Contents

Acknowledgements ix
Series Editor's Preface xiii
List of Illustrations xiv

Introduction **1**

1 Approach **4**
Puppetry, the art and the act 5
'Puppet theatre' and a 'theatre with puppets' 10
The puppet: animated figure and object 13
The animated object 18
The puppeteer 24

2 Related Arts **35**
Masks 35
Automata 39
Ventriloquism 46

3 Techniques **49**
Rod and string marionettes 50
Nether-rods 54
Glove or hand puppets 58
Shadows and silhouettes 62
Humanettes 67
Toy or paper theatre 68
Model Theatre 69
'Black Light' and 'Black Theatre' 69
'Tabletop', 'Bunraku-style' or 'rear-rod' 70

4 In Performance **75**
Writing 77
Directing puppets 82
Design and making 85
Street theatre 87
Stages and other playing spaces 89
Lighting design 89
Sound design 91
Puppeteer and actor 91

5 Dramaturgy **97**
Puppet production scripts 97
Playscripts for children 109
Devised and mixed media productions 114

6 Aesthetics **121**
On the marionette theatre 121
Puppetry aesthetics at the start of the twenty-first century 126
On Bunraku 133
Notes on puppet primitives and the future of an illusion 136
The use of puppetry and the theatre of objects in the performing arts of today 141

7 History **145**
Pre-theatre 146
The early puppet 'show' 149
The Middle Ages 150
Puppets in Commedia dell'Arte 153
The beginning of recognition 156
Puppets and opera 157
A growth industry 160
Modernism and a new language 166
Soviet riches 169
A distinct theatre art 173
The contemporary revival 175

Conclusion **178**

Bibliography 179
Index 187

Chapter

1

Approach

This book is intended for every category of theatrophile, all of them surely remarking on the growing presence of puppetry in mainstream and fringe productions. At the same time many are realizing that their experience, training or education in theatre has included little or nothing of puppetry. Some will want to know where it has come from and how it began; some will question its *raison d'être* in a modern theatre. Writers and critics will want to evaluate what they see, others will want to discover how it works. All these questions are, to some extent at least, addressed, with indications of where to discover more.

The three subjects of this chapter are first, puppetry itself; second, the puppet, including a distinction between the animated/manipulated 'figure' and the animated/manipulated 'object'; third, the puppeteer, whether actor-manipulator, designer-craftsperson or all of these. I offer an approach in the context of modern theatre practice, focusing on the period between 1990 and the present, with interventions and insights by many other writers.

It will become clear that we are dealing with a genre of the performing arts – intriguing and shape-shifting – for which there are few rules. Definitions and instructions are usually debatable, and any edicts and precepts given here and indeed in most other books on puppetry may be regarded only as points of departure for discussion and experiment.

In the context of today's 'western' theatre practices, any producer and practitioner of non-literary and non-naturalist theatre, including the genres inexactly labelled 'visual' and 'physical', 'music-', 'dance-', 'circus-', or 'object-theatre', will find themselves considering puppetry as a medium of expression to include in their productions.

All the most significant developments in theatre of the last hundred and twenty years have seen set, light and sound design gain in importance and critical attention; opera and ballet have renewed themselves in contemporary dance and music theatre; *commedia dell'arte* is revived in improvised, masked and circus-based shows often called 'physical theatre' which are some distance from classical mime; children's productions have revolutionized their dramaturgy and their standards of performance, attracting innovative artists and in many cases statutory funding. Puppetry, now allied and aligned with the other performing arts, has similarly evolved, broadening its brief to include endless forms of creative experiment, often unrecognizable as puppetry, often produced by artists trained in other disciplines. It has grown into a dynamic performing art, taking its position alongside all the others. The renewal is, crucially, engaging the attention of a youthful adult public.

Most theatre people, including its audiences, have come to the dramatic theatre through its literature, the printed plays. The teaching of 'drama' is usually located in school and university departments of English and a verbal text is still widely considered the central pillar of a production. However the growth of a paying public for another kind of theatre is an undeniable fact – it is a theatre whose performance text is concerned as much with scenography, sound design, music and other new visual media as with words. Among its resources puppetry sits naturally, concerned as it is with design and sculpture, with action, movement and music, usually more than with dialogue.

PUPPETRY, THE ART AND THE ACT

The term 'puppetry' denotes the act of bringing to imagined life inert figures and forms (representational or abstract) for a ritual or theatrical purpose – for a *performance*. The perceived investment of the inanimate with *anima* or spirit is effected through the convincing transference of a performer's energy to one or more of these figures and forms, endowing them with motion (normally), voice (if necessary) and presence (always). The transference is effected through the natural or manufactured 'controls' of the puppet, combined with specific performing skills, innate or acquired, directly and immediately applied (in 'real-time') to the thing animated. The execution of the performance may be live, recorded, and in a growing number of cases actioned by technological as opposed to handmade or hands-on control, but the hands or the body of the puppet operator are always in attendance, to effect and affect the performance of the figure or object.

The animation of objects, i.e. puppetry, can be directly traced to the atavistic, universal belief in the spirit life hidden within and embodied by natural phenomena, things and materials. This belief forms the core of the animist religion and is intrinsic to the understanding of the puppet's origins. Animism was humankind's first belief system and informed the early stages of awakening to its small world, its place in that world and its first questions as to the reason for its existence. Uncertain of their own power, unconscious of their mental capacities, but certain of their dependence on nature, humans deified everything that they feared or that brought them comfort and sustenance, investing any *thing* which represented the forces around them with *anima*.

