, Kagel developed his unique vision of music and theatre: "Kagel, who was, like

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75. Eric Salzman and Thomas Desi, *The New Music Theater: Seeing the Voice, Hearing the Body* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 186.

Cage, from the New World, did not feel obligated to deal with the German and European struggles between tradition and innovation. There was just one direction: straight ahead."[76] Kagel left Argentina, where he had studied literature with Jorge Luis Borges, to study composition at Darmstadt. The compositions he produced were music dramas that lived a Borgesian existence: that is, they were a part of musical systems whose reality that they also denied.

In his filmed adaptation of his aptly titled music-theatre piece, *Antithese* (1965), Kagel provides an index of post-war electronic sound experiments that is at the same time a harsh critique of overly strict adherence to systems. The main and sole character is a sound engineer, Alfred Feussner who is alone and wreaking havoc in the studio (wrapped in tape and toppling reels). On the hunt for the source of the sound of a cry, he seems a parody of Pierre Schaeffer in his obsessive pursuit of a *system* that would allow him to hear sound's "itself" by rejecting the image/body. While at the blackboard, drawing lines to connect the words "ad libitum" (in Cagean terms, "indeterminacy with respect to performance") to "hysterisch" (hysteria) and linking that to "unruhig" (nerves), Feussner might be Stockhausen who approached music from a *system* of serialism and physics. He might be Cage holding fast to the *system* of indeterminacy in respect to performance (ad libitum), as if it were no *system* at all. *Antithese*'s anti-dogmatic proposal suggests that the pursuit of disembodied sounds and voices cannot help but produce hysteria in the pursuer. If achieving the staging of such voices or sounds promises an evasion of the body, politics, and history, whether through a rigorous adherence to serialism, technology or indeterminacy, the pursuit in itself is hysterical because it demands the very thing it wants to

76. Ibid., 185.

make unnecessary, the performer and the body. These cannot be gotten rid of by systems of technology. Kagel indicates that the soundscape does not and cannot succeed at disembodying, depoliticizing, or de-historicizing music.

Tracing a return to the human voice in European experimental music, Salzman suggests that it was Kagel who, having studied philosophy in Argentina, was best positioned within the context of Darmstadt to spark a return to speech and text. Kagel seemed to usher a return by post-war composers to modernism and the historical avant-gardes:

> Questions of text, language, and speech were in the air at the time. There was a revival of interest in the works of Tristan Tzara and Kurt Schwitters and in the James Joyce language of the unconscious. The French structuralists were inspired by research on how language works. [77]

This return to the voices of the historical avant-garde suggests, Salzman writes, a return to meaning and emotion. Stockhausen's *Gesang* evinced a renewed interest in speech, as did Boulez's *Pli Selon Pli*, a composition based on Mallarmé's poetry. The movement towards speech and language was tentative; both serialism and tape were applied to the human voice as a means of making use of the voice and keeping emotions at a distance. As the compositions of American Minimalists that I treat below demonstrate, tape practices were also employed to counter-balance the pull of emotion in voice and language.

In the United States the new music-theatre resisted definition. An important spark in the United States, as in Europe, was Cage's indeterminacy and his theory and application of his own dictum that theatre most resembles nature in her manner of operation: that is, of seeing and

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77. Ibid., 140.

hearing. The experimental music theatre in European and America shares many of the same elements of total serialism, indeterminacy, and, frequently, magnetic tape. But American new music theatre is distinct in that it was not created in opposition to "blackboard composition," or academicism. In the first part of a two-part *Performance* article of 1972, the composer Paul Epstein situates new music theatre in the United States as a reaction, instead, to the evolution of an ever-more disembodied performer. Theatre is a corrective in Epstein's formulation, bringing life to music that has forgotten about the performer. He sets down three criteria of new music theatre to demonstrate the re-formulation of theatre/presence and music/absence:

> Music approaches theater as its structure adopts elements of physical and temporal reality....
>
> Music approaches theater as gesture ceases to be extraneous or incidental and are incorporated into the performance....
>
> Music approaches theater as the musician ceases to be a producer of sound and achieves physical and psychic presence.[78]

In his attempt to establish the seriousness of the hybrid, Epstein creates polarizations: music is fixed (absence) and theatre is fluid (presence). The musician gains most from this "reality," as he is usually fixed by the temporal reality of his music. Real gestures make his performance into theatre, whereas his playing an instrument is ir-"relevant." Epstein leaves the actor out, suggesting that the musician who acts is more present than the actor who plays a musician—for if the actor follows the above criteria, his gestures are "extraneous" i.e., connected to his "job." Epstein, who was involved with The Performance Group from 1969-1972, is certainly most

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78. Paul Epstein, "Music and Theater," *Performance*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (April 1972): 11-19. These are criteria that Epstein establishes over the whole of the article.

concerned with how the disciplines of theatre affect music. Yet, theatre in minimalist music is not a sign to point to the presence of the performer; instead, following Michael Fried's critical perspective, the emphasis on the spectator "theatricalizes" the work, in this case new music.

Getting caught in the desire to distance new music-theatre from musical-theatre, critics and scholars often polarize absence/presence and new/old. In *Theater*'s 2000 issue dedicated to the hybrid, Erika Munk and Tom Sellar write an editorial meditation on the placement of the hyphen:

> Our title is New Music-Theater, and that's how we first thought of this issue. But really the hyphen should be moved: The focus turned out to be on New-Music Theater -- music theater that isn't just contemporary, but experimental. There is a lot of theater with music around now, in a vast range of styles, and it's wildly popular in all its manifestations. Sometimes it seems as if the way images started to dominate text a generation ago is being paralleled by a new dominance of sound.[79]

In their desire to signal that the works they feature are new, avant-garde, and/or experimental, the editors point to the music that has renewed theatre and kept the form from becoming fixed in archaisms, discretely pointed to as music-theatre.

While the problem of combining the terms and in describing new music theatre to the public persists, Salzman's *New Music Theater* offers convincing evidence that variations of new music theatre have flourished since the 1950's. Foreman, who has been around much longer than "a generation ago," participated with Stanley Silverman in an aspect of this genre, but in his Ontological-Hysteric Theater, he invented a theatre that represented the mirror image to

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79. Erika Munk and Tom Sellar, "Up Front," *Theater*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Summer 2000): 2.

Epstein's definitions: that is, on Foreman's stage music and sound were present in his theatre through live and sometimes spontaneous manipulations, while the supposed live elements of theatre were fixed or absent. The final chapter analyzes how Foreman appropriated elements of the exchanges of new music and theatre and reformulated them through his uses of disembodied voice. This dissertation is dedicated to Foreman's invention.

3.3 American "Minimalist" Composers with Tape: Reich, La Monte Young, and Alvin Lucier

American minimalist composers, who resisted the assignation, had in common that they distanced themselves from a culture that returned to the historical avant-garde and was concerned with recuperating sounds from war. Composer Steve Reich, speaking for his generation, claims that they were not interested in expressing what "Stockhausen, Berio, and Boulez were portraying in very honest terms what it was like to pick up the pieces of a bombed-out continent."[80] Reich and other early minimalist composers claimed that they did not want to seek a replacement or (consciously) return to suggestions of the historical avant-gardes. Many turned instead to process and the single musical idea, which were nevertheless *suggested* by total serialism and indeterminacy that, once "set in motion," would of itself reveal the rhythms and pitches of sound and speech.

La Monte Young, whom Foreman consistently cites as his major influence, put a microscope to the sounds and voices that are always around us but to which we rarely pay active

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80. Steve Reich, cited in *Minimalists*, ed. Robert Schwartz (London: Phaidon, 1996), 56-7.

attention; in this way Young extended a particular aspect of Cage's project.[81] Young experimented in capturing and then externalizing through performance the internal sounds and voices of objects and, not usually human, living organisms. In his project, *The Tortoise*, *His Dreams and His Journeys* (1964), for example, he used the sound of the turtle motor from his aquarium to invite the listener to live inside the sounds that the tortoise hears. Young maximized the sounds of the motor, which creates a sixty-cycle hum frequency, with sustained notes and "drones." [82] The repetitions and subtle changes of the drones were intended to impact and alter the sounds that occur in the listener's own body.

La Monte Young thought of *Tortoise* as a mixed-means *theatrical* piece in that a pretext defines the musical situation; it starts from the sound of the motor of the turtle's aquarium, and is imagined going on without end, continuously.

> An [*sic*] in the life of the Tortoise the drone is the first sound. It last [*sic*] forever and cannot have begun but is taken up again from time to time until it lasts forever as continuous sound in the Dream House where many musicians and students will live and execute a musical work.[83]

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81. While studying with Stockhausen in Darmstadt in 1959, La Monte Young heard David Tudor play Cage's pieces for the first time; he counts this experience and becoming exposed to Cage's philosophies as pivotal in the direction of his composition. La Monte Young, interview with William Duckworth, *Talking Music: Conversations with John Cage, Phillip Glass, Laurie Anderson, and Five Generations of America Experimental Composers* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1995), 232.

82. This frequency is the ancestry of his interest in drones because, La Monte Young explains, they are the frequencies that are heard all over the urban environment. La Monte Young, "Program #449: With La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela," *New Sounds: From the Vaults,* John Schaefer, WNPR (New York City: WNYC, 15 August 2007).

83. La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela, *Selected Writings* (München: H. Friedrich, 1969). *Tortoise* had several sections; the longest, the "Dream House" performance, was given at

The stasis that is created by the sustained tones created what La Monte Young referred to as "a theatre of eternal sound." Young's performances were theatre because they were constructed with the spectator-listener's endless listening situation in mind. The musicians began playing before the audience entered and continued after they exited, thus distorting in the minds of the spectators the usual parameters of a concert. While the listener sat in the audience time was also distorted as the presence of drones meant that the listener's ear (and brain) was activated in the same way over an extended period of time. Listeners, including Cage and Foreman, remarked on the altered psychological state that La Monte Young's music induced in them.

Reich was similarly interested in capturing the sounds that exist in the world, but his kinship was with the tape processes of musique concrète, even if he rejected the post-war detachment from emotion and theatre that he believed were inevitable in relationship to listening.

> The bone I had to pick with Schaeffer and that bunch was that if they were using the sound of a car crash, they had to lower it by an octave or speed it up by an octave, run it through a ring modulator or play it backwards. Why not hear that it's a car crash! These sounds that you're using in the original state have some kind of emotional resonance. We relate to them in various ways. If you bring them into the music, that brings in an emotional, theatrical meaning which is useful. It's worthwhile maintaining and building upon. [84]

Reich applied tape loops to human voices that allowed the voices and words to be heard, as

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the Harrison Street Gallery in New York and lasted for six years, from 1979-1985.

84. Steve Reich, interviewed by Jason Gross, 2002 for *Ohm: The Early Gurus of Electronic Music*, accessed 11 July 2009, http://www.furious.com/perfect/ohm/reich2.html.

themselves: voices and speech. He used a process he called "shifting pulse gate" or "phasing," an innovation he discovered, as Schaeffer had looping, by accident when he was trying to synch two identical machines of the recorded sermon of the Pentecostal Preacher Brother Walter. In "It's Gonna' Rain" (1965), the differences in the machines caused a slight delay. The piece consists of two identical tape loops of the sermon. At first the preacher repeats the phrase, "It's gonna' rain," clearly. But as the loops fall out of synch, the preacher's rhythms become an abstracted percussive music. Through this process of phasing or "pulsing," Reich's attention was drawn to the phrases and rhythms of speech before abstraction, then as the loops fell out of synch, the rhythms of the preacher's speech become abstracted; the clarity of the words, speech, and rhythms reach a peak and dissolve into silence. The listener hears the sentences at first as part of a unity of character and voice that gradually devolves into a no-body; in other words, the listener witnesses the process of disembodiment through phasing. Reich composed several other tape and voice pieces, *Come On* in 1968 and he claims that phasing still drives his instrumental pieces.

Tape served as an extension (or prosthetic) of Alvin Lucier's physical body in his 1969 composition, "I am sitting in a room." The composition "for voice and electromagnetic tape" corresponds to Lucier's severe stutters, revealing them at the same time as it "smoothes them out." The text of the piece is itself a description of the work's processes.

> I am sitting in a room different from the one you are in now. I am recording the sound of my speaking voice and I am going to play it back into the room again and again until the resonant frequencies of the room reinforce themselves so that any semblance of my speech, with perhaps the exception of r-r-r-rhythm, is destroyed. What you will hear, then, are the natural resonant frequencies of the room articulated by speech. I regard this activity nnnnnot so much as a demonstration of a physical fact, but more as a way to s-s-

smooth out any irregularities my speech might have.[85]

With his prose, Lucier leaves the listener no doubt into his process; the text of the piece and the piece itself represent an explanation of the work. The listener is thus freed from an attention to meaning in the work, and can attend to carefully listening to Lucier's voice and its collaboration with the room and tape. The listener hears that with each playback of the text (repeated thirty-two times) Lucier's words and syllables become more stretched, even as they hold on to his rhythm and emphasize their "sonority." Lucier makes his speech impediment sonorous with technology. Technology corrects his stutter and other errors in a disappearing act through sound; the room, Lucier's voice, and the tape recorder merge, leaving traces on the recording.

An additional component of Lucier's piece, repeated in works throughout the neo-avant-garde, is that it functions as a work and as a "recipe" for a work. On the one hand, Lucier documents in this composition his speech patterns and his recording processes, so that a different performer (with other speech patterns) might repeat the work with distinct results. On the other hand, and also closely related to Foreman's stated goals, the piece is "isomorphic"; it is the work to which it refers.

Despite Foreman's reputed dislike of his chosen "home" in theatre, he might have but did not abandon it to become a composer (or a poet or a visual artist). He brought experiments in tape composition (and poetry and visual art) to theatre. Surprisingly, it is not in his own most explicit music-theatre constructions, the "Kurt Weillian music hall, and deconstructed show-

85. Alvin Lucier, "I Am Sitting in a Room," for voice and electromagnetic tape, SOURCE Records, 1970.

music scores of Stanley Silverman" that Foreman demonstrates his innovations in music.[86] Foreman's application of the praxes of tape to his Ontological-Hysteric productions most elucidated and contributed to the neo-avant-garde's genealogy of the disembodied voice. He drew from the context of sound in which the vision of his theatre germinated and created a theatre of disembodied voices.

3.5 Cinematheque

Foreman witnessed a convergence of relevant ideas vis-à-vis un-synchronized sound and image at Jonas Mekas's Cinematheque that triggered his re-orientation from a budding Broadway playwright to the playwright, director, composer, and set/costume designer of the Ontological-Hysteric Theater. From the mid-sixties the Cinematheque, in its various temporary homes, was a site of convergences where one could hear La Monte Young, see performances of Hermann Nitsch's Orgien-Mysterien ("orgies-mysteries") and watch films by New American, or "underground," filmmakers, and attend Fluxus events and the Expanded Cinema Festival of 1965, which united all these mediums. Mekas invited so many divergent performers that it is difficult to assert a coherent aesthetic, but innovations prompted by the possibilities with magnetic tape occurred across disciplines.[87]

New American Filmmakers configured sound and image in ways that were "natural," according to contemporary modes of perception. Foreman describes his interpretation of this

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86. Salzman, 336.

87. Mekas explains in an interview that he was encouraged by his colleagues to curtail his "permissive" attitude. Mekas, "Interview with Jonas Mekas," Brian Frye, *Senses of Cinema*, No. 17 (November-December 2001), accessed 10 July 2008, http://archive.sensesofcinema.com/contents/01/17/mekas_interview.html.

natural approach as an aesthetic.

> Their films are very raw. Lots of time you'd see the splices, you'd see the dots when the reel runs out. They used their friends as performers, and they exploited their friend's awkwardness, and they exploited the crummy film stock they were using. They were glorifying this kind of home-made, handmade, cottage industry style art.[88]

As part of the "inner circle" of New American Filmmakers, Foreman came to know this aesthetic intimately.[89] He came to know it by going to films almost every night of the week, by close critique and by proffering his loft for Michael Snow's *Wavelength*. Foreman's loft served as the basis for this "home-made, handmade, cottage industry style," as the blinding light and sounds of traffic that come through the windows or the entrance and exit of Amy Taubin from the frame create a naturalness of mistakes in image and sound synchronization.