In a paper presented at a 1992 conference in Poland on the trends in world puppetry research, the Catalan academic and writer, Maryse Badiou, charts the intermediaries by which humans connect to the sacred. In descending order they are: venerated natural objects, the image, sculpture (volume) and the cinema (motion), the puppet and the shadow, the dancer, the actor and finally the human. She confirmed first, the widely held belief that puppets and shadow theatre have been present since the first manifestations of humanity, in every culture of the world, and second, the human's 'insatiable thirst' to capture the volume and the movement of beings and things:

> [They play] their part in the community's most important occasions – birth, death, marriage and so on – through rituals, religious ceremonies and traditional celebrations; they are, without any doubt, the memory of the human condition in all its expressions. (Badiou, 1992: 61, trans. PF)

American academic Frank Proschan, a professor of anthropology, introduces an essay to be found in an edition of the periodical *Semiotica* devoted to the semiotic study of puppets and performing objects thus:

> Among the most ancient and widespread of cultural traditions is the use of material objects in narrative or dramatic performance […] Dancers who wear masks, bards who use scroll-paintings […] to illustrate their narrations, children who create dramatic scenes in dollplay, worshippers who bear icons in a religious procession, […] all manifest the urge to give life to non-living things, as they animate objects in dramatic performances and use material images as surrogates for human actors. Whether the dramatic actor is a miniaturized wood-and-cloth puppet or a gigantic, extra-human phantasm, and whether the performance context is one of secular entertainment or sacred ritual, the creative energy that animates the images is the same – the impulse to create objects to act in our stead. Objects through which we can project intensified, artistic and often holy speech and action. (Proschan, 1983: 3)

In modern times, when many but by no means all societies have 'freed' themselves from animistic beliefs, the freedom can seem superficial when confronted with the animation, the apparent stirring of life, in a 'dead' object. It is my claim that at the very least a residue of animism, the belief in the spirit residing within everything that is apparently inert, is universally present in twenty-first century humans; that this explains the power of the staged puppet.

You may identify two kinds of performance: one in which the puppetry is the principal medium of expression, which is referred to as a '*puppet show*' or '*puppet theatre*'. The other is a production in which the puppetry is only a greater or lesser component, and thus can be referred to as a '*theatre with puppets*' (it seems necessary to note the difference, albeit obvious).

Puppetry springs from two taproots: one nourishes its magic and illusion, its dramaturgy of ritual and religion, fairy tale, legend and folk memory, and the other nourishes the broad branches of its comedy, parody and satire. As a performance medium ritual and religion have been employed for thousands of years to produce sacred representations of gods and spirits, to evoke fear and awe, and to conjure demons, revelations of the divine and reminders of death.

In a 2000 interview the French director Grégoire Callies, after directing Büchner's *Leonce and Lena* with puppets, expressed the opinion that the theatre of object and puppet was more relevant than it was 40 or 50 years ago.

> I get the impression that I could link this change to the emergence of new concepts, new thoughts, like those of Deleuze and Foucault, even to the evolution of modern philosophy. Is it not simply linked to the return of the barbaric, to the end of a certain humanism, to another way of thinking about the burden of life and the role of death?
>
> The puppet, after all, speaks only of that, of the relationship between life and death. Doesn't it also correspond to our need to interrogate our power; literally to create life, to play the demiurge? (see Paska, 2000: 86–88, trans. PF)

Ritual and religion are dominant in most African and much of Asian practice, and both can be found in western puppet theatre too, for example in performances for children, such as Jesus' nativity at Christmas and some Jewish festivals, and also in the adult work of a few artists such as Christopher Leith, an English wood sculptor whose hieratic figures illustrate solemn tales of the saints. Divinities appear in myriad worldwide puppet-performed versions of myths and legends: a recent Royal Shakespeare Company production of the Shakespeare poem *Venus and Adonis* drew full houses, while devils and demons inevitably appear in the perennial puppet versions of *Faust* and *Don Juan*, and in episodes from the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* epics. Every country has its ancient tales of mythical creatures and heroic adventures.

The repertoire for school-age children has broken the restraints of anodyne fairy and folk tales, and productions may now include unsanitized versions of the Grimm folk tales, Angela Carter's bloody fairy stories and other strong meat.

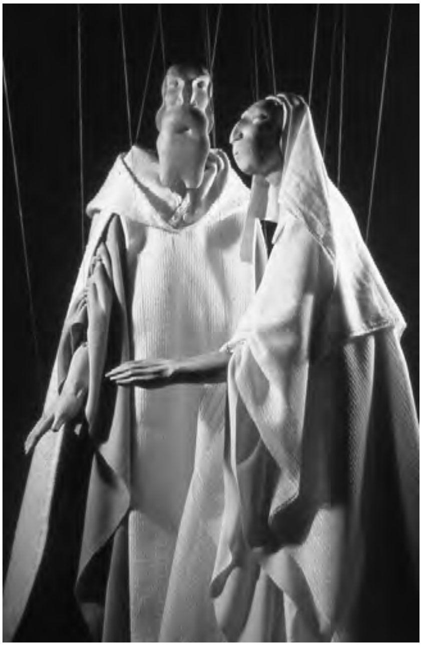

Figure 1.1 Christopher Leith's *Scholastica* (1989, but often revived since). 36 inch (1 metre) marionettes with heads and hands carved in limewood. The touching story of St Benedict and St Scholastica.

© Philip Sayer. Reproduced by permission of Christopher Leith.

Puppetry's close affinity to things fantastic effectively reflects children's darker fantasies.

Puppetry's other root gives rise to the knockabout, vulgar comedy of shows featuring Punch, the stereotypical anti-hero born of *commedia dell'arte*'s Pulcinella (and probably of ancestors reaching far further back into pre-Christian times). He is the embodiment of the man-in-the-street protesting against all forms of authority. Profanity, trickery, slapstick and even lewdness are joyfully expressed in his shows and those of his worldwide cousins (Petrouchka, Polichinelle, Kasper, Vitéz László, Vassilache, the Mamulengo, Karagöz, Karaghiosis, Mubarak, Gerolamo, the much later advent of Guignol and Tchantchès, and many others of the type). Since the nineteenth century, in Britain the antics of Punch are commonly thought of as suitable entertainment for children, a curious subversion of the original Punch and Judy street show in which the comedy depends on anarchy, violence, misogyny and social satire! Today Punch and Judy may be a bowdlerized version of the original,[1] yet even now, in the twenty-first century, after several hundred years of life, the highly schematic antics of Punch and his international brotherhood are a staple of puppetry and continue to draw crowds.

Parody, for which the miniature, manipulated characters imitate and mock their human counterparts and their activities, has been a constant in the puppet theatre probably since antiquity. It is not as often found as it once was, although in the Brussels bar-theatre called 'Toone' parodies of operas, melodramas and political shenanigans are still enjoyed, even after many years of the company's existence. The Sicilian '*pupi*' also perform what have evolved into amusing parodies of the conflicts of the Saracens and Christians in Crusader times. The Sicilian companies with their magnificently armoured figures could be seen all over the island even as late as the 1980s, but their numbers are now much reduced. In Britain the excellent Mark Mander parodies celebrities, using figures which are part human, part rear-rod puppet (a form known as 'humanettes', described in the next chapter), miming to songs and speech with uncanny accuracy.

With his satirical teeth drawn Punch is widely tolerated, in spite of the pressures of political correctness which confine any strong satire and lewdness to political and social cabaret in pubs and clubs. A puppet is a natural transgressor, entering where no human dares. Pornography is an underground offshoot, where puppets lend themselves more acceptably than humans to representations of acts of sex and violence, and this arena is growing. Where the puppets in action often produce an effect more comic than titillating (Jurkowski, 1988: 97–112) there are now more serious seams of cruelty that some puppeteers are mining.

Good professional live puppetry, solemn or comic, is predicated first on the spectator's complicity and engagement with the animated characters, so that acceptance and credulity overcome scepticism; and second, on the skills of the puppet-maker and above all the puppet operator who must be capable of sustaining the spectator's attention. Having witnessed on many occasions (nowadays mercifully rare) puppet shows incompetently conceived, crafted and animated, I have been surprised by the intense engagement of the average spectator with the weakest of them. The magnetism of the moving figure, even poorly made and animated, goes some way to explaining its survival throughout the centuries, against all the odds. High levels of manipulation skills seem not to have been required of western puppet operators until the late eighteenth century, when the popularity of the *fantoccini*, the trick marionettes on strings, demanded a good measure of dexterity and preparation. I do not of course speak of the age-old skills of the trained professionals of Asia, the marionettists and shadow artists of China, the *ningyo joruri* players of Japan, the dalangs of Indonesia and other master puppeteers performing a traditional, popular puppet repertory that is in many of these regions still closely associated with ritual and ceremony. Today's puppetry exacts more and more from every manipulator of puppets and objects; audiences are becoming educated to recognize skill in both the performers and their instruments, as the former become more numerous, trained and increasingly aspirational.

---

[1] In 2005 the great Ken Campbell originated *Attack of the Clowns* which more accurately restored the show to its original crudity but with twenty-first century comic relevance.

The criteria to apply to the evaluation of contemporary performances start, however, not with the crafting skills but with an estimation of the content of the production – the dramaturgy – and its suitability, its *validity* for puppet play, of which more in Chapter 5. The best performance text is usually expressed in a dynamic series of staged pictures, while other measures of the show's quality are the unity of aesthetic which comprises the materiality of the puppets, the sensitivity of the soundscape, the level of skill in the manipulation of the figures, and the appropriate stylistic of the acting, all to be enlarged on in the third chapter on performance practicalities.

A leaflet advertising a recent (2007) exhibition of puppets in the United States bears witness to the change in the modern perception and appreciation of puppet play:

> As a form of popular theater, invested with high artistic values and ambition, puppetry continues to thrive, especially in parts of Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa. In contemporary Western culture, where animation is increasingly prevalent in art and entertainment, the puppet renews its capacity as a psychological abstraction, social commentator and playful entertainer.[2]

The sentence could hardly have been written before this present century. It indicates that observers are able to recognize expertise in puppetry as they have long recognized it in, for instance, dance, where for years it has been impossible to present a professional company whose members were not highly trained.

---

[2] From the publicity leaflet for *The Puppet Show*, a touring exhibition produced by the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia, United States, 2007.

'PUPPET THEATRE' AND A 'THEATRE WITH PUPPETS'

If puppetry is the art and the act, '*puppet theatre*' or '*the puppet show*' is the staged production.

Professor Henryk Jurkowski, a Polish teacher and writer, will be widely quoted in this book since he is the most prolific writer to date on the history and theories of puppetry. In 1988 his first book in English was published: *Aspects of Puppet Theatre* is a collection of essays which quickly became required reading for every student of the art form. The first essay was titled *Literary Views on Puppet Theatre* in which he traced references to the puppet in the works of various prominent authors from classical times to the present. In it Jurkowski proposes a definition of puppet theatre, having established that *its characteristic features are the changing relationships between its iconic signs of character, its driving power and the source of its vocal expression*:

> The puppet theatre is a theatre art: the main and basic features that differentiate it from the live theatre is that the speaking and performing object makes temporal use of the physical sources of its vocal and driving powers, which are present beyond the object. The relationship between the object (the puppet) and its power sources changes all the time, and these variations are of great semiological and aesthetic significance. (Jurkowski, 1988: 31)

The common name given to puppetry in live performance is 'puppet show'. Once, the expectation was that puppets would be operated by the hands of hidden operators working from below within a booth or behind a screen or from above on a bridge. The troupes were constantly on the move, travellers with a great deal of baggage, literal and metaphorical. The social status of all performing with the puppet show was lowly. Another term given to the puppet show in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was 'motion'. Edward Gordon Craig revived it for his series of witty playlets which he called *The Drama for Fools, Five Motions for Marionettes*.[3]

Since those early times the puppet theatre's status and that of the puppeteer have made a long journey into respectable society. The puppet show, even when its popularity faded in the early twentieth century, maintained upward mobility with the attention of the high-art Modernists, in revolt against naturalism and in search of art's spiritual values. Their embrace awarded puppetry the status of an art form, and they left a legacy which has contributed to its present-day prominence – and the search for another description.