At first, audiences and critics read the aesthetics of the New American Cinema as non-aesthetics because in contrast with Hollywood, it was unaffected. Smaller, lighter, and cheaper recording equipment meant that these filmmakers were not tied to controlled studio environments. When they problematized sound and problematized image, their aesthetics was not always so evidently "intended." In the spirit of "cottage-industry" exchanges, for example, Jack Smith asked the young composer Tony Conrad to create a soundtrack for *Flaming Creatures*. Using loop delay techniques, Conrad carefully crafted a "hysteria" of bells that fits loosely with the film and so may easily be interpreted as accidental. Viewed in the context of the

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88. Foreman, "An Interview with Ken Jordan, Draft #1" (January 1990), accessed 23 January 2001, http://www.ontological.com/RF/rfinterviews/ForemanJordan1990.doc.

89. Foreman, cited in *Illegal Living*, 90.

domination of the perfected aural/visual image, such de-synchronization, however, revealed the imperfections not only of the film but also of the culture itself. The failure of the technology coincided with the failure of the human body. Even when broken synchronizations supported a narrative, the films resembled "documentary" in the way that the poets Charles Reznikoff and Frank O'Hara referred to it: that is, as a document of the artist's existence in a particular moment in time.

Supporters of the New American Cinema articulated the aesthetics of naturalness as an intrinsic politics. Wheeler Winston Dixon writes that opposition to society was inseparable from filmmaking:

> The experimental cinema in the United States in the 1960's was nothing less than a call to decisive action to free the self from the dreams of the state, from the Orientalist strategies then pursued by the government in the prosecution of the war in Vietnam, from the neo-colonialist sign/system exchange apparatus ruthlessly applied by the dominant media. This new cinema was embraced by the transalterity of those for whom there has previously been no effective agency; it sought to escape the tyranny of history, and the commodification of the future in the mainstream cultural industry, through the abdication of all conventional standards of photographic representationalism.[90]

Such intrinsic politics is equally audible in Mekas's address to the Philadelphia Institute of Technology: "We don't know what man is, we don't know what cinema is."[91] An exploration of

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90. Wheeler Winston Dixon, *The Exploding Eye: A Re-visionary History of the 1960's American Experimental Cinema* (Albany: SUNY, 1997), 5.

91. Jonas Mekas, "Where Are We--the Underground?" in *The New American Cinema,* ed. Gregory Battock (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1967), 19.

the material of filmmaking was tantamount to the artist's understanding of "his" relationship of being in the world. If this was fast becoming a convention of experimental cinema and the visual arts, it was less apparent in theatre, where the problem of how to document the actor's body as *body* and voice as *voice*, not wrapped in character, devoted formalistically, had gone largely unexplored.

Foreman might easily have applied Mekas's words to his own program for theatre of a stage on which sensations, single moments of experience, and the failures of the human body could be documented. Like the New American Filmmakers who used silent film as a means of re-viewing film, Foreman would make use of the limits of his particular medium to distinguish the parts of a construction that were dispensable in theatre from those that were still vital. He would subject antiquated nineteenth century theatrical models to a similar re-viewing. The first sections of the next chapter chart the Ontological-Hysteric Theater's first home at the Cinematheque's beleaguered space at 80 Wooster Street, where Foreman performed a re-vision of cultural objects, asking each time: *how* do they perform the way they look, *how* do they perform the way they sound? The theatre's "cheap stock" that Foreman exploited was himself as writer/director, the stage as stage, the actor as confused, terrified, and manipulated body and voice.

Conclusion: "Presentness is grace."[92]

Foreman's theatre seems to answer, even now, to the critics who doomed the neo-avant-garde's

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92. Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood" (1967), in *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Gregory Battock (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 147.

returns to the historical avant-garde as empty returns to a failed project. Just as Foreman's Ontological Hysteric Theater was burgeoning, the chronicle of Dada by a veteran of the movement, Hans Richter's *Dada: Art and Anti-Art,* appeared as an implicit indictment of the neo-avant-garde. Richter evaluated returns in Neo-Dada by Fluxus and Happenings as complacent, "Romanticism reinterpreted in terms of Dada," suggesting that the later versions of Dada were more naïve and subjective.[93] In "Art and Objecthood," Michael Fried derided literalist or minimalist art for embracing the theatrical in comparison with a modernist art that sought to defeat the theatrical. In 1974 Peter Bürger foreclosed on the historical avant-gardes as impossible within a bourgeois culture, charging the neo as "void," or too fashionable to demonstrate any significant link, beyond empty repetition. Per Backström reads Bürger's prognosis on the basis of the avant-garde's failed project to merge art and life as damning for the achievements of the historical avant-garde and for its "neo" incarnations.

The criticisms of the avant-garde have fueled Foreman's theatre and his critical/rhetorical mind. Questions about the avant-garde's usefulness have driven what Foreman refers to as his compulsion to justify his vision:

> I want to have the courage to refuse to justify it. Because I've spent many, many years trying to justify it. And a lot of people, even people who have said, "Oh, but your justification is very interesting, very interesting ideas, more interesting than your plays." Well, I don't think so. But if that's true, OK. Plenty of what I've had to say about it is out there and now I want to release that heavy load of justification that I've been

93. Hans Richter, *Dada*: *Art and Anti-Art* (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1965), 205.

carrying around on my shoulders for the few years remaining me and I just say that this is what I do. [94]

As much as Foreman proclaims his desire to overcome his compulsion to justify, it is difficult to imagine his productions without his hypercriticism. It is difficult to imagine his work without the theoretical framework that he experiences as justification.

Like the harshest of critics, Foreman judges the agonism of the avant-garde artist as a disingenuous indication of the artist's sacrifice to the world; Foreman represents it instead as a mark of the artist's "strengthened ego" and solipsism. Foreman echoes Bürger who deemed that the historical avant-garde artist had failed by creating walls against the society. The walls succeeded only in further shutting the artist off from that society he or she intended to transform. Foreman proposes the "dispersed ego," as a resistance to the institutionalization of art through spatialization, through a continuous deconstruction of the self.

Foreman defines the Ontological-Hysteric Theater in his answers to the criticisms of the neo-avant-garde. Fried judged harshly, for example, what he perceived as a growing trend, especially in minimalist visual art, to break with the boundaries of its own medium and demand the presence of the viewer as spectator to complete its signification. Fried imagined that art and theatre were doomed when he commented that, "what lies between the arts is theater" and "art degenerates as it approaches the condition of theater" because the object possesses in it "an absence of anything beyond itself." The minimalist object demands the presence/participation of

94. Foreman, interview with Laura Winton, "Richard Foreman is Angry," *Liminalities*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (2006), accessed 15 June 2007, http://liminalities.net/2-3/foreman.htm.

> The stratagems developed by the theatre of the avant-garde in the first third of this century, to transform he spectator into one that acts, function in postmodern theatre in the opposite way as the condition of the possibility of recognizing the spectator as spectator and returning the rights of spectatorship. In the theatre, the fact of looking on is action.[96]

Rather than demanding the merging of art and life in life, the postmodern theatre demands that that merging occur *in* the perceiving of art.

The next chapter charts Foreman's returns to the very act of returning to find "the ontology of the present" in previous avant-gardes.[97] Foreman's productions are attempts to occupy the positions of the critic who announced the death of the historical avant-garde, the critic who dismissed the neo-avant-garde, and the artist who proved them wrong. To this end, Foreman's plays read like enacted theory, and his theory like performances that continue beyond the theatrical space, forging a stage between the imagined consciousnesses of the reader and the writer/director.

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96. Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Shadow and Gaze of Theatre*, 59.

97. I invoke Jameson's title because I read a correspondence. For Jameson, the break with late modernism is so decisive in postmodernism, that whether or not he believes in the latter it defines ever after what came before. We are now, according to Jameson in the midst of a post-modernism that shows no evidence of semi-autonomy. Jameson, *A Singular Modernity: Essay on the Ontology of the Present* (New York: Verso, 2002).

CHAPTER FOUR: Rhythmic Juggling

> FEMALE STUDENT: Disturbed? You hear voices, Professor?
> PROFESSOR: I'm lucky that way.
> FEMALE STUDENT: I'd say, weird.
> PROFESSOR: I feel connected.
> FEMALE STUDENT: Connected to what?
> PROFESSOR: To the source of my voices.
> Foreman, *My Head Was a Sledgehammer* (1994)

This chapter shows that a genealogy of disembodied voice can be traced in Foreman's forty-one years of Ontological-Hysteric productions through hysteria, the historical avant-gardes, and tape experiments. In his early productions, Foreman discovered that tape was a means of *resisting* mimesis within the framework of performance. He replaced the conflicts of traditional theatre with conflicts between recorded voices and frozen bodies. He rejected character by rejecting the attribution of any voice to any particular identity; the words or parts of words that actors repeated over their own recorded voices neither originated in character, nor perhaps even in the playwright. Like Charcot who, as we saw in the first chapter, used re-enactment in his lecture-demonstrations to reveal the symptoms of hysteria and its cure while suppressing the mimetic, Foreman used re-enactment and controlled as much as possible the mimetic to reveal the "psychology of making art."[1] Foreman and Charcot both signaled their rejection of the theatrical while nonetheless using re-enactment.

Foreman used the disembodied voice to confront the "impossible" projects of the historical avant-garde traced in chapter two. He had a new tool for the old problem of how to stage a voice without a body. Foreman intimates his solution to that avant-garde problem in an interview with Nick Kaye. "I'm interested in problems and I'm interested in solutions and to me

1. Goldberg, RoseLee, *Performance*: *Live Art 1909 to the Present* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1979), 123.

the most interesting solution is the no-mind solution."[2] Foreman pursued solutions beyond what he perceived as the avant-garde's ego-driven art in the "dispersed self" as adamantly not-I, no-mind, and no-body. He made the disembodied voice central to his aesthetic, not ancillary like his predecessors in the avant-garde. Therefore, no-mind, not-I, and no-body are synonyms for the disembodied voice.

With tape and the experimental tape practices of the sixties (traced in the third chapter) Foreman pursued and realized the disembodied voice more fully than the avant-garde. He began to use tape in the midst of second wave neo avant-garde experiments with recorded voice and his own sound scores reflected what he heard. His most radical solutions to the avant-garde problem of staging a voice with no body grew out of his tape experiments.

Foreman was influenced by the past in developing his solution to the avant-garde's problem of staging a voice without body, but he broke with the past in his allowance of what he identifies as "contingencies."[3] The first contingency was the limited means of Foreman's earliest productions. Foreman drew his resources for his first production from the world around him; 80 Wooster Street, which Foreman was renovating for the future home of Jonas Mekas's Cinematheque, became the Ontological-Hysteric's first theatre space, and filmmakers, largely drawn from Mekas's Filmmakers' Collective, made up his first cast.[4] Just as Foreman followed

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2. Foreman, interview with Nick Kaye, *Art into Theatre: Performance Interviews and Documents* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1996), 109.

3. Foreman employs the term "contingency" to indicate the unforeseeable. In "How I Write My (Plays: Self)," he explains, "a certain degree of contingency and improvisation… can only testify to the integral 'truth' (i.e. inhabitedness) of the process I have set in motion, which reveals one aspect of itself under the guise of 'text' (or, if you will, play)." Foreman, *Reverberation Machines* (Barrytown: Station Hill, 1985), 237.

4. Mekas and George Maciunas were Foreman's "gurus," teaching him "how to make my way in the world." Foreman, cited in Roslyn Bernstein and Shael Shapiro, *Illegal Living: 80*

the cue of the raw space to create rough sets, so he followed the cue of his inexperienced actors to record voices. The recorded voice resolved practical problems of delivery and memorization, but as the first section of this chapter demonstrates, the practices that arose from Foreman's solutions to those problems became integral to his theatre. The second contingency is marked by the arrival and ever more vital contributions of Kate Manheim that influenced Foreman's formalized oppositions of voice and body. Voice became defined in relation to the "erotic element" that Manheim introduced into Foreman's theatre.[5] The third contingency is the growing popularity of Ontological-Hysteric productions *and* of Foreman's more "commercial" productions that led him to abandon recorded voice (but not disembodied voices) for almost a decade. The problem of disembodying voice without intruding upon the professional actor's craft led Foreman to some of his most important innovations in looping and miking. Finally, in Foreman's late productions, in which his own disembodied voice is often the dominant one on the stage, he invoked his own production history.

While each section of this chapter handles the same material of contingencies, psychoanalytic formulations, and technologies of the disembodied voice in a production or productions, each section also reflects Foreman's tendencies in a particular period; in the early periods, for example, he tends to engage more with hysteria, in the middle more with the avant-garde.

Wooster Street and the Evolution of Soho (Vilnius: Jonas Mekas Fondas, 2010), 90. Foreman became immersed in Mekas's world when he and his first wife, Amy Taubin enlisted in protests against the prohibition of public screenings of Jack Smith's *Flaming Creatures* in 1963.

5. Foreman, "An Interview with Ken Jordan, Draft #1, January 1990," accessed 6 February 2003, http://www.ontological.com/FOREMAN/interviewarticles.html.

4.1 The Allure of the Disembodied Voice

Scholars may wonder what attracted the younger Foreman to disembodied voice. Foreman turned to the disembodied voice as a barrier between his internal voice and his mother's reading voice. In a discussion with Charles Bernstein, Foreman reveals the genesis of disembodied voice.

> When I was writing plays at Yale for John Gassner, then when I came to New York and was a member of the New Dramatists and the Actor's Studio, the one problem I had, the one reason I rewrote all the time, was that because whenever I wrote a play I'd sit there and read the dialogue to myself, and the only thing I would hear in my head was the inflectional pattern of my mother reading bedtime stories to me and my sister. And I thought, you don't get to be a major playwright sounding like your mother. So I started eliminating inflectional patterns. I tried to train my actors to speak every sentence in a monotone, with a downward inflection at the end of the sentence. [6]

Foreman offers the persistence of his mother's reading voice in his head as the psychological explanation for removing "inflectional patterns" in the voices he directs and records. Her reading voice represented an obstacle to his identity as a "major playwright." Consequently, his early uninflected and recorded disembodied voices represent an effort to break with that. We will see that the sounds and rhythms of his disembodied voice and of the actors' recorded voices remain defined *against* the seductions of his mother's reading voice. A less psychological but equally early determinant in the allure of disembodied voices for Foreman was the Broadway musicals that he attended as a child with his sister and grandmother.

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6. Foreman, "A Conversation with Richard Foreman," Charles Bernstein, *TDR*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (Fall 1992): 103-30, accessed 19 March 2005, http://www.ubu.com/papers/foreman_interview.html.

As a child, Foreman ran back home from these musicals to his first tape recorder and lip-synched the songs he had just heard. In his extended collaborations with the composer Stanley Silverman, which began the same year as *Angelface* with *Elephant Steps*, Foreman evoked the periods and conventions of those musicals. He also evoked those musicals in the recorded voices of Ontological-Hysteric productions but less explicitly in his redirection of the spectator's attention from plot or character to the body or voice. Foreman realized that bodies and voices could be the sole focus of productions and that plots were superfluous. Moreover, he transformed his early experiences as a listener to music to later serve his development to the solution of the avant-garde problem of staging a body without a voice.

The minimalist composers who performed at Mekas's Cinematheque (and who followed the traditions of Russolo and Schaeffer) had a profound effect on how noises would play and voices would sound as manifestations of the disembodied voice on the Ontological-Hysteric stage. Foreman expresses this direct connection between his early innovations and his experience as a listener to music at the Cinematheque in an interview with Charles Bernstein.

> I thought I was being rigorous and severe like all the rest of them. In music--Phil Glass less than Lamont Young, but you know, Phil, Steve [Reich] and Lamont. Seeing Lamont Young's first concert was a revelation. He was a profound influence upon me. So at that time I thought, "Hey, what I'm going to do in the theater's what all *those* guys are doing in *their* fields."[7]

Foreman applied the rigor of these "guys" to his aesthetic of the disembodied voice. Like them, he treated the human voice as if it no longer belonged to a source but instead to the "organizer" of recorded material. He re-organized voices and sounds to surround and/or assault the listener

7. Ibid.

through volume and repetition.[8] Ultimately, disembodied voice is the vehicle that allows Foreman to do in theatre what La Monte Young is doing in music. Foreman brings that rigor and severity of the minimalist composers to his own writing.

Foreman wanted a means of extending the radical impulses in his writing to the stage and disembodied voice allowed him to resist conventions. In his classes with John Gassner, Foreman had been trained to perform a method of conventional playwriting that was based in a strict adherence to outlines. Foreman continued to find Gassner's method useful but constraining in his early Ontological-Hysteric plays, from *Angelface* (1968) to *Hotel China* (1971-72). In *Unbalancing Acts*, he explains, "I was controlled in a funny way by the outline, but I wanted to write scenes that would in fact obliterate the outline. That program controlled my writing methods for the first five years, perhaps."[9] Foreman wrote outlines at the same time that he resisted the control of outlines with de-writing, staging the collision of two approaches to writing throughout his process. He set these collisions in staging with recording, interrupting performers with pauses and "doubling" their live voices with their own recorded voices. Creating collisions in both writing and staging, Foreman imposed upon himself and the spectator his radicalized approach to perception.

4.1.2 Contingency One: Untrained Inflections, 1968-1975.

As there exists minimal documentation and no reviews of the four performances of *Angelface* (1968), which took place at 80 Wooster Street, this section relies on a close reading of the texts

8. As we saw in the previous chapter, the terminology of "organized sound" comes via Russolo, Varèse, and Stockhausen.

9. Foreman, *Unbalancing Acts,* 76.

that are available: Foreman's notes and the play itself. These texts are essential to our introduction to Foreman's uses of disembodied voice because they reveal his attempts to interrupt mimesis with collisions of voice and body.

Foreman wrote collisions between speech and activity into the text of *Angelface* by writing dialogue that interrupted every action of the body. In *Angelface*, the characters note every act of their body, thus creating a collision between voice and activity where one interrupts the other.

> MAX: (calling back his position.) Walter! (Pause.) Walter! Follow my voice!
>
> WALTER: (low. Smiles.) I can't follow people's voices. It always seems to me as if people's voices... (He trails off.)[10]

Noting every act of the body prevents the act from being completed. Walter expresses this collision when he cannot "follow [other] people's voices." He admits, "It always seems to me as if people's voices..." Max asks Walter to accomplish a simple act and when Walter notes that act, it prevents him from achieving it and he "trails off." The text isolates the performers' bodies--eyes, ears, and hands--like parts of a machine to collide with parts of speech in the text.

Although Foreman was able to create collisions or exert control through text, the inflections in the performer's voice risked escaping his directorial control and he identifies this problem in the text itself of *Angelface*. Walter says that the voice comes "from all directions." Whereas the body is controlled by physical space, a voice coming from all directions gives the impression that it is beyond control. So Foreman is enacting the continuing struggle with his mother's reading voice. That continuing struggle is then transferred onto the performer's voice.

Foreman tries to control the performer's voice by making speech into an event that would

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10. Foreman, *Angelface* in *Plays and Manifestos*, 2.

exclude the spectator. In his notes to *Angelface*, Foreman guides the performer's voice:

> Some sudden awareness of the flood of warm ecstatic energy flooding the body which does SOMETHING that has to do with "light" that lifts-floods the following speech. Nothing forced by the actor. But he allows something to happen to him (and to hell with the audience).[11]

In the above directions, Foreman instructs the performer to reject the bond between his or her voice/body and the spectator's ear. Foreman describes the "something" that "happens" to the performer's body as a private re-enactment of which only traces remain discernable to the spectator. Inflections provoke a reaction from the listener, but when Foreman breaks the bond between speaker and listener by telling the performer "To hell with the audience," he gains control over inflection.

Despite Foreman's meticulous stage directions, he was unable to strip the performers of their inflections in *Angelface* entirely; this failure fueled Foreman's early and lasting innovations with tape and recorded voice. Laughs, like inflections, proved unwieldy under even the minutest stage directions. In an interview with Ken Jordan, Foreman explains how his inability to control the performers' laughter, like their inflections, led to his experiments with tape.

> When they couldn't laugh, that's when I came upon the idea of using these loud thuds to punctuate the plays. In other words, the dialogue was punctuated every few lines by these terribly loud thuds. I believe the laughs, initially, were to have the same function of being a sort of indication that: oh, we can't go any further now. You know, what more is there to say right now? It was like a wall ending discourse. And then there'd be a pause, and then you'd try again. But you'd hit yourself against a wall, again, and the laugh would

11. Annotated script, Fales Library, Box 312, Folder 11.

> indicate hitting against that wall. When I gave up the laugh, the loud thud would indicate the hitting against the wall.[12]

Laughter is a species of inflection that is automatic and does not yield easily to stage directions. Consequently, Foreman used "terribly loud thuds" because directing untrained actors to consciously produce a live performance that occurs on an automatic level proved impossible. Beating and banging a myriad of heavy objects and exploiting the clicks and pauses of the machine, instead, he interrupted continuous time and prevented spectators and performers from "pretending." The noises wrenched the spectator from an "emotion machine," and pushed him or her into present ("real") and awkward time. Thuds became a mechanical sign of "walls" or unconscious impasses in the performer.

Foreman's early uses of recorded voices and noises, which were his most lasting solutions to the problem of mimesis, shared an affinity with other twentieth century disembodiments. In an interview with the author, Foreman describes the affinity of speaking without emphasis that his work shares with Duras and twelve-tone music. He says,

> I was reading Marguerite Duras saying at one point, saying that she tries to, when she speaks her language in her films, as she often does, she tries to read it in a neutral way, so that each word is equal, so that no word takes precedence. Another thing that is important to me is sort of like twelve-tone music. No note takes precedence over other notes. I want the same thing in language. Now I am not rigorous. I am not… that's a tendency, a tone. I am not a person who cracks a whip, no, no, no, you're inflecting![13]

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12. Foreman, "An Interview with Ken Jordan, Draft #1, January 1990," http://www.ontological.com/FOREMAN/interviewarticles.html.

13. Foreman, interview with the author, 6 September 2010.

Foreman traces the cadences of his disembodied voice and his actors to Duras's "neutral voice" in her films, which makes her voice acousmatic: that is, a voice that speaks with no visible or identifiable source. Foreman's disembodied voice, like Duras's voice-over narration, refuses to be "nailed to a body."[14] Foreman proposes cadences for his actors, as for his own construction of Voice, that are evenly paced and without emphasis. Analogous to twelve-tone music, in which the absence of emphasis is replaced by a repetition of scales, are Foreman's noises, sentences, and phrases that are the building blocks for the structures of his productions.

In his efforts to create a disembodied voice, Foreman goes beyond his influences in pursuit of the sound of an "elsewhere." Foreman cultivated in his own voice, as well as his actors' voices, lower registers and resonances, to create the sound of elsewhere:

> I used to just speak as quiet and low as I could. I've always wanted it to reverberate, which I think relates to this feeling that the low tones, low frequencies have a vibratory effect on the body of the listener and I wanted my voice to vibrate the mind or the body, to massage it or penetrate the mental muscles. It's important that it resonate low because when it's low it creates a vibration that's almost like space.[15]

Deep timbres are what make the voice, according to Foreman, like space, which is, he explains, what makes it *dis*embodied: that is, a sound from "elsewhere." Vibrations make the voice exist in the present in the body of the listener. Foreman created this "elsewhere" sound by imitating the movement of live speech through space on recorded tracks, setting the mediate and the immediate in a delicate balance. If Foreman was working with an actor whose inflections he

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14. Michel Chion, *The Voice in Cinema,* trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 13.

15. Foreman, interview with the author, 24 September 2010.

disliked, he directed that actor to whisper in feigned French or middle European accents because he noted that such accented speech displaced sound. Foreman was trying to make a voice that sounded as if it existed totally on its own with no body. Besides the timbres and lower registers, he taped voice in a spontaneous way on "primitive" equipment and that created an immediate sound.

Foreman signaled the sound of an autonomous body with a spontaneous recording process on "primitive" equipment. He described in an interview the process of recording his own voice and the process of recording his performers:

> Usually I was out of breath after three sentences and I just sort of had to squeeze it out of myself. I would just try to do it as fast as possible because I got tired after five minutes, but I had to do that whole stupid thing for half an hour.[16]

Treating the recording process as a kind of tedium, Foreman cultivated clips that were, according to Neil Benezra, Foreman's former sound operator, "recorded way too hot, grainy, scratchy quality."[17] By committing *this* voice to recording, Foreman projected a voice that sounded unrehearsed in opposition to the rehearsed and trained (mediated) voice of a live actor who, according to Foreman, tries and fails to signify presence. In his editing of tape, Foreman also kept the process deliberately primitive. He cut the portion of the sound that he wanted from the rest of the tape, spliced it together to form a loop and then re-recorded and re-recorded a four-second section of sound to get the length of the loop he wanted.

With recording and fixed cadences, Foreman minimized the sound of intention/emotion *and* enabled a startling automatism. He recorded actors' voices quickly and monotonously, and

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16. Ibid, Foreman's main concern was saving time, rather than spending it in rehearsal and memorization, when he decided to record his performers' voices.

17. Neil Benezra, telephone interview with author, 7 September 2010.

he played them back while actors spoke parts of their lines live at a slower pace. When he paused, started, and stopped the tape in performance, he pointed to the performers' reliance on tape as on the structure of a play. The recorded voice and Foreman's real-time control of the tape recorder made the actors machine-like, their voices inscribed in theatre's machinery.

The contours of Foreman's early recording practices culminated in *Pandering to the Masses: A Mis-representation* (1975). In *Unbalancing Acts,* Foreman describes how *Pandering* was the apogee of his early tape experiments:

> During the performance the tape was played back from loudspeakers located in the four corners of the performance space, so each sentence of dialogue would seem to circle the audience: they'd hear one word coming from the left side of the stage, then the next word from the right, and so on. We'd do it for the whole evening. The actors would slowly and softly repeat the lines of the character they were playing in counterpoint to the tape. Since the actors would speak at a slower rate than the tape they were cued by, it meant that they were soon overlapping each other as well as the tape.[18]

In *Pandering,* Foreman layered and doubled the actors' voices exponentially, so that actors spoke over the voices of other actors as well as their own. In the earliest productions Foreman focused most of the dialogue on the body, sections were defined as units or "cells," and all the actors' lines were recorded on tape and created delays between an actor's *live* voice and his or her own recorded voice. In *Pandering,* Foreman still directed the actor's dialogue to the body and still used the human voice as a building block that might be arranged and rearranged. He distanced actors' voices ever further from specific actors' bodies in *Pandering*, eliminating the actor's ownership of lines and moving voices in space through multiple banks of speakers, "out"

18. Foreman, *Unbalancing Acts*, 34.

towards the spectator. *Pandering* represented the culmination of what Foreman refers to as his "primitive" approach, at the same time that the web of voices indicated an aesthetic shift in his work in the direction of continuous soundtracks and multiplied moving objects onstage.

Moreover, in *Pandering*, Foreman most nearly realized the "web of sound" that he dreamed of when he heard La Monte Young's drones. In *Pandering*, speech had *become* noise-music, fragmented and barely comprehensible, more important for the rhythmic patterns that it contributed to the overall structure than for its individual sounds and/or meanings. In his earliest productions, Foreman used noise to create a "space" in theatre that interrupted dialogue and forced the spectator to listen again.[19] Foreman's buzzers may have sounded endless, but they lasted only a fraction of the duration of Young's drones. Not only did *Pandering* exhibit the influence that minimalist composers had on Foreman but also how he had gone onto influence experimental composers.

The recording techniques that evolved in Foreman's first decade were perhaps the most influential of his practices on the avant-garde composers, John Zorn and Glenn Branca. In Boston in the seventies, Branca had been emulating Foreman's productions with his own "Bastard Theatre." When Branca turned exclusively to music, Foreman's influence remained through Branca's integration of music and noise as assaults on the listener.[20] Zorn spent a lot of time at Foreman's loft in the seventies, ostensibly helping out with the phones and later

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19. Foreman, "An Interview with Ken Jordan," "I mean, there was a certain kind of space, aural space created when this terrible sound ended. So five minutes before the curtain, we turn on the buzzer."

20. Branca cited in *Talking Music: Conversations with John Cage, Philip Glass, Laurie Anderson and Five Generations of American Experimental Composers,* William Duckworth (New York: Da Capo Press, 1999), 423. Foreman has said that he was never able to reciprocate and listen to Branca's music.

performing his "Theatre of Musical Optics," in which he performed operas with small objects on a small wooden stage. Zorn was most inspired by Foreman's assemblage of sounds and voices; he admired that Foreman juggled the multiple elements of his theatre and their potential multiple meanings, until, as former Ontological-Hysteric sound operator Brian Cronin explains, there was a "certain tangible feeling, almost like a vibration" when a production "worked."[21] Zorn developed a similar system that he called the "file-card technique" and used in his compositions for *Godard* and *Spillane* (1987), Zorn noted images, sounds, and dialogue on index cards and, like Foreman, shuffled these until he arrived at a structure that "felt right."[22]

Foreman had such influence on experimental musicians because he created a theatre that took shape through its evolving rhythms. Music, speech, noise were intrinsic to Foreman's rhythms. Unlike other directors who used sound as a background in their theatre, Foreman was more concerned with the score that evolved before him than in creating the sound of a score he already had in his head. Opposed to improvisation in performance, Foreman used technologies to control individual elements of theatrical production, but in combination he used them to signal immediacy, withholding until the last moment (even from himself) how the pieces of a production in the set, staging, lights, and sounds would come together.

4.1.3 Arrested Mimesis in *Angelface*: Recorded Voice as a Means of Making Visible

In *Angelface*, Foreman proposed, as did Charcot in his anatomo-clinical demonstrations, that

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21. Interview with the author, Brian PJ Cronin, 6 October 2010.

22. Stacia Proefrock, *All Music Guide: the Definitive Guide to Popular Music* eds., Vladimir Bogdanov, Chris Woodstra, Stephen Thomas Erlewine (San Francisco: Backbeat Books, 2001), 1131; *Put More Blood into the Music*: *John Zorn*, episode 292 of *The South Bank Show*, aired 12 March 1989.

truth could be *seen*. Foreman describes *Angelface* as "A chamber play/An event (a process)/A means of making visible."[23] Setting the stage as a "lecture-demonstration," Foreman proposed his earliest theatre as truth and as study. In the notes to the text of *Angelface*, Foreman writes,

> Any special effects called for would be rendered with quite obvious wires, ropes, etc. the mystery and magic is in the CHOICE, not in the execution. The execution is magical—(not as an explicable "trick").[24]

Tricks are emblematic of an "old theatre" that engages the spectator through a variety of traps. Foreman staged magic in his dramaturgy, but he rendered tricks "quite obvious." Foreman let the audience in on the secret, for example, that ropes pulled the characters to a standing position. In revealing the mechanics of his theatre, Foreman disrupted channels of seduction between spectator and performer and implicated the audience as objective-minded observers of potentially deceptive actor/hysterics. The audience's gaze was focused with Foreman on the diagnosis of making art.

Foreman structured his early plays in cells or units that were interrupted by loud noises and would begin again. This forced the spectator to "look and look again" and to participate in the diagnosis of what was wrong with making art. *Angelface* made visible the truth that performers are dissociated by exposing their dependence on external factors to speak and to move, that is, to act:

> MAX: (Finally he laughs once) The door opens. I don't even turn my head
>
> WALTER: Does it turn?
>
> MAX: What?

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23. Annotated script, *Angelface*, Fales Library. Box 312, Folder 11.

24. Ibid.

WALTER: (Laughs once.) Heads turn.

MAX: Heads turn. My head is a head. Therefore: my head turns.

(Silence. He smiles.) Open the door a second time.

WALTER: Why?

MAX: Find out if my head turns.

WALTER: I can't.[25]

In *Angelface*, the theatrical framework of a melodrama appears in place: a room, a beginning, and the potential for a triangle. Walter "can't" open the door and thus Max cannot turn his head. In each of the subsequent episodes the actions accrue; it remains impossible for Walter to open the door in section two and then Agatha to get a seat. The performer-entities are dependent on external forces to complete their actions, but their text hinders that completion. The impossibilities reveal a spectacle of dissociation: an anti-mimetic mimesis that permits the audience and the writer–director (or doctor) to "see" symptoms of the malady of, in this case, acting. This dissociation is the hysteria of the actor in place of the hysteria of the character.

In *Angelface* the hysteria of the character is suppressed while the hysteria of the actor is revealed. Foreman controls every aspect of the usual theatrical manifestations of hysteria with an ontological gaze because in *Angelface* and other early plays, "hysteria is hidden as a seed/spark."[26] The middle-class theatre that Foreman rejected would have located hysteria in an evolving Max-Walter-Agatha triangle, but Foreman interrupts this plotline, as he does other similar plotlines, again and again. He subsumes the characters' emotions and intentions, which

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25. Foreman, *Angelface* in *Richard Foreman: Plays and Manifestos*, ed. Kate Davy (New York: New York University Press, 1976), 1.