---

[3] See Craig, E. Gordon, *The Drama for Fools by Tom Fool: Five Motions for Marionettes*, Florence 1918, supplemented by a further collection hitherto unpublished and acquired in 2004 by the Institut International de la Marionnette, Charleville-Mézières, France.

By the second half of the twentieth century '*puppet theatre*' had become the smart title[4] in English when the term 'puppet show' was thought to sound unbecoming to the latest productions with their higher aspirations. The new title became currency, especially when the Communist-dominated countries poured subsidies into what Moscow considered an ideal educational medium. Because of generous funding, enabling the engagement of well-known artists from the human theatre and the schooling of new talent, the Soviet productions often had great merit. In response, from the 1960s, a handful of western production companies, such as the Caricature Theatre of Wales and the Cannon Hill Puppet Theatre of Birmingham, modelled themselves on the eastern European state companies, setting themselves ambitious goals which attracted new respect and finance, though the subsidies were minuscule compared with the Soviet largesse. However 'puppet show' has stubbornly remained the common English label.

Peter Schumann was a catalyst of the twentieth century's puppet theatre revival. Still active, he will live in the history of theatre and puppet theatre for his courage, breadth of mind, his genius as a sculptor and the application of his talents to a company – the Bread and Puppet Theatre – that made an immeasurable contribution to the respect now afforded to puppetry. The work of the Bread and Puppet theatre has drawn attention to injustice and tyranny in many parts of the world, including those of Schumann's adopted homeland, the United States. His productions are of giant scale, performed usually in the open air by effigies with metre-high heads and vast hands. They are held aloft by a small army of puppeteers and locally recruited, voluntary assistants accompanied by musicians and banners. The shows, not only because of their scale, are impossible to overlook, as a force for protest, freedom and hope. The company has travelled to various troubled parts of the world where injustice is rife. Much has been written of the company's activities and he himself has written many pungent essays.[5] This is an extract from one, *The Radicality of Puppet Theatre:*

> Puppet theatre, the employment and dance of dolls, effigies, and puppets, is not only historically obscure and unable to shake off its ties to shamanistic healing and other inherently strange and hard-to-prove social services. It is also, by definition of its most persuasive characteristics, an anarchic art, subversive and untameable by nature, an art which is easier researched in police records than in

---

[4] In Germany many adopted the term 'Figurentheater' and in English there were other substitutes intended to avoid the humble 'puppet' word. 'Theatre of Animation' was one, 'theatre of animated forms' another.

[5] See the two volumes of *Peter Schumann's Bread and Puppet Theatre* (1988) by Stefan Brecht for the most comprehensive account.

> theatre chronicles, an art which by fate and spirit does not aspire to represent governments or civilizations, but prefers its own secret and demeaning stature in society, representing, more or less, the demons of that society and definitely not its institutions. […]
>
> And yet, despite the general tendency of our cultural effects to be subservient to the power of the market, to money-making and to the associated steeping of our souls in as much nonsense as possible, despite the fact that puppet theatre exists mostly in the feeble manner of an art obedient to the demands of the entertainment business, puppet theatre also exists as a radically new and daring art form: new, not in the sense of unheard-of newness, but in the sense of an uncovered truth that was there all along but was so common it couldn't be seen for what it was. Radical in the sense of not only turning away from established concepts, it also succeeded in a widening of the heart that allowed for greater inclusion of more modern art into the ancient art of puppetry. (see Schechner, 1991, 75–83)

In the late 1980s and still growing like a triffid, the phenomenon of a '*theatre with puppets*' arrived to take over a large proportion of puppetry practice. To illustrate the difference between a *puppet theatre* and a *theatre with puppets*: the company Tartana of Madrid produced a version of *King Lear* in 1987 in which human-sized, animated figures were the principal medium, playing all the characters, thus clearly 'puppet theatre'. Complicite, a company based in England, frequently employs animated objects in its productions, a theatre with puppets, for example *Mnemonic* (1999), *Light* (2000), and *Shun-kin* (2009).

The current western mainstream and fringe repertory holds many examples of theatre with puppets. It refers of course to a production of mixed means of expression and while hardly an accepted label or category, it serves as a useful description of the last development in the evolution of staged puppetry; certainly it has proved successful in attracting for the first time a large number of artists, producers, directors and designers from mainstream theatre, including opera and dance. Since the 1980s these theatre-makers have come to regard the art form as accessible and attractive, where before most puppetry had allowed itself to degenerate into a ghettoized entertainment suitable only for the very undemanding. Children were thought to be the ideal public for a puppet show, but were frequently offered poorly conceived and executed productions as unsuited to them as to the adults accompanying them. It is true that children still constitute the greater proportion of audiences for puppetry, but today they are more likely to witness productions that pre-suppose their intelligence and sound judgement, developed at an early age through contact with the high production values of television and the cinema. Adults too are increasingly beguiled by the art form and are now catered for by the puppeteers regularly. Adult productions are growing exponentially: an international puppet festival may programme more shows for adults than for kids. Puppets are winning back some of their old ground.

All the twenty-first century productions have been heavily influenced by the latest available technological resources, and, crucially, more generous subsidy. The shows play in arts centres and prestigious theatre spaces rather than in school or parish halls, and there is a proliferation of national and international festivals where the puppeteers absorb new ideas and new contacts.

Whether as a 'puppet show', 'puppet theatre' or a 'theatre with puppets' the genre has become an accustomed addition to the spectrum of the performing arts.

Having located puppetry in an innovative contemporary theatre context, is it possible to define the puppet itself?

THE PUPPET: ANIMATED FIGURE AND OBJECT

You will find a variety of definitions of a puppet, a different one in almost every book on the subject. For me, the puppet is a representation and distillation of a character, the repository of a persona perceived by both creator and spectator within its outward form. It can be any thing, any object, if brought to imagined life through the agency of a human player who inspires it and controls it directly. The control may be through corporeal contact (hands-on, hands-in), or via strings, wires, wooden or metal rods. The figure animated electronically or even remotely is still a puppet if the performer is present at the other end of the cable or the machinery, controlling the movements, just as at the end of a simple string or rod.

The writer and educator A.R. (Panto) Philpott (1919–1991) in his *Dictionary of Puppetry* (long out of print but little out of date) wisely observes:

> Perfect definition eludes theorists, historians, puppeteers, dictionary-makers. It is easier to state what a puppet is NOT: it is not a 'doll' … Dolls are for personal play: puppets are essentially theatrical in function. (Philpott, 1969: 209)

It is not an automaton either, although there is no doubt that automata are cousins and even assistants to the puppet, so that the dividing line is sometimes blurred (as further explained in the next chapter). The automaton, when set in motion by clockwork or some other mechanism and not directly operated by human hands, is pre-programmed, repetitive in its action and therefore not, in my view, a puppet.

In pursuit of other perceptions of the puppet I quote Eric Bass, a prodigiously talented American auteur-puppeteer, who sees the puppet through the eyes of a Jewish poet and comedian. He claims that 'puppets are poetic' and goes on:

> They are, because they are not human, immediately metaphors. Their world is a poem, not a short story. They are by their very nature images come to life. When the puppet bridges the gap between his seeming limitations and his coming to life, he has made a moving comment on the human condition. And even the puppet's

> death can be moving as, having given us the gift of his breath, he then takes it back. And yet, in the next moment, he lives again, immortal, a dream or memory in the actor's hands. The actor can play this role, too, but the puppet *is* the role. He is naturally tragicomic, naturally abstract, a detail. In the human world, he is a visitor and we must see ourselves through his eyes. (see Staub, 1992: 10)

Miles Lee, a writer and puppeteer, and pioneer of the art form in Scotland, wrote a book in 1958 entitled *Puppet Theatre Production and Manipulation,* about many aspects of puppet-specific production which remains a good resource and is full of sensible guidance:

> The main life and purpose of the puppet is its movement and what it does in an actual performance. Action and movement are the prime life factors of the puppet, voice and speech being secondary components. (Lee, 1958: 51)

Lee's statement should be qualified, however. Stillness can be as effective in the life of a puppet character as motion. Belief in the thing's life can be projected onto a motionless object, through the focus and conviction of the other characters on the stage conveyed to the spectator who in turn becomes convinced of its *anima*.

Peter Brook's production of *Le Costume* provides a good example of the life perceived in an immobile object. The play told of a vengeful husband who, having caught his wife at home *in flagrante delicto,* places the abandoned suit of his wife's lover, who has fled, over a chair at the end of the marital bed as a permanent reminder of her guilt. For spectator and actors, the suit was invested with a powerful presence – a torturous reminder of her adultery.[6]

Was it then a puppet? Or is the thing never a puppet when it is inert? It must remain a question of individual perception.[7] The figurative puppet at rest will yet be perceived as puppet, given its distinctive manufacture. Specially designed, shaped or modified to be a stage or screen character, attached to some sort of control mechanism, even if it is onstage but unmoving, then it will be seen as a puppet, since the intention of its maker and its theatrical employment are obvious: it is a potential performer, whether ritualistic or dramatic. The object-puppet, unmodified and unmoving, is simply a useful or useless artefact. A polythene bag performs only when given life and breath in a performance by a puppeteer, when the spectator may perceive its life as a symbol or a ghost, even a human character. The same polythene bag, put aside by the puppeteer, is, in the perception of the average spectator, an object again.

---

[6] *Le Costume,* directed by Peter Brook, was produced in London in 2001 and 2003. The play is an adaptation by Mothobi Mutloatse and Barney Simon of the short story, *The Suit,* by South African writer Can Themba.

[7] Compare the occasion when shortly after the death of Kantor in 1990, in the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the company placed the same chair onstage as the director had occupied during rehearsals of *Today is my Birthday.* The company announced that it would stay unoccupied during the performance. 'The stage … was filled with objects and people from Kantor's "Room and Inn of Imagination/Memory" […] a big picture frame […] stage right was occupied by Kantor's double, the Self-portrait, a man in a black suit and a long black scarf, who sat on a chair with his back to the audience' (Kantor, 1993: 366).

The form of a figurative puppet can be realistic or abstract, exquisitely sculpted or roughly made. It can represent a human or animal or the concrete expression of an emotion, the symbol of an idea. Fantastic characters – many of them creatures from the outer limits of man's imagination – appear as variations on the theme: monsters, extra-terrestrials, robots. I have seen animated numbers and letters of the alphabet, mathematical shapes, personified images of the seasons, of spirits, archetypal depictions of destitution or grandeur.