26. Foreman, "Ontological-Hysteric Manifesto I" (1972) in *Richard Foreman: Plays and Manifestos*, ed. Kate Davy (New York: New York University Press, 1976), 70.

otherwise would have involved the spectator in attachments, in the actors' tasks of speech or movement that the text makes un-accomplishable. Like dynamic psychiatrists and the avant-gardes, Foreman pursues the means for gaining access to and controlling the "ecstatic energy" that hysteria suggests.[27]

4.1.4 The Return of the Avant-Garde's No-Body: Foreman's Mallarméan Vaudeville.[28]

In Foreman's early aesthetic, which he returns to throughout his career as his purest and most uncompromising, he arrives at solutions that share much with the philosophies and the stage-worthy solutions of symbolist theatre. As we saw in chapter two, Maeterlinck realized Mallarmé's Idée by separating the voice and body in *L'intruse* (1890) and *Intérieure* (1895) (*The Intruder* and *Home*). When Foreman, similarly, took as the "building blocks" of his plays the basic elements of theatre--the actor's body and voice--he had minimalist aesthetics in mind. The attitude with which Foreman put these aesthetics into practice reveals, however, that his disembodied voice had more in common with the symbolist theatre than with Minimalism.

On Foreman's stage, as on the symbolist stage, the disembodied voice redirected the spectator's attention from her or his eye to her or his ear. Foreman sometimes achieved this by pointing out the spectator's excessive attention to the body. If in the symbolist theatre, the disembodied voice was made audible by being set within an environment dimmed and/or veiled by scrims, in Foreman's theatre the disembodied voice was made audible by being set against the body in the blinding light. In both the symbolist theatre and Foreman's Ontological Theater, the

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27. Section Two of this chapter demonstrates that Foreman seeks access in "The Rhoda Plays" by opposing the male voice to the female body in the form of Kate Manheim.

28. Foreman, interview with author, New York, Video Recording, 6 September 2010.

spectator is not only exposed to a new approach to perception, but also is marked as a listener distinct from audiences seduced by spectacle.

Setting the ear and eye apart, Foreman (like the Symbolists) used the disembodied voice to cull his intended spectator from the crowd that rejected his theatre. Foreman challenged his audiences to reject his theatre because such rejection suggested to him that his pursuit was "heroic."[29] In the first six years of the Ontological-Hysteric Theater, Foreman drove two-thirds of his audience away with the relentlessly "difficult and uncongenial rhythms."

Foreman troubled his own heroic stance by indulging his impulses to stage vaudevillian elements that entertained his audience. Foreman tried dividing his impulses into discrete careers: writing librettos for musicals composed by Stanley Silverman and creating serious intellectual work in his Ontological Hysteric productions.[30] Foreman believed that the steady critical praise and awards that the collaborations received would supply him with enough moral and financial support for his Ontological-Hysteric productions. In those productions, he wanted to be free of critical opinion, but he *did* rely on the opinions of a "few people": Arthur Sainer of *The Village Voice* wrote Foreman's first positive review (of *Total Recall*) in 1971 and followed it with consistent enthusiasm for Foreman's "difficult" work.

Foreman's impulses did not remain divided for long. In the mid seventies, concurrent with the growing popularity of the Ontological-Hysteric Theater and his readings in poststructuralist theory, Foreman grew tired of stasis. He explains in *Unbalancing Acts*, that this restlessness was propelled by his readings at the time. "Partially under the influence of the

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29. Foreman, http://www.ontological.com/FOREMAN/interviewarticles.html.

30. In 1968, Foreman wrote his first libretto for the composer Stanley Silverman, *Elephant Steps: A Fearful Radio Show with Pop Singers* and began a collaborative relationship that would win him several Obies and would last more than twenty years.

French structuralists and poststructuralists, I began to entertain the possibility that objects were simply crossroads for a multitude of inputs from the culture and our unconscious."[31] These readings supported a different form of attack on the embodied voice of intention. Instead of directing all of the dialogue and attention to the actors' bodies, Foreman had begun to stage objects, including letters, lamps, *and* actors' bodies, to make transparent the "inputs from the culture and our unconscious," or "arche-writing." The multiplied inputs corresponded to the more numerous spectators in Foreman's theatre at 491 Broadway, the space that he purchased in 1975. Audiences were no longer walking out on performances; in fact, nightly performances had become the pretext for ticket wars outside the building. The proliferating analyses, (mis) interpretations, and expectations of audiences surfaced in Foreman's vision of a theatre, as he allowed more elements to enter his plays.

In *Pandering to the Masses: a Mis-Representation* (1975) Foreman staged his conflicting impulses by multiplying the aural and physical elements of the production. In the first moments of the play, Voice tells the audience "You… understand… NOTHING!" But Voice's dismissal of the spectator's intellect puts her or his intellect on the alert, as the spectator's thought processes are at the center of the production.[32] For the benefit of the spectator, the actors subject a single object, a leaf, to each of the senses to demonstrate different modes of knowing: seeing, smelling, and hearing. Spectatorship *is* writing as "Choice" and choice as "Writing." Every moment onstage involves a choice for the spectator of how to arrange

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31. Foreman, *Unbalancing Acts*, 82.

32. Foreman, *Pandering to the Masses: a Mis-Representation* in *Theatre of Images* (New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1977), 15. In Bonnie Marranca's article on the production that prefaces the play, she asserts, "the Ontological-Hysteric Theater is a theater of illustrations in which pictures, continually interrelating with words, replace dialogue." Marranca, "Richard Foreman and the Ontological-Hysteric Theater," 4.

the seen and the heard. Although the stasis of Foreman's early productions that made his aesthetics resemble those of symbolist theatre is absent in *Pandering*, Foreman continued to pursue in this production and others that followed the problems of the symbolist theatre in staging the condition of reading. He engaged the spectator in a "reading" through the divided processes of watching and thinking.

Voice invites the spectator into the gaps between the act of writing and the world that writing has created; in *Pandering*, Voice thus draws attention to a parallel in the spectator's divided attention and the division in writing.

> MAX: I am now in the present moment. Writing it of course, not when you are watching it.
>
> (*He looks up*.)
>
> What can I do about the evident problem? Nothing. Nothing. I can proceed as if everything will take care of itself. And it will.
>
> VOICE: You can either watch Max writing it, or you can watch Max as he is writing. But you can only watch what he is writing after he is writing it, and in that case, your expectations are in a different direction, are they not.
>
> MAX: It will be in the present, after it is in the present.[33]

Max's problem that his description of the writing process cannot make it happen "now" is the problem of a world where no presence is absolute, but also of a world too distracting in its physicality. The act of writing the current text, hidden in the moment when words and objects were retranslated from the writer's pre-conscious, can never be made present because it has

33. Ibid., 18.

passed into the past too quickly.[34]

In *Pandering*, the seductions of the concrete and physical world distract from and compensate for the impossibility of attaining an ideal. Ben who plays Max who plays the author is a stand-in for the unattainable that Voice more closely than either Ben or Max approximates. The production closes with a closing book.

> He inhabits that word. That means to celebrate his return, finally, he thinks about his face as being her face. And thinks about his person as being her person, finally. And worships it, finally. And reads it finally like a wonderful book.[35]

The already written absorbs the body and mimesis, enjoying a melancholic victory over them. Writing absorbs Rhoda's face, which is now like a "wonderful book." Her face then takes its place among the books lying on the floor that hold the "meaning" of the play that Max/Ben/Voice/ Foreman reads. On the one hand, Voice claims the words that the actors speak are his own, and on the other hand, he must accept the finite meanings he has created; the book has become part of the physical, concrete world, more associated with Rhoda's body in this respect than Voice's mind.

4.2. Contingency Two: Rhoda, 1972-1980.

This section outlines the oppositions of voice and body in the "Rhoda Plays": those plays that included the character Rhoda portrayed by Kate Manheim from 1972-1980. Foreman

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34. Foreman, "Artists' Reading," Franklin Furnace, 1977, accessed 20 May 2011, http://vimeo.com/20882962. In the midst of this reading Foreman turned to Derrida's problematics of originary speech to explain his own theatrical preoccupations with the problems of speech: there is no speech that can be present, only speech that can be different.

35. Foreman, *Pandering to the Masses: a Mis-Representation*, 36.

"discovered" Manheim (his soon-to-be main performer and future wife) by accident, while wandering the offices of the Cinematheque when he was looking for an actress to fill the role of the Angel in *Hotel China* (1971).[36] Manheim stepped in, but a year later when she played Rhoda for the first time in *Sophia=(Wisdom): Part 3* (1972-73), she chose that role as her own and over the next decade shaped the "entity" Rhoda. Soon, Manheim's presence on stage and within Foreman's texts became so central that, Foreman explains, "the plays have come to be built around her, around a 'not me.'"[37] Rhoda evolved, and Voice spoke more and more often to, for, and about her body. The couple, as stage couple of voice and body, created an aesthetic of dissociation that would become the aesthetic of the Ontological-Hysteric Theater and would endure in other guises long after Manheim ceased playing Rhoda and subsequently retired from the stage.

4.2.1 Formalizing the oppositions of Voice and Body

Manheim created Rhoda as a character grounded in the poetics of the hysterical body. In the first extensive profile of Manheim, Kate Davy outlines Manheim's construction of Rhoda's body.

> In relation to what many spectators have labeled "presence," Manheim works with her body in certain ways to "make myself feel more intense when I am performing." For example, while simply walking from one point to another, she will "tighten up" muscles not used for carrying out that activity, perhaps consciously contracting in her stomach or

36. Foreman indicates in a conversation with J. Hoberman that the first actress might have left *because* she was asked to undress. If this is so, it puts into question both Foreman and Manheim's account that Manheim chose to undress. Commentary with Richard Foreman and J. Hoberman, DVD edition of *Ontological-Hysteric Theater,* Vol. 1 (2008).

37. Foreman, cited in Theodore Shank, *Beyond the Boundaries: American Alternative Theater* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 168.

> arms. In general she attempts to push her body into uncomfortable positions. She explains, "I always work against whatever comes naturally to the body." Often, when she is merely standing motionless onstage, one might notice that her foot is turned in a somewhat awkward direction or her arm might be slightly twisted into an uncomfortable position.[38]

Manheim isolated her muscles and limbs, giving each part of her body an individual command and breaking pathways of information between parts by "tightening up." In working "against whatever comes naturally," she emphasized the machine-like quality of her body. Manheim put herself into such uncomfortable positions in order to feel more intense before the audience. Re-enacting this discomfort ostensibly brought Manheim, like the hysterics who stood before hundreds of spectators at Charcot's stage, to the "border between madness and mysticism,"[39] and the meeting place of "bliss and anxiety."[40]

Whereas Rhoda's "presence" did seem to emanate from Manheim's body, Foreman created the character of Voice from an absence. Rhoda's body was always before us onstage, but Foreman maintained a distance from and invisibility on the stage that put his body into question.[41] When Manheim did speak she created what the critic John Simon referred to as an

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38. Davy, "Kate Manheim as Foreman's Rhoda," 43.

39. Georges Didi-Huberman, *Invention of Hysteria: Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpetrière,* trans Alisa Hartz (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004), 142.

40. Martha Noel-Evans, *Fits and Starts: A Genealogy of Hysteria in Modern France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 192.

41. Blau, *To All Appearances: Ideology and Performance* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 146-7. "The relatively non-existent Rhoda is an accretion of behaviors and, if not a character, something *other* than Kate Manheim, about whose displaced gratifications one may think, as she became identified, through time and repetition, with whatever it is that *is,* in Manheim's absence, metabolically there."

unnatural "whine." Foreman established the timbres of his Voice as "deep," "deeply ironic," "hypnotic, deep and slow," and "ominous."[42] Even though Voice's timbres corresponded to the qualities of Foreman's own speaking voice, Voice was not an immediate and natural emanation from Foreman's body.

Foreman's theoretical categories of body and mind voices contradict the Voice that Foreman creates with his absence and the Rhoda that Manheim creates with her presence. Foreman theorized body voices as those that *sounded* present because of deep timbres and vibrations: voices of unseen or invisible bodies that sounded as if they were speaking now. He theorized "mind voices" as high-pitched and absent in their preoccupations with meaning. Foreman rejected the latter because, he explains, "I could not stand sopranos because that seems like the piercing arrow of directed intellect."[43] The high-pitched voice that Manheim gave Rhoda made her sound absent (or pre-occupied), even as her body was visibly active on stage. And even though Foreman was not visible, he wanted to suggest presence through the vibrations of his voice and a process of recording that was intended to sound spontaneous. Foreman's Voice was an absent presence and Manheim's Rhoda a present absence.

In Foreman's productions before Manheim, the female body stood for a physical experiential knowledge in opposition to mental knowledge, but Voice and Rhoda built a complicit relationship, even when they were opposed, that defined Foreman's theatre for almost

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42. *Symphony of Rats* in *Unbalancing Acts*; *What Did He See,* in *Unbalancing Acts*, 273; *Lava* in *Unbalancing Acts*; *Permanent Brain Damage* in *Paradise Hotel*, 73.

43. Foreman, interview with author, New York, Video Recording, 6 September 2010.

a decade.[44] In *Sophia=(Wisdom): Part 3*, in which the couple Foreman-Voice/Manheim-Rhoda-Body first appeared, Voice tries to assimilate Manheim/Rhoda's nudity to the object-oriented concerns of the play, where no character "carries more weight than any other." While Rhoda sits nonchalantly on the same train bench/church pew as the other clothed actors, Voice flatly announces the play's statement/question: "People are more interesting than props: Do you agree with that statement."[45] The slowed cadence of Foreman's voice and the stillness of Rhoda's body permitted the spectator to contemplate and thus remove the charge of Rhoda/Manheim's nakedness. Voice and Rhoda attempted to neutralize the nudity and the erotic component that Manheim introduced into Foreman's theatre.

Because Foreman adopted Rhoda as the central problematic of Ontological-Hysteric productions, Voice continued to use her Body to answer the theoretical problems of the plays. In *Pain(t)* (1974), for example, Voice singles out Rhoda's body to perform his commands and to answer Foreman's question: "whether you could have high art and not have pornographic elements drag it into pure sexual excitation."[46] Foreman purposefully heightened the erotic charge of nudity, including multiple naked bodies, and Voice urged Rhoda to perform an "other"

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44. In *Total Recall* (1971), "Sophia," the goddess of wisdom, who was not nude, was the central female figure and her body was the focal point of a mystical or hysterical power; her body was "like a mind."

45. Foreman frequently omits punctuation or uses it expressively and not according to laws of function. By omitting punctuation, in this case a question mark, Foreman removes the usual inflections even in the reader's inner voice. Just as Foreman directs his actors' voices to descend at the end of a statement, the reader of English whose inner voice would normally rise at the end of a question is forced to reorient itself and end with a similar descent.

46. Foreman, Commentary with Richard Foreman and J. Hoberman on *Pain(T)*, DVD edition of *Ontological-Hysteric Theater,* Vol. 1 (2008).

kind of knowledge. Voice says, "Oh Rhoda try stuffing the word, painter up your ass."[47] The other actors prepare Rhoda's body, lifting the edges of her skirt as if she were a prop for a magic trick. By the time of *Pain(t)*, the erotic component that Manheim introduced to Foreman's stage had become the central problematic of the Ontological-Hysteric Theater.

Rhoda went through the motions of Voice's suggestions with an apparently happy ignorance of her own pain, as an hysteric in the throes of *la belle indifference*, and Voice "treated" Rhoda's hysterical body as a doctor, subjecting her to the temporary pains of the stage in the name of discovering a lasting "cure." In *Book of Splendors,* Voice, in simultaneous dialogue with the onstage characters, proposes a cure that will still Rhoda's body and stop her pain.

Oh Rhoda, you should have a heavy weight

Heavy weight, on your body gros lourd

Oh Rhoda, you should

Have a heavy weight Boing!

Heavy weight. On your body.[48]

The "weights" are symbolized objects that are used, like Charcot's real weights and needles, to focus the hysteric's trauma outward, at a "distance," and away from the male body. The fact that Foreman's body was rarely visible onstage emphasized his distance not only from Rhoda's body but also from his own body, which was buried in the mechanics of the tape recorder.