Sometimes a puppet is hardly crafted at all: its appearance must depend on the dramaturgy and the aesthetic of the production in preparation. All will be manipulated as depictions of characters in dramatic or comic performance not performable by the human actor, in what has been called a 'theatre of the impossible' (Vella and Rickards, 1989) – impossible, that is, for the flesh and blood performers, constrained by the weight and frailty of their physicality and by gravity.

The question of the definition of a puppet has been complicated by producers exploring the potential of the latest technologies in relation to

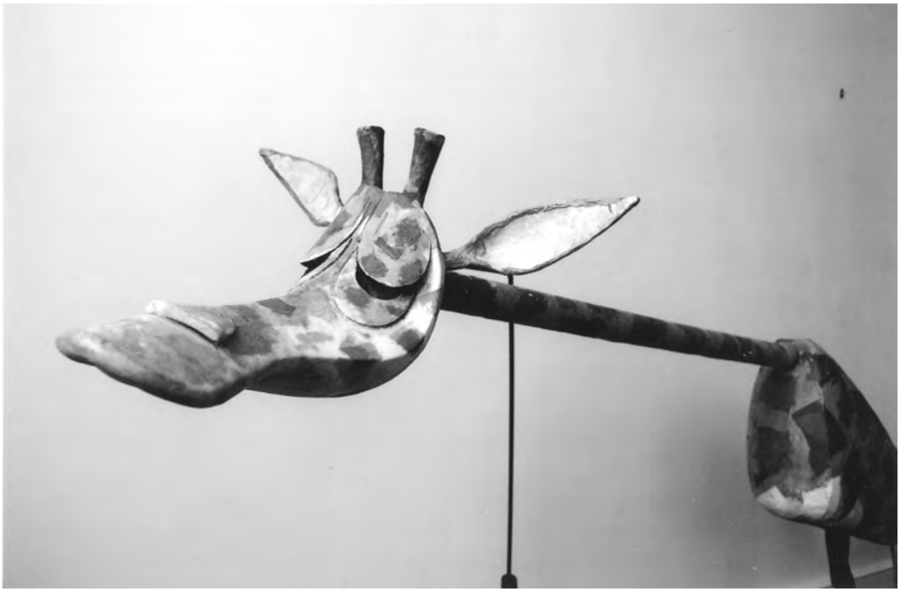

Figure 1.2 Art, design and craft in a single head. Peter O'Rourke's Giraffe from the Little Angel production of Roald Dahl's *The Giraffe, the Pelly and Me* (2008). © Peter O'Rourke, who also designed and directed the production.

their puppetry. Hardly a performance is given without some inclusion of projection, video or filmed animation in the constant stream of experiment. It remains an academic question whether the mediated, screened image can ever be termed a valid puppet to accord with my definition above, although a plausible contribution in favour of its entitlement is given in an essay by the American academic and writer Steve Tillis, 'The Art of Puppetry in the Age of Media Production' (Tillis, 2001). It is a long essay, cleverly argued, and worth seeking out to read in full.

Tillis lists three types of 'media figure': those generated by computer graphics, those 'moved' by stop-action photography and those activated by electronic ('animatronic') controls. He discusses the widely insisted-on criterion of the puppet performing in 'real-time', and argues that media figures – most obviously those created through computer graphics – cannot generally be said to lose their presence in time and space when presented by their particular medium, for their presence is actually created by the medium. That is to say that they are not media reproductions but original productions made possible through media (Tillis, 2001: 173). He notes that the 'real-time' criterion refers to 'a synchronicity between the puppeteer's control and the puppet's resultant movement' and suggests that an 'alternate meaning of real-time would refer to a synchronicity not only of control and movement, but of audience reception as well'. Going on to discuss a 1994 essay by Stephen Kaplin (Tillis, 2001: 18–25), to be found in the same volume, *Puppets, Masks and Performing Objects,* Tillis draws out Kaplin's implied definition of puppetry.

> [If] the signification of life can be created by people, then the site of that signification is to be considered a puppet. This definition – which I should emphasize, I have read into Kaplin's essay – is revolutionary, expanding the realm of puppetry beyond all definitions that center upon the materiality of the puppet […] It would seem to encompass not only computer graphics images (and stop-action and all animatronics as well), but also forms of art that have been almost universally held distinct from puppetry, such as the cel (also known as cell) animation popularized by Walt Disney. (Tillis, 2001: 175)

Tillis then explains the complicated but interesting means by which the computer graphic figure is produced, Having joints and articulation points like those of a puppet, and with the technique known as 'motion capture' generated in real-time through the physical efforts of a performer, the movement of the figure on the screen can be said to be directly manipulated:

> To create from the keyboard the walk of a figure across a room […] involves the bringing together of separately defined gestural and proxemic movements: first one uses handles to define the gestures that constitute walking, and then one defines the animation path and speed of the walk. This bringing together of movements is analogous to the way that puppets are moved. A marionette, for example, also has specific gestures of walking, created primarily with its leg strings; these

> walking gestures are brought together with a proxemic path along which the marionette is transported by its main support strings. […] The main difference between the keyboard-created walking of a computer graphics figure and a puppet is that the walk of the former is painstakingly composed over an extended period of time, while the walk of the latter is created all at once, in real-time. (Tillis, 2001: 177)

Tillis approaches the question of whether the figure's intangibility should be taken into account if it is to earn its place under the heading of 'puppet'.

> Computer graphics figures are not tangible […] As we have seen, there are striking similarities in the creation of computer graphics figures and puppets: the creation of both involves the construction of a figure imbued with articulation points that is then given surface design features. Both, in short, are artificial human constructs designed for manipulation (of one sort or another) by people. And, as I suggested earlier, both share the crucial trait of being sites of signification other than 'real' living beings. (Tillis, 2001: 178–79)

Noting that puppets made of wood or cloth are tangible objects, while computer graphics figures are not, Tillis proposes that traditional puppets should be thought of as 'tangible' puppets, while computer graphics figures are thought of as 'virtual' puppets. Another point in favour of the argument concerns the manipulator of this kind of figure: can a person working at a keyboard be called a puppeteer? Certainly the virtual puppet still depends on human control 'of one sort or another'.