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47. Foreman, *Pain(t)* (1974), in *Plays and Manifestos*, 198.

48. Foreman, *Book of Splendors: Part I* (1976) in *Reverberation Machines* (Barrytown: Station Hill, 1985), 8.

Foreman polarized Voice and Body as in the medical profession the "sick" and the "healthy," or the patient and the doctor are opposed: convenient categories that conceal interdependences. Foreman's Voice and Manheim's Body "put on" the roles of doctor and patient to play out what Foucault refers to as the "psychoanalytic couple."

> [Freud] exploited the structure that enveloped the medical personage; he amplified its thaumaturgical virtues, preparing for its omnipotence a quasi-divine status. He focused upon this single presence—concealed behind the patient and above him, in an absence that is also a total presence—all the powers that had been distributed in the collective existence of the asylum; he transformed this into absolute observation, a pure and circumspect Silence. [49]

Voice was always "concealed" behind Rhoda whose acting-out was constantly available to his and the audience's "gaze." Like Charcot, who stood plainly visible before his audience as he described himself as nothing more than an eye and a camera, Foreman put his own body into question through his staging: playing tapes of his disembodied voice onstage while he sat in the front row behind a table and a reel-to-reel, visible to all.

The thematic of the doctor's cure reappeared throughout Foreman's oeuvre, as a cure for specific personas onstage *and* for the general audience. If the doctor is the voice that translates the hysteric's body, which "speaks" to the doctor through its gestures, then there is always the possibility that the body is being mis-translated and that the doctor is the author of his own pain. According to this logic, Foreman's disembodied voice and the pursuit of cures in his plays were an implicit demand for the doctor's own cure.

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49. Foucault puts forward the concept of the psychoanalytic couple in the last pages of *Madness and Civilization*. Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), 276.

4.2.2 "Mad Love" of Voice and Body: Foreman's Surrealism

Foreman reprises André Breton's project of rescuing the hysteric from the status she held in the previous avant-gardes as "unmarked" entity. Marinetti implied that the crowd was a feminized mass, electrified by hysterical impulses. Dadaists "disintegrated" their own bodies to function as, Hal Foster writes, "traumatic mimes."[50] Finally, with Breton the female hysteric became explicit as he "celebrated" her malady as a genuine expression of art. If he frequently did so through an eroticization, this eroticization represented, according to Bürger, Breton's attempt to escape the solipsism of the previous avant-gardes through the fantasy and glorification of the Other. Foreman likewise turned to the hysteric and to Rhoda's erotic experience of the world to escape his solipsism, or the "serious stuff" of his writing.

Like the hysteric in Breton's manifestos and the main character of his novel, *Nadja*, Rhoda was the object of the narrator's desire *and*, as an erotic adventurer, the text's conduit for another kind of knowledge. Foreman's staging of male voice and female body in the Rhoda plays challenged the limits that theatre places on writing. Breton rejected the theatre because he believed that the actor's body stood in opposition to automatic texts. Foreman articulated similar frustrations with the stage, claiming that his impulses as a director forced his "wilder" (or more avant-garde) writing impulses into "conventional" forms. As "the most fruitful creation of the intellectual currents of the twentieth century," the unconscious is for Foreman a matter of staging, and his own theatre is its *re*-staging.[51] Using the disembodied voice at the center of such "creation," Foreman attempted to solve Breton's dilemma of how to stage "pure psychic

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50. Hal Foster, "Dada Mime" in *October*, Vol. 105 (Summer 2003), 169.

51. Foreman, interviewed by Howard Silver, *Bloomberg Muse*, 9 March 2009, accessed 10 June 2010, http://vimeo.com/3549092.

automatism." Because Foreman's Voice and Manheim's Body were an unrelenting and obvious mis-fit, automatic messages could never completely settle in the bodies with which they were associated. The mis-fit might have appeared strange, funny, or impossible but more importantly the Body-Voice couple of the Rhoda plays represented a type of avant-garde agonism in that it exposed the cultural garbage heap of gender identities that is otherwise taken for granted. On the one hand, the mis-fit thus seemed to ask us to question assumptions. On the other hand, implied equations of Rhoda and Woman, Woman and Body, and Body and hysteria exposed Foreman to charges of sexism. His productions with Manheim were understandably criticized (as we will see below) as essentialized visions of male and female that put Rhoda through hell and empowered Voice.

4.2.3 Feminist Critiques

Critics and admirers alike of the Ontological-Hysteric Theater used the "real" relationship of Foreman and Manheim to either defend or condemn the productions. Richard Schechner interpreted the autobiographical component of Foreman's theatre, especially in relation to Manheim, as evidence that Foreman "offers a transcript of what he sees, no more, no less."[52] Tracing Manheim's construction of Rhoda, Davy at first treated as a misconception that, "many people tend to interpret the plays in terms of Foreman's and Manheim's personal lives."[53] Later,

52. Richard Schechner, "If Heidegger Wrote Soaps, He'd Be Richard Foreman," *Village Voice* (23 February 1976), 124.

53. Kate Davy, "Kate Manheim as Foreman's Rhoda," *TDR*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (September 1976), 39. Indicating the places of non-convergence, Davy reminds us that the character appeared in Foreman's first play, *Angelface* (1968), although Manheim began to play her in *Sophia= (Wisdom) Part 3: The Cliffs* (1972).

with the publication of *Reverberation Machines* in 1985, Davy found that Foreman concealed in his published writing the misogyny that was visible in his staging of Rhoda's "adventures."[54]

Foreman and Manheim blurred the boundaries between their stage and real-life couple in the Rhoda Plays. In *Rhoda in Potatoland* a crewmember approaches Manheim and asks, "Aren't you the famous Mr. Foreman." [55] The joke indicates not only how familiar the couple was to the downtown audience at the time but also how consciously Foreman exploited the confusion of his voice and Manheim's body to play on the merging of male and female.

The lines that separated Manheim from Rhoda were murky because, as Manheim explains to Florence Falk, her portrayal of Rhoda, including her nudity, was the product of her own creative and/or personal pursuits.

> I am a conscious masochist, not an organized one. There's something about my acting that I see as an exercise in death, or perhaps I am learning how to die through the physical suffering that takes place onstage. Death is my worst fear. I cope by being masochistic on stage. Before I had the stage I went through those painful experiences in my life.[56]

Manheim defends the masochism of Rhoda as her own conscious choice in performance and not the dictatorial choice of her director/husband. She does not point to the specific death of a character but to a death that the experience of being onstage provokes. By going through the pain

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54. Davy, Review of *Reverberation Machines: The Later Plays and Essays* by Richard Foreman, *Theatre Journal* (March 1987): 124-25.

55. Foreman, *Rhoda in Potatoland* (1975) in *Plays and Manifestos*, 220.

56. Florence Falk, "Kate Manheim: Theme and Variation Within an Erotic Landscape," *Soho Arts* (22 December 1977), 23-5.

of performing in Foreman's plays, Manheim hardened herself to doing it again and again. As it was for Rhoda (and later for "Kate" in *The Cure*), the pain itself was the cure.

Foreman's staging of extreme pornographic images at the peak of second wave feminism seemed designed to provoke criticism, and Foreman hardly denies charges that his work was sexist, but he defends his vision as the inevitable outcome of who he is, a twentieth century male artist. In response to the poet Charles Bernstein's question "how does your maleness affect your work," Foreman responds unapologetically.

> Back in the seventies the feminist movement came down for a while pretty hard on me, saying I was…. the play was from the chauvinist position of the male psyche and I felt bad for a while. Kate was always the lead in the plays and she was generally beset by all these people exploiting her, sexually and otherwise. I always said, "well, all I can do as an artist is give evidence of where my head is at and that's how it comes out."[57]

Foreman's critique of society is ostensibly so deeply imbedded in his sense of self that it reveals itself in his work. Foreman was not an "organized" misogynist (just as Manheim was not an organized masochist) but a critic of being male. Bernstein jokes later in the interview that Foreman is certainly "no Robert Bly." In fact, he says that Foreman's representations of men are rather "repulsive." If all of Foreman's characters, including Voice and Rhoda, are Foreman, then he punishes Rhoda in order to punish himself for being a repulsive male.

Foreman's plays of the mid to late seventies find common ground with *écriture féminine* in treating language as the "prison house" that determines gendered identities. In *Rhoda in Potatoland* (1976), Voice opens the play, assigning the spectator the task of identifying with

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57. Foreman, *Close Listening*, an interview with Charles Bernstein, 10 May 2006, Clocktower Studio: New York, accessed 10 July 2008, http://writing.upenn.edu/pennsound/x/Foreman.php.

Rhoda. "Compare: Her mind and your mind. She is an actress in a play. But at this moment her real mind is working just like your real mind."[58] Superseding the symbolic and the body, Voice appeals directly to thinking. Thinking is always happening in both spectator and actor, so that at any point in time, that assertion is true. If Foreman rejects a theatre that pursues an outright sociological agenda, his plays become invested in making Rhoda "more dominant, more active,"[59] which translates in Foreman's theatre to a domination of language over the physical world. Voice encourages Rhoda to pursue such domination in her own mastery of the art of comparison.

Jill Dolan resists Foreman's formalist defense that his work deconstructs the prison house of language. For her, as for other feminist critics, his theatre represents a series of untenable contradictions.

> Foreman attempts to deconstruct the signs he chooses to their phenomenological essence, but for a feminist spectator observing his use of women he cannot go far enough. A woman is never "a woman is a woman is a woman," particularly when she is part of a representational frame.[60]

According to Dolan, Foreman makes no place in his theatre for a feminist spectator because he can never go far enough in deconstructing the identity of the female body, which she suggests is an impossible task anyway. The female naked body is always more charged than the male naked body. Voice, as part of the dominating structure of the play, reconstructs the "representational

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58. Foreman, *Rhoda in Potatoland (Her Fall-Starts)* (1975) in *Plays and Manifestos*, 210.

59. Foreman, interview with Charles Bernstein, 10 May 2006.

60. Dolan, *Feminist Spectator as Critic* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1991), 57.

frame, " or the prison, for Rhoda and, by extension, the feminist spectator again and again, thus restaging trauma each time.

In the late seventies, Foreman's staging becomes less explicitly exploitative of the female body. His productions include fewer images of Manheim as Rhoda in her naked body, "beset by all these people exploiting her, sexually and otherwise."[61] Starting with *Penguin Touquet* (1981), and in *Egyptology* (1983) and *The Cure* (1986) Manheim plays other characters, Agatha or "Kate," and she is a clothed adventurer of the world and of the mind.

The final production in which Manheim appears on the Ontological-Hysteric stage, *Film is Evil*: *Radio is Good* (analyzed more fully in the next section) seems the summation of her career. As Estelle Merriweather, the station manager of the radio station (a propagator of disembodied voices), she represents, as she had throughout her career on the Ontological-Hysteric stage, the "not me." Through Manheim, an Ontological-Hysteric performance style had evolved: her construction of Rhoda required Foreman to find actors who could keep pace with her very intense energy and even led Foreman to coax actors into a degree of "virtuosity." Manheim resisted recorded voice in her desire to speak live and to speak more, and her resistance contributes to Foreman's almost total abdication of actors' recorded voices for almost a decade. When Manheim leaves the stage in 1988 because of an on-going illness, Foreman explains that he no longer feels comfortable summoning the erotic. His disembodied voices do not, for some time, speak to and for female bodies but instead proffer an escape to his male characters from a male consciousness.

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61. Foreman, *Close Listening*, an interview with Charles Bernstein, 10 May 2006.

4.3 Contingency Three: Professional Actors, 1981-1988.

This section demonstrates Foreman's continued pursuit of disembodied voices in practice and theory throughout the period when, from 1981 to 1988, he abandoned recorded voices. This period is especially important to this dissertation because it proves the centrality of the *pursuit* of the disembodied voice (and not only the technological practice of recording) to Foreman's project.

Foreman's omission of recorded voice corresponds to his frequent use of professional actors after he sold his theatre at 491 Broadway in 1979. In the temporary homes at The Public Theater, The Performing Garage, NYU, and theatres around Europe that Foreman inhabited until he gained his permanent home at St. Mark's-on-the-Bowery in 1991, Foreman frequently engaged parts or all of the resident companies. In this context, beginning with *Penguin Touquet* (1981), produced by and performed at The Public, Foreman commented that he could no longer ask actors to put their main mode of expression, live speech, on tape. This contingency challenges him instead to "find out if I could internalize in flesh and blood performers the effect of psychic fragmentation."[62]

If allowing actors to speak in *Penguin* seems to suggest that Foreman had evolved a trust of the actor in her or his choices of inflection, the fact that it is with this production that he began to create continuous alternating soundtracks suggests the opposite; Foreman continued to control and thus guarantee fragmentation. *Penguin* was a psychosexual production with Manheim as Agatha, the sufferer of a mysterious illness, and David Warrilow as her doctor. Every aspect was

62. Foreman, *Unbalancing Acts*, 95. As early as *Ida-Eyed*, Foreman's second production, professional actors did not use recorded voice, but in *Total Recall*, the production that followed, Foreman's returned to use both non-professional actors and recorded voices. In his 1976 production of Brecht and Weill's *Threepenny Opera,* Foreman did not record actors' voices.

staged as a shard of split selves: comic-book Surrealist elements in the play, including the enormous titled penguin, entered and exited the dreamscape. The actors' dialogue, scenes divided into vignettes, and alternating soundtracks assured the spectator's fragmented reception of the live voices that they heard.

Beginning with *Penguin*, Foreman created continuous looped soundtracks that he used to set against scenes and to alter moods. He prepared these soundtracks by recording bits of music that he heard on the radio as he wrote. He then cut these bits into smaller snippets that lasted no more than five seconds. Assembling these into a whole, he made several soundtracks of thirty-minute loops.[63] After *Penguin*, Foreman would come to rehearsals armed with forty or fifty music loops in addition to other sound clips, and soon the process infiltrated his writing.

Looped soundtracks urged Foreman in another direction with his writing processes. Whereas Foreman had for some time been excising bits of writing from his diaries to "begin again," he now began to write "under the influence of looped music very repetitively and try to let come whatever comes through the motor input of those rhythms."[64] Listening to two different loops at the same time while he wrote, Foreman found that he did not have to actively seek a "voice inside the voice." Instead, he could write distractedly, picking up pieces of whatever he "heard" (either in his head or in looped music). This approach pushed his writing beyond the usual comfortable territories to write longer passages, and to include for the first time in *Miss Universal Happiness* (1985) song forms or lyrics, or unconscious phrases such as, "Here is an

63. Ibid.

64. Foreman, interviewed by David Savran, "Both Halves of Richard Foreman: The Playwright," *American Theatre* (August 1987), 14.

important dream," which he repeated a year later throughout *The Cure*.[65] Cutting phrases from his own lost contexts, Foreman (like Pierre Schaeffer) remixed long passages, lyrics, and unconscious phrases into new contexts, which when staged, would signal new and unforeseen reverberations.

Foreman further layered continuously alternating soundtracks with evocative shifts between live speech and mediated sound. In his first Ontological-Hysteric collaboration with the Wooster Group, *Miss Universal Happiness*, Foreman exploited what Philip Auslander refers to as "the very presence of the microphone and the performers' manipulation of it… as paradoxical markers of the performance's status as live and im-mediate."[66] Microphones were largely responsible for making *Miss Universal Happiness* Foreman's noisiest and most frenetic production to-date. The standing microphones, as well as Foreman's "song-forms" inspired the actors to dive into the rehearsal of the play as if it were a rock and roll concert. A year later in *The Cure,* a "chamber piece," Foreman used the microphone to suggest very quiet shifts.

In *The Cure*, Foreman used the close-mic technique to blur boundaries between the audiences' internal thoughts and the actors' speaking voices. He staged *The Cure*, *at* the Performing Garage but without the Wooster Group, in what resembled a nineteenth century salon. "Kate," "David," and "Jack" delivered lengthy contemplations in close-miked voices, which, Foreman reflected, "gave the play a unique quality, detached and meditative. It indeed

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65. Foreman, *The Cure* in *Unbalancing Acts*, 116. Such phrases as "here is an important dream," "here is a man," and "he says" have a similar impact in every play in which they are heard: that is, they prompt longer stretches of writing in Foreman and thus longer stretches of speaking in actors.

66. Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 53-4.

seemed to be happening inside the audience's heads."[67] The closeness of the microphones created an impression of presence and intimacy; at the same time, amplifiers moved the actors' voices away from their bodies and out towards the "audience's heads," making the actors' voices sound as if they were in two places at once: in the "salon" and bouncing off the walls into the audience's heads.

Microphone techniques enabled Foreman to circumvent the actors' sound of intention without explicitly intruding on their live speech. The close-mic technique put the oneness on actors to speak in softer consonants and lower registers. Lower tones and volumes in turn sabotaged the actors' efforts to control meaning; control was displaced to the sound operator's manipulations of volume and amplification. From these modifications of volume and timbre during performance to the amplification that created delays, the microphone altered the actor's "present" voice.

Foreman's looping and microphone techniques pushed his writing and subsequent comprehensive theorizations of the disembodied voice. In his productions of the mid to late eighties he would use a variety of different types of microphones as technological and theatrical objects to query the disembodied voice of the mediated and/or fragmented self in *Film is Evil: Radio is Good* and *Symphony of Rats*.

4.3.2 Technologies of No-Body: *Film is Evil: Radio is Good*

Foreman staged *Film is Evil: Radio is Good* (1987) largely without recorded voice but made the technologies of recording and broadcasting symbolic representations of disembodied voices. Staged at Tisch School of the Arts, *Film is Evil* is set in the "real world" of an embattled radio

67. Foreman, *Unbalancing Acts*, 107.

station owned by Helena Sovianavitich (Lola Palashinski) and propagandized by the "Girls" (played by NYU students).

> Girl: When something goes through the ear, it goes straight to the heart. But when it goes through the eye, it's the brain that gets it and that's the bad news, testifies Mable Williams of Ashmont Oregon.
>
> HELENA: Well? There's more to say, certainly. Keep the ball rolling, please?
>
> Another Girl: Doctor Max Jacobson of Minneapolis explains that what you see, i.e., film, you tend to believe. Bad, bad, bad. But what goes through the ear, you supplement with your own creative imagining.[68]

The Girls put the values of perception, which are inscribed in Foreman's plays and the problematics of this dissertation, into blunt terms. The listeners' personal endorsements of the station's ideology that radio is superior to film underscore Voice's ability in Foreman's plays to disrupt at will the visible, "plastic" world, including all the temptations of the stage, the body, and the spectator. Whereas hearing-Radio encourages the listener's subjectivity in her or his imagination and creativity, seeing-Film erases subjectivity by replacing it.

The play is set in a "studio" where the voice is turned into a signal and film absorbs reality. In this studio, the characters' voices and bodies are liminal objects; in the midst of being recorded and/or transmitted ("radiated"), they are part objects/part technologized entities. The studio and its operations are the physical equivalents of Foreman's hidden creative processes, which consist, he explains, of writing without an imagined reality, shutting his mind off from social interactions, and often designating neither characters nor situations. *Film is Evil* sheds light on the role of mediation in Foreman's writing and directing processes. Foreman lets the

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68. *Film is Evil: Radio is Good* in *Unbalancing Acts*, 159.

spectator understand the degree to which his voices are and are not autonomous.

Film is Evil; Radio is Good represented a turning point for critics, as for Foreman. Erika Munk identified in the play signs of more outwardly directed Foreman aesthetic.

> Here's a possibility-not a large probability, but the glimmer of a chance-that this script, unlike other Foreman texts, could be directed by someone else, in some totally different way, and still keep the integrity of its ideas and its feelings about the world. It's not easily pleasing in the manner of Foreman's work with Stanley Silverman, but it's not hermetic like the earliest plays nor eccentrically referential like the larger and (to my mind) slicker productions at the Public Theater. The word "accessible" is demeaning to both artist and spectator, but certainly the subject(s) of this piece are important and comprehensible to anyone likely to be in an experimental theatre audience. [69]

Munk registers an optimism that Foreman is leaving his protective shell to allow his productions to exist without him. However, if the play promises to demystify Foreman's polemics, the production did not quite convince reviewers that its values were *his* values.

Manheim took some credit for the shift in Foreman's approach and for the critical and popular successes of *Film is Evil.* She explains in an interview with Richard Schechner that she had had enough of not understanding Foreman's plays and made sure that this play was grounded in the real world.

> I was very instrumental in that. The play he had at the beginning--he went into his drawers and he took pages randomly from various scripts and shuffled them all together. He's done that for a lot of his plays but it doesn't show as much as this one did. And I just kept telling

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69. Erika Munk, "Film Is Ego: Radio Is God: Richard Foreman and the Arts of Control," *TDR*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (Winter 1987), 144.

him it made no sense, it had nothing to do with "film is evil, radio is good." I kept trying to piece it together so that it would make some sense.[70]

Film is Evil appears to tell a literal story of Foreman's voice and Manheim's body. If the spectator, familiar with Foreman's plays in which he played Voice, were to identify Voice as the voice of the author/director, then it would appear that Foreman was linked in ideology to the central proponent of radio in this play, Miss Estelle Merriweather; yet her certainty of radio's moral superiority was the very thing that put it into doubt. Her over-emphatic propagandizing troubled the proposed moral position of the play that hearing is better in every way and that it is at least the lesser evil of the mediated world that is threatening to dissolve the visible "real" world. The fears of the filmed Manheim of her doubling and disappearance into her image were melodramatic, and her certainty of radio's purity was over-confident. If the evil that film does is in erasing subjectivity by replacing it, the good that radio does by promising to preserve subjectivity is not less artificial and distant. Technologies modify voice and image, falsifying the human body, and extend ideas out into the world, where the modified voice and image have lives of their own. But technologies are not alone in distancing us from "hidden truth"; mere physical existence distances us just as much in the concrete world. Foreman had throughout his career staged implicit battles of the image and the word or the voice and the body, but in *Film* he spelled it out. Following Manheim's departure from the Ontological-Hysteric Theater, Foreman plotted his return to the disembodied voice that he had established in the seventies. He would soon attempt to stage it: this time with no counterpart in image or body.

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70. Manheim, "Talking with Kate Manheim: Unpeeling a Few Layers: An Interview," Richard Schechner and Kate Manheim, *TDR*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (Winter 1987), 141.

4.3.3 The More Serious Choice: Disembodied Voice/Aural Hallucination in *Symphony of Rats*

In *The Cure*, microphones pointed to the fragmentations inherent in a "normal" consciousness; in *Symphony of Rats* (1988) the microphone made the President's own voice object-like, indicating that the voices he hears are the result of aural hallucinations.

> *(He* [the president] *thinks for a while, then begins to speak into the microphone, as if talking to himself, though he is addressing the audience)*
>
> **PRESIDENT:** What's out there in space? *(Pause)* Jesus, you've been there. What's out there? Silence. Vast silence? *(pause)* There are…complex webs of radiations all through space, aren't there? Yes? *(Pause)* Isn't that silence a kind of noise? Not for the human ear perhaps. *(Pause)* I guess I'm projecting my own thoughts.[71]

The spectator cannot know whether the President is speaking to himself *or* to the audience because he speaks "into" a microphone to document his "own thoughts," at the same time that the amplifiers "project" his voice into outer space. The President is the first in a line of Foreman's characters who behave as subjects afflicted with aural hallucinations: he hears his own voices but does not recognize them as his own. With the productions that fit into this category, Foreman tied the disembodied voice *specifically* to mental illness.

As a hearer of object voices, the President is, paradoxically, more situated in the world of real things than Rhoda who heard Voice as an extension of her self. In the essay that precedes the play, Foreman attempts to convince the reader of the President's humanity by appealing to the voices that we all hear.

> The president is someone no different from us, mixed-up stupid, fallible person, bounced

71. Foreman, *Symphony of Rats* in *Unbalancing Acts*, 215.

> back and forth by forces outside his control. The President is receiving messages telepathically and he doesn't know whether to trust them or not, just as we all receive messages from our unconscious or God or the media or our past experience and don't know whether to validate them by paying attention to them and acting upon them, or to dismiss them as irrational impulses we hope will pass.[72]

The President's voices are like the disembodied voices of the Other that exist within all of us that come from "our conscious or God or the media" and make us the brunt of a ventriloquist performance. Whereas the disembodied voices that spoke to Rhoda (as female hysteric) came from an untranslated elsewhere (with no object) the President's voices are attached to fathomable objects of the world. The President hears voices that have a defined "source," even if that source is "telepathic."

Foreman's voice-hearing characters are not simply tormented by the voices they hear, but there is also comfort in the fact that voices allow them privileged access to the primitive self. The President speaks to a totem-like Robot with two television heads broadcasting Foreman's face, and in *My Head was a Sledgehammer*, the Professor hears Gnomes, which run around the stage.

> FEMALE STUDENT: Disturbed? You hear voices, Professor?
>
> PROFEESOR: I'm lucky that way.
>
> FEMALE STUDENT: I'd say, weird.
>
> PROFESSOR: I feel connected.
>
> FEMALE STUDENT: Connected to what?

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72. Ibid., 205.

PROFESSOR: To the source of my voices.[73]

Hearing voices from external imagined or mythical entities makes the hearers "connected." If that connection is to no more than a hallucinated entity, it still represents an identifiable source, which is more than those with unconscious voices. The Robot or the Gnomes may be the source of the President or the Professor's voices. Both suggest the source lives in an ancient place that most of us do not have the privilege of visiting.

In Foreman's dramaturgies of *Symphony, The Mind King*, *The Universe, What Did He See, My Head was a Sledgehammer*, and *Bad Boy Nietzsche!* he drew on a poetics of schizophrenia: from Daniel P. Schreber's nineteenth century *Memoirs of My Mental Illness*, which for a century represented the most important source for understanding schizophrenia, and the literature that sprung from the disagreements of Freud and Lacan in the works of R.D. Laing, Gilles Deleuze, and Julian Jaynes.[74] Foreman's voice-hearing characters exhibit symptoms that seem torn from the pages of the "canon" of schizophrenic literature. They share with Schreber, a

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73. *My Head Was a Sledgehammer* (1994) in *My Head Was a Sledgehammer: Six Plays* (Woodstock: Overlook Press, 1995), 195.

74. Daniel Paul Schreber, *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*, trans. Ida Macalpine (New York: New York Review of Books, 2000). Schreber was a well-respected judge in late nineteenth century Dresden and his *Memoirs* stands at the heart of the literary "canon" of schizophrenia as a document of the struggle of a highly rational mind with the unrepresentable. Freud based a great part of his understanding of the schizophrenic on Schreber's *Memoirs*, in his "Psychoanalytic Notes Upon an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia" (1911). Schreber's *Memoirs* has been the source material for numerous other works and interpretations as well. Carl Jung's defined Schreber's case not in Freud's terms of the libido but as a "compensatory function." *Theory of Psychoanalysis* (New York: The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Company, 1915), 35-37. Lacan was critical of the continued reference to Schreber's *Memoirs* as a primary source material. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari suggest Schreber's case as the mark of capitalism on the individual. *Anti-Oedipus*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane (London: Continuum, 2004), 327. Foreman counts himself among the many who have considered making "something of" Schreber's *Memoirs*. Foreman, interview with the author, 24 September 2010, New York, Video recording.

well-respected Judge, that they are male signifiers of power: presidents, (mind) "kings," and philosophers. Voice-hearing provides an escape from the weight of their power and at the same time gives them access to a power beyond place and time. The voices that the President or the Professor hear offer them a privilege that Jaynes, at one time a frequent audience member of Foreman's theatre, describes in *The Origins of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind.* As we saw in the first chapter, Jaynes argues that the voices of famous hearers were not evidence of madness, but of an earlier brain distinct from our own. The voices that distance the Professor from his students and the President from his staff give them access, according to Jaynes's logic, to a primordial brain in which the conscious and unconscious were not defined as split.

Foreman's dramaturgy of aural hallucinations also reveals the concomitant anxieties of hearing disembodied voices. In the introduction to *Bad Boy Nietzsche!* Foreman proposes that Nietzsche's madness is the other side of his genius.

> The perspective offered by this play--about a philosopher who preached "perspectivism"--is from within the seeds of his own madness, which we choose to hypothesize as having been present not only in later years, when he flew to embrace a horse being beaten on the streets of Turino, but also in healthier years (and may we all productively touch such hidden madness!).[75]

Foreman defines Nietzsche's madness as "productive" because such madness drives Nietzsche to make language into "jewels." Foreman turns Nietzsche's jewels, which are his historical words and sentences, into whittled down aphorisms and then turns these aphorisms against the character

75. Foreman, *Bad Boy Nietzsche!* (2000) in *Bad Boy Nietzsche! and Other Plays* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2007), 5.

Nietzsche. Foreman stages the relentless repetition of aphorisms as an expression of Nietzsche's madness and the tenaciousness of his own rhetoricizing habit; both are the products of a struggle of the ultra-rational mind to make sense of object voices. The struggle that Foreman frames in *Nietzsche* arises in Foreman's descriptions of his childhood debates around the dinner table with his father-lawyer.[76] Foreman has said that the resultant impulse to reason is his greatest tragedy. *Bad Boy Nietzsche!* reveals Foreman's staging of the disembodied voice as a struggle of his mind to escape its own tangles of language.

4.3.4 Foreman's No-Mind: The Avant-Garde's Liberating Life Praxis

The stage set of *The Cure* resembled a nineteenth century salon, one of the environments into which the avant-garde was born. From this point forward, Foreman's theatre settled into the rooms of the avant-garde and into its quest for the borders of the spiritual and the unconscious in language.

In the late eighties, Foreman adopted the avant-garde's quest via "meditative" writing. As a result, the characters in *The Cure* (Kate, David, and Jack) were provoked by an "important dream," to contemplate a language gem beyond language; Jack discovers that gem in a "corn flake that speaks volumes before it is transformed into light."[77] The corn flake is comparable to Mallarmé's idea; it offers a means of suggesting but not saying. If saying is a form of destruction, a way in which language becomes part of the physical world and is thus doomed to die, then corn flakes are inscrutable and the "idea" is protected.

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76. Foreman, "A Conversation with Richard Foreman," Charles Bernstein, *TDR*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (Fall 1992): 103-30, accessed 19 March 2005, http://www.ubu.com/papers/foreman_interview.html.

77. Foreman, *The Cure* in *Unbalancing Acts*, 127.

Foreman describes the writing process that brought him to lengthier passages as dictation. His body was a radio; he "transmitted" the voices that he "heard" throughout his process that told him to think, to wake up, or to remember an important dream. Cued by such phrases, Foreman allowed his writing to go places he had previously prevented it from going.

Foreman's meditative writing made his language susceptible to charges of elitism that tainted the avant-gardes; Foreman was troubled by his own criticism of elitism and proposed a practice dedicated to the enlightenment of his reader/spectator.

> What I propose is not a theater of "poetic atmosphere," but one which models itself on the strategies of poetic syntax and structure, the better to handle the materials out of which the life-force builds subjective human experience.[78]

Foreman's distinctions between "atmosphere" and "syntax" reflect the importance of Surrealism to his own solutions. The poetic syntax of dreams and of automatic writing, which defines Surrealism, awakens the spectator in Foreman's theatre to the structures of her or his own unconscious. Foreman's suggestion that his purpose is functional for the spectator to be able to "handle the materials" resembles the praxis of the recipe, the exception that Bürger allowed to his condemnation of the project of the avant-garde to merge art and life.[79]

Foreman was concerned, as was Breton, with poetic strategies as a solution, not only to his own aesthetics but also to the spectator's experience of her or his everyday life. The following text from "The Carrot and the Stick," like so many others of Foreman's texts, reads like a recipe.

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78. Foreman, *Unbalancing Acts,* 111.

79. *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, 53. The recipes of Tzara and Breton represent an exception, according to Bürger, because they are directed to the reader/spectator as a means of realizing her or his own existence through a "practice."

> Careful, this is not to ask itself "what will surprise my audience?" but simply to notice and be true to the visible jumps the mind is hungry to make as soon as it is activated. Careful: these are not plots jumps or idea jumps, not free association or imagination but the little voice inside the voice that is doing the writing. In other words, jumps in language. [80]

The voice that Foreman directs his reader/spectator to hear can only be "heard" when its role is eliminated in drama or real life. The voice is not a tactic for "surprise," or a strategy in plot development. It does not surprise the spectator/listener in the usual way. Rather, the voice disassociated from the author and from the author's control is thus available to the reader or spectator's own unconscious.

Foreman is critical of the historical avant-gardes; according to him, their greatest failing was that they were too bound by their egos. In *Eddie in Poetry City* (1990), Voice revisits the historical avant-gardes and points to the limits of the "not-I" after more than a century of the plumbing the unconscious.[81]

> The center was nothing
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> The edge was nothing
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> The bottom was nothing
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> The root was nothing
>
> The depth was nothing
>
> The extension was nothing

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80. Foreman, "Rules," in *Paradise Hotel and Other Plays* (Woodstock: Overlook Press, 2001), 10.

81. Foreman, "The Carrot and the Stick," *Reverberation Machines* (Barrytown: Station Hill Press, 1985), 219.

The kernel was nothing.[82]

Voice visits the itinerary of the disembodied voice through the historical avant-gardes and returns wearily to tell the spectator that the "center," which Yeats had shown did not hold, was nothing; to "depth," which Minimalists replaced by probing surfaces; to "extension," which the Futurists celebrated and fascism appropriated to its own ends; and to the "kernel" of psychological drama, which demonstrated no truth but only clichés. Voice not only directs the spectator's attention to these places, but also to the failures.

In the late eighties, Foreman pursued the strategies of the avant-gardes' no-mind/no-body beyond its perceived failures. His wrestling is discernable in the essays that accompany his plays in *My Head was a Sledgehammer*.

> Now, the form of "now" can be determined only as I try to twist my body (mental) until it FILLS somehow the moment, till it touches the borders of the moment. The meaning then, cannot be in a superimposed fable, but is in the modes found of being able to inhabit (fill the spaces of the present and the sequence of those modes.[83]

Foreman resists the "superimposed fable" by forestalling the usual suppression of oppositions, of, for example, the unconscious in the conscious and points instead to an intellectual plenitude. Foreman's "paradise" is a co-existence of all "atoms" as potentialities.[84] This is the dispersed self.

The filled aesthetic of the Ontological-Hysteric Theater led some writers to situate

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82. Foreman, *Eddie Goes to Poetry City* (1990) in *My Head was a Sledgehammer* (Woodstock: Overlook Press, 1995), 4.

83. Ibid., 218.

84. Ibid., 197.

Foreman's theatre within a *diagnostically* schizophrenic aesthetic. In *Over-Sensitivity*, Jalal Toufic situates Foreman's disembodied voices within a web of disembodied voices of the media and of schizophrenia.

> What is required is to immerse people, for a short period, in a different mode of mental functioning, so that they will be in their disorientation more clear about the plight of more than one hundred thousand seriously mentally ill.[85]

Toufic paraphrases Foreman's mission to immerse his audience in "their disorientation" and suggests that this has practical ramifications for voice-hearers. If schizophrenia is a reality of the culture and a disease of the population, then Foreman's aesthetic serves as a means of acclimation for both. Foreman employs the strategies of schizophrenia to give the spectator sitting in a place of conflicting forces what he calls a "disorientation massage." staging a theatre in conflict with its own means of representation.[86] But Foreman adamantly rejects any association with the diagnosis.

In *Symphony of Rats*, Foreman staged disembodied voices as problems specific to characters of the President and the Professor to create a dialogue between those characters and Voice. The characters sometimes responded to Voice(s) and referred to it/them as strange; the characters acknowledged that the Voice(s) they heard came from *elsewhere* and in so doing exposed their voices (their Other) to the light of day. In the next period, Foreman will treat the disembodied voices as the problematics of his productions, but not the problems of embodied characters. The next section demonstrates productions in which Foreman stages Voice with no

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85. Jalal Toufic*, Over Sensitivity* (Los Angeles: Sun and Moon Press, 1996), 57-8.

86. Foreman, "Rules," in *Paradise Hotel and Other Plays* (Woodstock: Overlook Press, 2001), 8.

body to theorize the problem of itself.

4.4 Contingency Four: Mortality, 1989-2008.

When Foreman's writing had become meditative, he began to wonder whether he could create theatre without the pull of the physical and the concrete against the invisible and philosophical ideas of his texts**.** To direct his audiences' attention (as well as his own) to the meditative writing and aural elements of his productions, Foreman staged Voice to speak most of his text and the actors to perform as Voice's "audience."

As a means of grounding his productions in the aural, Foreman returned in *Lava* (1989) to recorded voice, which returned his theatre to elements of his earliest aesthetics**.** In his productions of the seventies, tape controlled the speech and movement of actors who spoke only parts of their lines live. Actors were freed of their dependence on tape in the productions of the eighties, but their characters became bound to "internal" disembodied voices. In *Lava* and other later plays, the actors come to depend on tape and rarely speak once again. Unlike the early productions, in which the actors' own recorded voices triggered speech and movement, Foreman's disembodied voice(s) now cued actors. This section is dedicated to *Lava*, *Permanent Brain Damage* (1996), *Maria del Bosco* (2002), and *Panic* (2003), productions in which Foreman's disembodied voice "dominated" the stage and represented the plays' central problematic, while the actors performed as bodies and as listeners.[87]

Foreman's later Voice is the product of adjustments in performance and technology over the course of forty years. When Foreman shouted out live commands in early performances, the association between Voice and the authorial voice was a relatively direct and natural one with his

87. *Maria del Bosco* in *Bad Boy Nietzsche!*, 89.

body; in texts, Foreman maintained a relationship to his body, defining Voice with adjectives that corresponded to his own deep timbres. Sitting in the audience in the first row or amidst the audience, Foreman taunted the spectator with a potential relationship between Voice and the authorial voice. But the sound of his disembodied voice was never natural; Foreman created Voice from artificial bodies to "penetrate" real bodies. As we saw, he recorded his voice at home, cultivating a sound that distanced it as far from body as possible. He cut and re-mixed it and then sat in the audience and controlled its volumes.

When Foreman's soundscapes became more varied and complicated the juggling of hundreds of text cues, cut and pasted onto matte boards threatened his balance presence and absence. The arrival of the mini-disc in 1989 meant, however, that Foreman could regain a physical relationship to the material and an intuitive sense of rhythm that had been the advantage of primitive practices. The mini-disc simplified the taping, filing, and operating of hundreds of sounds and voice cues, without significantly altering the experience of playback. A loop could be recorded for the duration of a three to four second sound (and not the half of an hour or longer of a loop), filed and played back with the touch of finger to signal a cue. The mini-disc eliminated the clicks and thuds of stopping, starting, and changing tapes; consequently noises, music, and voices sounded ever more removed from an originary source.

When Foreman accepted the advent of the computer, which made sound cues visual, Foreman relinquished a great amount of control and a physical/rhythmic relationship to playing cues. A cue could be snuck in seamlessly by noting the visual dip in a sound wave. As a counterbalance to this loss of control, Foreman continued to hold onto, in the midst of technologically sophisticated soundscapes, a simple sound effect for himself.

> Richard would sit in the audience with a little four-channel mixing board, a mini-disc deck, and some sort of special effect that only he could control. For *Panic,* it was a small Casio keyboard, sometimes it was a little bellhop bell, just something that he could always play with every night so that he was part of the performance as well.[88]

This small object symbolized the threat of Foreman's presence/absence. If Foreman never improvised, the threat that he might was always in the air. A production that was, after months of vision and re-vision, fixed in every last detail, was still susceptible to the changes he *could* make, whether by spontaneously altering the sounds on the microphone or the cues of a bell.

4.4.2 Listening to No One: *Lava* and *Permanent Brain Damage*

> I'm trying to be honest about the fact that, like 99 percent of the people in the world, I'm fascinated by my own voice.
> Richard Foreman, *7 Days*

Foreman attempts and fails to focus exclusively on the aural in *Lava* and *Permanent Brain Damage* and his failure forges tense dramas of Voice's attempts to conquer and/or negate the physical world. In rehearsals for both plays, Foreman tried to limit his use of choreography, set design, and lighting design. He was prepared to direct his actors as listeners only, but as rehearsals progressed, he became "sick of the sound of his own voice" and so could not resist his own tendency to add layers to the staging and textures to the set.

Foreman made the writing and theatrical situations in *Lava* transparent. The play is made up of texts that Foreman assembled directly from his theoretical musings (not intended as plays). The staging begins with Kyle deCamp standing at one of three blackboards, taking dictation from (and sometimes predicting) the quiet indecipherable rumblings of Foreman's Voice. The

88. Neil Benezra, telephone interview with author, 7 September 2010.

five other actors listen closely to Voice, "the voice of their author, their director, their boss--even the voice of God." Seated around an enormous study table, the actors perform acts that are those of student-clowns. They use repetitions to hold onto Voice's words; they sometimes "read" from an enormous book in unison with Voice and, intermittently, they "look up at the speakers" and listen not for "meaning," but as if captivated by a "mirror" or "black hole."[89] Voice's only physical representation onstage is as an oscilloscope.

Voice asserts the theoretical terms of the text, which are largely concerned with "category three," and sets about putting them into practice

> Category One, the material world—you live in it. Yes. I live in it. But it's… not such a great world, the way I look at worlds…. Category two. Forgive me, but—category two is the world of the spirit. I have to admit, I can't claim to live in that world of spirit. If it exists…. Category three. Yes. That's the best I can do. If something can… flow through me in the right way, from these two other places at once, flowing through me, then I'm in category three. Welcome to category three.[90]

Voice pushes against its own limits as "no-body" and against the actors' limits as "no-mind." Can the audience listen to Voice by itself without inevitably associating it with author, director, boss, or God? Must the spectator necessarily treat a disembodied voice as the mark for the origin of everything or can the spectator listen to Voice as that through which things "pass"? Can Voice "pass" through the actors' bodies without becoming fixed?

In *Permanent Brain Damage* (1996), Voice again dominates the spoken text, but instead of revealing the situation of the stage in the transparent terms of *Lava,* Foreman stages a highly

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89. Foreman, *Lava*, 310.

90. Ibid., 332.

theatrical "dumb-show" of intellectual fatigue. The Bald Man (played by D.J. Mendel), who is at the center of this drama, resembles a fallen buffoon-king and his entrance onto and existence on the stage subject him to Voice's analysis and the other characters' mischief. The other characters that make up some kind of family of fallen aristocrats hold a party on their stage of broken objects, caricatured portraits, and empty bookshelves.

Voice speaks in a deep stage whisper, ostensibly about the Bald Man.

> Here is a man, not quite sure what's been happening to him. Except he does know he has been speaking—having a conversation of sorts. Except the rules of the game, for this man and others—well—there are no rules.[91]

Voice and the Bald Man are ambiguously linked. If Voice is still the voice of God or the director, then Voice's role is, with continuous talk, to distract the Bald Man from the physical world and the mania that surrounds him in order to try to direct him towards listening carefully to his "own thinking," which "he has turned against."[92] The Bald Man is onstage without anything to do and so tries repeatedly to get off that stage, or to disappear, while Voice approximately describes him and the cohorts, thanks to the Bald Man's distraction, taunt and play tricks on him.

In *Lava* and *Permanent Brain Damage*, Foreman tests the limits of the disembodied voice. In *Lava*, he attempts to put the fluidity of the theoretical voice that moves through bodies and belongs to no body into practice. In *Permanent Brain Damage*, Voice maintains a tenuous relationship to the Bald Man, as internal voice or Voice of God. In both plays the actors' tenuous access to the source of the disembodied voice make them the brunt of jokes and of torment. Nevertheless, Voice demands staged bodies that are not its own body. The outer limit of

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91. *Permanent Brain Damage*, 88.

92. Ibid., 90.

Foreman's disembodied voice is thus that it is unable to exist without a "no-mind" that is seen hearing it.

4.4.3. Last Tapes: *Maria Del Bosco (A Sound Opera: Sex and Racing Cars)* and *Panic*

Foreman first turned to crafting plays from aphoristic-like statements in 2000 with *Bad Boy Nietzsche!*, but in *Maria del Bosco* (2002) and *Panic* (*How to be Happy!*) (2003), he unified his practices of textual and recorded looping. Each of the two latter plays fills just a few pages of text with "sayings" that recur throughout performance.[93] Most of the text is spoken only by Foreman's Voice, in three distinct tones, which are altered by being "fed through different effects, each phrase number corresponding to its button on the sampler or track order on the mini-disc."[94] Voice is heard (and denoted in the text) as slurred speech, a deep bass voice, and a high-pitched voice. Foreman created an economy of text and recording that recalls his arrangements and re-arrangements of minimal elements of his early productions.

With aphorisms, Foreman once again took up the challenge of making his spectator a "reader." In *Maria del Bosco*, a loop repeats in different voices, "There is a hole/In the middle of my thinking/That my thinking cannot touch."[95] These few words create a circle of logic that is intended to send the listener into her or his own "thinking." Foreman composed these phrases to be "read" by his spectator in the way that one reads poetry. To this end, Foreman composed the

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93. Both texts precede the performed texts; without stage directions, the text of *Maria* is five pages long and *Panic* is four pages. Foreman has said this is how he would like to publish all of his plays: without directions, as poems, but that he has been compelled to include directions by his publishers.

94. Cronin, 6 October 2010.

95. Foreman, *Maria Del Bosco*, 106

aphorisms as "hard-wrought" phrases in the search for economy as truths that can seem to be summed up in a few words and then in a sound of one of the voices or a word be twisted to trouble sense and engage the spectator/reader in a circle of non-sense.

Aphorisms are the literary equivalents of Foreman's loops. Like loops, aphorisms can be re-told or re-played anywhere and in any combination; both exist whole and complete and are exempt from the rules of communication, demanding no response. In the unedited version of his interview with Ken Jordan, Foreman reveals the implications of looping.

> The loops, as well as all of this non-narrative activity in its many forms, have tremendous religious implications, in that you're working with structures that are outside of time, that are in sacred time, and that do not advance in the same way that the historical, socialized time of our written Western history seems to advance with all the climaxes and resolutions which seem to imply historical progress. No, in opposition to that, we're trying to be in touch with a sacred time outside of history that is the archetypal, mythic time.[96]

Tape loops take neither the past nor future but only the present into account; Foreman's pairing of tape loops with aphorisms point ever more distinctly to cyclical time, and frees the audience from dependency on a finite narrative, and time.

With aphorisms and tape loops, Foreman set presence and absence in renewed configurations. In *Maria del Bosco*, Voice has the advantage of multiple perspectives: sometimes narrator, directing the spectator's gaze to Maria del Bosco, who is "Searching as usual for the appropriate image," often, Voice tells the audience what the play is "about": "One world

96. Ken Jordan, "An Interview with Ken Jordan, Draft #1, January 1990," http://www.ontological.com/FOREMAN/interviewarticles.html.

superimposed upon another world."[97] Despite the multiple perspectives, the statements have the ring of lyrical poetry that makes the spectator tend toward reconstituting the subject; Foreman is the director, searching for the appropriate image, and if he repeats the aphorisms as pieces of text in three masked voices this only illustrates his point: one character/world superimposed on another character/world. It is difficult to resist putting Foreman's voices and body back together again, defining Foreman's recorded, disembodied, and/or ominous voices as his own.

Music and aphorisms conspire to sabotage the reconstitution of character and narrative. Foreman uses the looped aphorisms as motifs in an opera. In *Maria del Bosco*, which Foreman identifies as a *Sound Opera*, Maria and the two other "Ballerinas" are in a world denoted by ballet, lieder, and meditation. The "Garbagemen" are in a world denoted by recurring Depeche Mode lyrics, "I'm taking a ride with my best friend." The three men, alternately dressed in skullcaps, Ku Klux Klan hoods, or stocking caps, appear threatening when they enter with garbage pails and slam dance to music. The motifs do most of the work for the spectator of character recognition; the spectator does not, therefore, need to waste time considering what is on the "inside" of the characters, Ballerinas and Garbagemen.

Similarly, Foreman's disembodied voices in *Panic* adopt the usual work of the spectator to in this case keep time on the stage distinct from time elsewhere. The stage is the site of an ambiguous mating ritual. The two female actors, dressed as Mongolian warriors, and the two male actor-pirates situate the events onstage in an indefinite past; Svetlana (played by Alagic) sings songs from childhood: "Kate, Kate, Sister Kate, I wish I could shimmy like my sister Kate…"[98] Meanwhile, Foreman's Voice sounds from "outside of history," reminding the

97. Foreman, *Maria Del Bosco*, 90.

98. Ibid, 137.

audience that they are watching “the sacred text of a forgotten people.”

If primitive sexuality is at the core of the stage’s sacred text, the separations amongst the recorded voices and between the recorded and live voices make that text sound inaccessible. One looped aphorism repeats, “This is no end of trouble/This is my safe harbor.” [99] Is “trouble” a “safe harbor,” or is trouble on one side of an equation while safe harbor is on the other? Stopping the reader/sentence in mid-aphorism, Foreman “frustrates” the spectator/reader’s expectations that the form will sum up a “morsel of experience.” A different perspective exists on each side of the sentence and within the single space of a stage, but each perspective is fixed; one cannot impact the other.

Critics who have long followed the Ontological Hysteric Theater read Foreman’s later plays according to Foreman’s own suggestions, as ruminations on his own mortality. Marc Robinson, who has documented Foreman’s work in reviews and also dedicated a chapter in his book, *Theatre of One’s Own* to Foreman, writes a deeply thoughtful, if disappointed, review of *Panic*.

> Like all Foreman, [*Panic*] repeats itself, idles, leaps forward only to leap backward--the verbal and gestural equivalents of the loops of music wreathing the action. But now such circularity seems less a choice than a stoic acquiescence to reality, a comment perhaps on the fading of an ideal that once promised deliverance. Foreman no longer seems to know what he would be delivered to. The vision of utopia he has variously termed "Paradise Hotel," "Poetry City," and (in an uncut draft of *Permanent Brain Damage*) "the room of radios" is here obscured by "the paraphernalia of my youth," the "entire world [of]

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99. Foreman, *Panic*, 169.

> memories," the "old patterns," and "redundant behavior." Obsession with the past isn't the only habit blunting perception. The future seems even less alive.[100]

For Robinson, *Panic*'s stasis is too grounded in "reality." The actors and Foreman seem to "acquiesce" to circularity and have no plans to escape. Robinson sounds disappointed in Foreman's retreat from a paradise. The circularity of *Panic* is a return to Foreman's earlier aesthetic of stasis but is distinct from the stasis with which he began his career (and we this chapter).

Panic recalls the obsessions of the title character in Samuel Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape* (1957). Krapp uses the tape recorder to move back and forth through his own time, but time travel, which is only possible *because* of the invention of magnetic tape, gets Krapp, as Voice, nowhere. In both *Krapp* and *Panic* looping voices only serve to magnify the panic of relative time. Looping voices play incessantly, whether in the mind or on machines, creating the impression of a continuous present, a life without death, but Voice's references to a "forgotten people" puts a world without time into doubt. The "places" that Foreman used to establish his earlier forms of stasis have changed; they are no longer no-body or no-mind but are now past and future. Neither of these points in time offers a place of escape, or, as Robinson comments, a utopia. Foreman's disembodied voice has become a fact of existence, a distraction not from the physical world but from matters, it seems, mostly of sex and death.

4.4.4. The Ends of Foreman's Avant-Garde.

If, as Dadaists held, participation in art is itself bourgeois, the only means of combating bourgeois habits of making and observing art is the destruction of art. With *Lava* (1989),

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100. Marc Robinson, "Permanent Brain Stasis," a review of *Panic,* February 2003, accessed 11 March 2009, http://www.hotreview.org/articles/panic.html.

Foreman enacted the dada practice of bringing the manifesto to the stage to highlight its theatricality as he destroyed its power as "act."[101] Voice is an "isomorphic" version of its "stream of talk continuum of nondifferentiation." It speaks endlessly, ostensibly in order to escape the "ideological prison" of language and to turn language into something else—not meaning, "the given, oppressive ideology."[102] Through speaking, Voice tries to make manifest the pursuit of the play, "Category Three." Neither body, nor spirit, neither logic nor chance, category three is perhaps another form of itself.

Authoritative, aggressive, and impatient, Voice is crystallized in *Lava* as Foreman's "fundamental gesture or attitude" towards the world he sought to undo and redo; the disembodied voice is thus the most avant-garde feature of the Ontological-Hysteric Theater.[103] From the Voice in *Sophia=(Wisdom) Part 3* that stops Ben when he attempts to "begin" the play through speech *or* activity and keeps him from performing with the iterance, "Not yet" holds back the "flood," even as it articulates the moment of tension between something beginning and nothing beginning.[104]

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101. Harries proposes that the problems that arise in the theoretical discourses of Foreman's manifestos appear in practical terms onstage. In Harries's view, Foreman's intellectual pursuit begins in his writing and is realized in performance. Martin Harries, "Richard Foreman and the Ends of the Avant-Garde," *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (March 2004): 83-96. Foreman maintains that his plays may include his readings as part of a myriad of discourses in his mind at the time, but he theorizes *after* he completes his production, which he approaches through intuition.

102. Foreman, *Lava* (1989) in *Unbalancing Acts: Foundations for a Theater* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1992), 320.

103. Puchner, *Poetry of the Revolution: Marx, Manifestos, and the Avant-Gardes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 22. The manifesto's tone, according to, Puchner "is not only a formal feature but one that describes a fundamental gesture or attitude orienting the manifesto toward the world it seeks to undo and redo."

104. Foreman, *Sophia=(Wisdom) Part 3* in *Plays and Manifestos*, 113.

Foreman's move into his permanent home at St Mark's Church in 1992 might have threatened the Ontological-Hysteric Theater's "attitude" of undoing the world.[105] For the first time in more than a decade Foreman did not set himself up in a temporary home as an outsider. From 1992 to 2009 audiences knew where and when to find him. Consequently, Foreman's disembodied voice was not "anyplace whatsoever." It was settled into a fixed place.

Foreman managed to consistently resist meeting his audience's expectations by cultivating at St. Mark's Church the quality of the early avant-garde's salons. In a review of *Panic*, Ben Brantley described the Ontological-Hysteric Theater as a domicile that Foreman sometimes shared with his audience.

> The décor has changed a bit since this time last year. There are playing cards on the walls now and an army of dolls with long golden curls on the ceiling. But in many ways, the old place looks the same--creepy, disorienting and astonishingly familiar. It's both somewhere you would never consider living and somewhere you have lived all your life. Yes, you are back in Richard Foreman's dream house, one of the prime pieces of surreal estate in Manhattan.[106]

As familiar as the setting is to Brantley, he describes the place as Foreman's "dream house," and being in another person's dream cannot help but be unsettling to the visitor. In the small space of St. Mark's attic, Foreman usually took his place in the middle of the audience, as if the host of a late nineteenth century Paris salon. Foreman's salon was both theatre and home. The spectator's

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105. Puchner, *Poetry of the Revolution*, 22.

106. Ben Brantley, "In This Mind's Décor, Sex Is No Love Seat," *New York Times*, 17 January 2003, 3.

body that found itself in familiar territory was surrounded and penetrated by disembodied voices that reached beyond comforting limits.

The uses that Foreman first found for the disembodied voice in his early productions were to identify his spectator and to freeze his actors' bodies. The disembodied came into its own on Foreman's stage in the Rhoda plays as a mark of the staging of the unconscious. When he used the disembodied voice to formalize oppositions of voice and body, Foreman's oppositions converged with polarizations of male and female, patient and doctor. Those oppositions were still more ambiguous than the President's aural hallucinations in *Symphony of Rats* or the Mind King's schizophrenic symptoms. Foreman's more general staging of the unconscious of the dispersed self dovetailed with Breton's idea that the unconscious was a way to freedom. Finally, Foreman's disembodied voices take the place in his productions of the avant-gardes, traces of the inescapable cultural garbage, a reminder of a lost sense of depth and essence.

5. Conclusion

In May of 2010, Foreman was making his exit from the theater.

> The Ontological-Hysteric Theater announced April 16 that it will leave our theater space of eighteen years at St. Mark's Church in the Bowery at the end of June. This is a big step for the theater and for me personally, but it signifies a shift in my work--not an end to it. In addition, I'm happy to tell you that the Incubator presenting programs will take over the theater at St. Mark's July 1st.[1]

As much as Foreman borrows from the historical avant-garde, he resists becoming an artifact and in so doing is committed to the defining characteristics of the avant-garde: to agonism, aggression, and to surprise. He goes on to explain that the separation between St. Mark's Church and the Ontological-Hysteric Theater is amicable, that Foreman is driven by his desire to focus on filmmaking and to continue his "adventures." But like many of Foreman's audience, I have heard this one before. Whether or not I take it to be the "truth" is of little consequence; whether or not the statement has historical significance also is not the core issue. Foreman's gesture, or his "speech act," proves his dogged connection to the avant-garde traditions, if not as living thing.

In Foreman's final works, the desire to "begin again" has become increasingly obvious: as we saw in the end of the previous chapter, he returns in his later productions to his earlier uncompromising vision and transforms this vision by integrating film in *Zomboid!* (2006) and in *Deep Trance Behavior in Potatoland* (2008), and he collaborates on an opera with John Zorn, thirty years in the imagining. While each of these attempts reflects Foreman's struggle with finding a new uncompromising aggressive expression, his collaboration with Zorn has the most to say to this dissertation about disembodied voice in the realm of sound experiments. In his collaboration with Zorn, Foreman returns to *listening*

1. Foreman, email message dated 8 May 2010.

as the guide to creating the disembodied voice, manifest in the opera *Astronome* (2008).

When Foreman started to direct his own plays in 1968, he was drawn to the reorganization of the human voice in minimalist tape compositions. He began to use tape in simple ways to record non-actors' voices and quickly went on to create ever more complicated scores in the context of the stage. While Foreman was inspired by the minimalist composers, avant-garde composers such as Zorn and Branca, were drawn to the uniqueness of Foreman's scores in part *because* they were not made of "real" sounds, but of continuous invented noises, and they were not used to suggest a specific environment but "buffeted" the listener-spectator, as well as the performer, and finally they suppressed the expressive human voice in favor of timbre.

Foreman's collaboration with Zorn suggests that his work had come full circle to be inspired by a musician his sound experiments inspired. In the early 1970's Zorn found Foreman at his temporary home at 80 Wooster Street and became a regular observer of his rehearsals. In 1975 at Foreman's Broadway loft-theater Zorn began to perform his own Theatre of Musical Optics, late night performances in which he either played the saxophone or moved small objects across a "stage" of a wooden box as if they were musical notes.[2] In the 1980's Zorn's "file-card method" was inspired by the techniques that Foreman used in assembling his sound scores.[3] For such scores as *Mickey Spillane* (1986) or *Godard* (1985), Zorn would write down all the sound and text associations related to the central (real or fictional) figure on file cards and lay them out; he would then choose some and discard others. Foreman and Zorn have come together in this method several times; Foreman

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2. Ela Troyano, "John Zorn's Theatre of Musical Optics," *TDR*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (December 1979): 37-44.

3. Stacia Proefrock, "*Godard/Spillane,* 20 July 1999, Tzadik," *All Music Guide: the Definitive Guide to Popular Music*, eds. Vladimir Bogdanov, Chris Woodstraw, and Stephen Thomas Erelewine (San Francisco: Backbeat Books, 2001), 1437.

performed the narration in Zorn's *Godard* (1985). In 2009, a collaboration long promised by Zorn to Foreman came to fruition in *Astronome* (*A Night at the Opera*). Zorn wrote *Astronome* using a technique that had originally followed Foreman's scores for the theatre.

In Foreman's work with Zorn, Foreman has had to move the disembodied voice from the native territory of his own sound scores to someone else's already completed sound score; this represents an effort to use the disembodied voice to begin again. When the opportunity to stage a production to Zorn's music finally came about, Foreman found the work more challenging than he expected.

> I hated the music for *Astronome*. Now as we worked on it, I got to understand the music better. I just said to John do something for me, he said sure here's this and as I listened to it what the hell am I going to do with this. I found that challenge very rewarding. I said to John this is very hard for me I don't know what to do with this. And he said, I can appreciate that.[4]

As we have seen, Foreman's early uses of sound and voice were inspired by the tape compositions of experimental composers, but working with experimental music as the source material meant he would have to forego most of his own "discovery" of a sound score of noises, music, and voices that he created in tandem with his text. Foreman struggled with staging a composition of noises, music, and voices that came from what he experienced as Zorn's much darker vision; this struggles his need to resist his own complacency of keeping the disembodied voice in its native context.

Foreman and Zorn share an attraction to the cultural garbage heap, but Foreman differs from Zorn in that he rejects the direct association with his sources; rather, he takes in his sources and purposefully does a "bad reading." Zorn returns to past masters or icons and

4. Foreman, interview with the author, 24 September 2010.

names them: *Fidel* (1975). *Mickey Spillane, Godard*, and *Genet*. In the case of *Astronome* Zorn returns to recombine the ritualistic, utopian, and apocalyptic elements of the never completed collaboration of Edgard Varèse and Antonin Artaud's *Astronome* in "the hypnotic intensity of ritual (composition) the spontaneity of magick (improvisation) and in a modern musical format (rock)."[5] Zorn attributes his "file card method" that he used in such pieces to his knowledge of Foreman's practices of purposefully doing bad readings. Foreman references cultural garbage as *voices*, and he splinters innumerable sources. He incorporates, without composing, tiny loops of music, rock, punk, and twenties' jazz. Foreman stages references that he can use to "make perception a more powerful weapon."[6]

Foreman was challenged by Zorn's re-vision of source material, not only as composition but also for its additional references within his staging. He explained in an interview with Yehuda Duenyas that Zorn's "opera is about dark forces and I am uncomfortable with dark forces, but I wanted to pay homage to this piece of music. I was trying to be responsive, moment to moment to the music."[7] In fact, Foreman was faithful not only to Zorn's music and conceptualization, but also to the origins of *Astronome* in Artaud's theatre of cruelty. In Foreman's staging of *Astronome*, the stage is the site of very dangerous events for actor and for spectator. The production appears to return theatre and opera to its roots in sacrifice, cannibalism, orgies, and sadism. Of only a few loops heard throughout, "Stagefright," iterated by Foreman, has a very grounded resonance. Who would not be afraid of a stage peopled with cannibals?

Foreman's disembodied voice in Zorn's opera is really an extension of Zorn's score.

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5. John Zorn, *Astronome* (2006) Liner notes, Tzadik.

6. Foreman, a conversation with Yehuda Duenyas, 31 March 2009, accessed 23 October 2010, http://www.lostnotebook.org/videos/ForemanDuenyas042009.mov

7. Ibid.

Engaging with Zorn's "dark forces," Foreman draws from the same primal imagery that created the totem and aliens who spoke to the President in *Symphony* and the gnomes who spoke to the Professor in *My Head was a Sledgehammer.* The actors look like world-weary sex workers, dominatrixes and professional sex slaves. The Ontological-Hysteric stage, which had been dangerous in previous productions because the disembodied voices buffeted the Bald Man or Rhoda, is more literally sadistic in Foreman's staging of *Astronome* because he makes the stage the site of sacrifice marked by his repetition of the phrase, "Stagefright."

The production that resulted from Zorn and Foreman's shared languages troubled many reviewers. Brantley, for example, describes a suffocating experience.

> In "Astronome," Mr. Zorn's recorded music, which often suggests electric guitars speaking in tongues, exists on its own plane. It's as if you had two people in the same room saying the same thing in different languages. Even the bilingually fluent may find it hard to give their attention unconditionally to both at the same time. The theme of "Astronome" would seem to be the serendipity that comes with surrendering to your senses and to your unconscious, intuitive self."[8]

For Brantley this production was overly layered; the production un-did itself, according to him, because while there was coherence in the artists' shared content (what they were "saying") there was too great a disjunction in their languages. By languages, Brantley does not mean mediums of music and theatre since both Zorn and Foreman have challenged the boundaries between those mediums. Zorn does not stand for music and the Foreman theatre; rather, each artist has evolved such an intricately interwoven form of theatre and disembodied voices with sound/music that one eliminates the necessity for the other's conception of a hybrid.

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8. Ben Brantley, "It's What Happens When 2 Iconoclasts Get Together," *New York Times* (14 February 2009), C1.

Astronome proves that Foreman has evolved into a composer of disembodied voices. When he was a listener, minimalist composers influenced his theatre, and it was as a listener that he tried to restage in theatre what "those guys" staged in music. Foreman's scores became so successful in their own right as theatres of disembodied voices that they went on to influence avant-garde composers. The collaboration with Zorn is a testament to the fact that Foreman went from being a listener who used disembodied voice to transform his influences to a composer of disembodied voices. In this penultimate production at the Ontological-Hysterical Theater at St. Mark's Church, Foreman brings together the fundamental elements of experimental music and disembodied voices that were at the genesis of his career in order to begin again.

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