There follows an explication of the stop-action puppet, which can never perform on a stage as its action depends on the movement from one attitude and gesture to another by a photographer and a trained manipulator. Each movement is shot so that, strung together, the finished film is indistinguishable by an average viewer from the cell animation of, say, a Disney cartoon. Tillis describes stop-action figures as closely related to puppets 'as we have known them' except in one crucial respect: 'the absence of even the possibility of real-time control is the defining characteristic of these figures' (Tillis, 2001: 182).

According to Tillis, these three types of animated forms – tangible, virtual and stop-motion – should all take their rightful place under the rubric of 'puppet', but only, he says, if the criteria of 'real-time' action and 'tangibility' are discounted. I have not used either of these in my definition above; I'm therefore ready to be convinced that the stop-action, the animatronic and the keyboard-operated computer figures are screen puppets: the first two, after all, have a trained performer controlling the movements. Of the third I am less convinced: here the keyboard is the control, moving the character. Can this be said to be a means of manipulation, even if 'operated' by the hands of a puppeteer? I leave it to the reader.

While technology is discovering new techniques for animating the puppet, new materials for its construction are invented. There are no longer any rules here, unless the figure is intended for a strictly traditional performance when there will indeed be strict rules, as in the making of a figure for the Bunraku theatre, which takes years of intensive practice.

The answer to the question 'what is a puppet?' depends, as Margaret Williams explains, on just 'how the question is posed'. Like Vella and Rickards Williams is Australian, an academic who taught theatre, including puppet theatre theory and practice, in the University of New South Wales and whose first-hand experience is incalculable, having also married a puppeteer, Richard Bradshaw, and toured the world with him and his shadow show. In her essay, *Including the Audience: The Idea of 'the Puppet' and the Real Spectator,* she writes

> Any definition necessarily reflects the writer's pre-existing conceptual framework and excludes what does not confirm it. Yet there seems a persistent need for individual perspectives on puppetry, even personal preferences, to be framed in terms of a universal definition.
>
> Roger-Daniel Bensky notes that a puppet is not only a medium of artistic expression but an object of reflection – aesthetic, psychological and metaphysical. There are many valuable semiotic and aesthetic analyses of puppetry and its relation to the theatre of human drama, and of specific puppet forms. But it is the *idea* of 'the puppet' that is the subject of much theoretical debate, an idea which Jurkowski says would persist even if all puppets cease to exist. […] The most common definition of a puppet is the oxymoron of a 'living object', what Jurkowski calls the 'magic' puppet. But 'magic' implies something more than just the apparent miracle of life in the inanimate: the puppet is seen as the bearer of an archetypal or collective memory, the heir to a long tradition of belief that inanimate matter moulded into human form has magical power. (Williams, 2007: 119–20)

THE ANIMATED OBJECT

Be that as it may, the puppet can appear as a realistic or abstract figure, a piece of unformed material or a non-performative object. At this stage it is important to explain the distinction between the animated *figure* and the animated *object*. The first is manufactured to depict a stage character, the second is a thing in its natural state or manufactured with no thought of any future as a stage player. In performance, animated and manipulated, *both* are puppets.

The '*object-puppet*' may be almost any thing not intended for performance, made or in its natural state: a garden tool, an item of clothing, a flexible table lamp, newspaper, a stick or a plant. To convince the spectator of an object's breathing presence, to imbue it with character, that is to make it become a puppet, is, by the way, more difficult for most puppeteers than the animation of a recognizably human or animal figure. The energy needed to 'enliven' the object has to be powerful enough to carry to the audience who, if complicit, conveys their conviction (of the object's liveness) back to the puppeteer. A delicate triangle of projected energy and response from the puppeteer through the object to the audience has to be formed, but is rarely sustainable for long.

The Human Among Objects was the title of a lecture given at a meeting of the members of the British Centre of UNIMA, the international association for puppetry, in Brighton in 1994. Jurkowski as the invited speaker traced the rise of interest in the object as an animated character as opposed to the portrait or caricatured figure, in this 'new age of artistic expression'. He said:

> Distinct from puppets, common objects are manufactured for some practical use. Naturally each has its own iconicity which allows people to recognise it. If a performer produces an object in order to turn it into a stage character, his task is more complex than the task of presenting a puppet character. By means of his acting and manipulation he has to transform the object (for example, an umbrella) into a character (for example, a woman). First he has to contradict the iconic and practical value of the object and next he has to endow it with new functions and new appearance to make it recognisable as the intended character. (Jurkowski, 1994: 9)

Successful object animation in theatre comes in short episodes or vignettes which are comic or tragic. A few longer pieces have been successful: there was for instance a forty-minute show by Peter Ketturkat with a strong storyline, *Keine Angst vor Grossen Tieren!* (*Don't be Afraid of the Big Animals!*), a classic success of the puppet theatre, created in the 1970s and produced again in 2006. The characters were all kitchen or garden implements, most modified in some way (attached eyes or hair for example), but some as unadorned as their manufacturer intended them. The 2005 touring version of this show was reviewed by Beccy Smith, dramaturg and director, in the periodical *Animations Online*:

> Ketturkat's work is renowned for its playful reinvention of object theatre. The long narrow playboard provides a simple wide-screen framing, the lighting state is fixed and the bizarrely varied sound effects voiced by the strange objects of his world are created one-man-band style by the two performers hidden within. Yet the precision and aptitude with which Ketturkat characterises his objects, testing every physical property of each item, matching movement to shape, rhythm to mechanisms and deftly mixing human qualities with the surreal, give a sense that we're witnessing a liberation of the essence within each form. There's no overarching structure to the piece, instead spoons, corkscrews, garlic crusher and tubing … seemed to live out their inner life before us, before vanishing back to obscurity and, presumably, the kitchen drawer or garden shed – but remaining forever transfigured in our imagination.[8]

---

[8] I have quoted the 'statements' of several artists from a booklet produced in 1992 (see http://www.puppetcentre.org.uk/animationsonline/aofifteen/reviews.html) to accompany an exhibition of the work of the United States' greatest puppeteers. As this claims to be a serious work, I have not included in the main text the statement by the peerless performer-comedian Paul Zaloom, but I cannot resist reproducing it here:

> 'I am interested in puppetry because puppets show up to rehearsals on time. I like puppets because you can hurt them and throw them out the window and not get into

'Object animation' is more than 'object manipulation' – the former means the projection of life into the object; the latter only demands dexterity in its 'handling'. Both will affirm the object's characteristics and materiality, showing its dramaturgical significance, but only the first will imbue it with breath.

Tadeusz Kantor (1915–1990), visionary Polish theatre-maker, designer, and, in his early years, puppeteer, was perennially interested in the employment of 'low status objects' which he dedicated to the creation of 'a "different" reality'. In one of his lessons, the *Insegnamento*s, he agreed that

> There must be a very close, almost biological symbiosis between an actor and an object.
>
> They cannot be separated.
>
> In the simplest case, the actor must attempt to do everything for the OBJECT to stay visible; in the most radical case the actor and the object must become one. I call this state a BIO-OBJECT. (Kantor, 1993: 240)

In the course of the production of *La Ballade de Mister Punch* by Alain Recoing's Théâtre des Mains Nues in Paris in 1976 Antoine Vitez, the respected French director, commented on the pleasurable interrelationships to be discovered between a human actor and a scenic environment consisting mainly of objects in transformation:

> Now I would like to say something perverse: the transformation of the object is the concern of contemporary theatre, leading us to the wellsprings of performance. In my work I have often used transformation. In the show *Friday or the Natural Life* from the novel of Michel Tournier which I produced in Chaillot, an umbrella became a magic arrow, then a flute, a parachute, a parasol, a scarecrow, and a stage character. Each object gradually changed its function during the course of the play. (Vitez, 1976: 19)

Encapsulating the neo-modernist passion for the impersonal theatre at its most extreme, an English-Israeli writer, poet, actor and puppeteer Dennis Silk (1928–1998) saw life in every kind of object, even a knife and fork on a table. Silk was a surrealist with a unique vision who formed a company he called 'Thing Theatre':

---

trouble. Another significant advantage of puppets is that I can play many different characters without changing my pants ["trousers" to the British]. The reason I've dedicated my life to puppetry is that I love schlepping around a thousand pounds of stuff wherever I go.

I work with found objects because they are cheap. "Found object" is a pretentious word for "thing". My shows are too weird for T.V. and not weird enough for the avant-garde. The only people who cannot understand my work are non-English speakers and television executives. Avant-gardists understand my work and thus don't like it'.

> Thing Theatre? What does that mean? It means a theatre where things are granted a higher dramatic status than in the theatre of the personal actor. A playgoer may ask: Isn't it a little frivolous, a little whimsical, to deprive the personal actor of part of his function, and to search out instead the dramatic life in a shoelace, a bicycle-pump, a hair-dryer? The *thing* novelty will wear off soon enough, a playgoer will say. Can a packet of sewing needles outtalk Chekhov?
>
> That playgoer is wrong. It's because the personal actor has lost the thing in himself, the strong concentrated thing, that we turn to a theatre of the thing. He's squandered his strength in a hundred personal emotions which he then inflicts on his role. But the thing-actor has guarded its strength, it's a form of locked-up energy waiting for the right outlet. The personal actor should be locked up in a furniture warehouse for an entire week, and study the concentrated life in a chair, a table, a commode … the unhurried life. The warehouse should be his school. (Silk, 1996: 228)

Silk's long essay on *The Marionette Theatre* goes to the mystery at the heart of puppetry, but will seem eccentric to anyone who is not a poet or a puppeteer or an animist, preferably all three. Here is a taster:

> The umbrella teases. It opens. Then folds back on itself. Really it's two umbrellas. Yet it's one. A villager would have to have two minds to grasp it. Moreover its mode of arrival draws attention to itself. So they build a shrine to it. Best to abandon it to mystery … In the street outside the small red spinning top has been hoarding its conversation for a long time … Speech after long silence. And its cousin, the yo-yo, opens and shuts shop. The balloon declared itself at half-past nine this morning … Then went back into tininess … The umbrella should make a place for them in the shrine. It should hold a nest of gods. Umbrella, yo-yo, spinning-top, balloon. A cotton-reel. … The flag over the shrine waits. Waits for a lucky wind to give it life. Unfolds and flaps in the wind. (Silk, 1996: 238)

If a Theatre of Objects is concerned with the presence of things or raw materials rather than crafted, mimetic figures, it is nevertheless notable that in the playing, almost every manipulated object recalls a human or animal character, with, for example, a location (if only hinted) for its head and eyes. Perhaps there is a case to be made for a theatrical exploration of the pure thing-ness of an object in its essential, non-humanoid form. Enno Podehl, German academic, performer and director cites a production of a company who tried to do exactly that. In an essay from the journal *Das Andere Theater* (The Other Theatre) written in 2002 and titled 'Parlament den Dingen' (Parliament of Things) this was the final paragraph:

> In the piece 'Mousson' (Monsoon) by the 'Au Cul de Loup' company from Paris, objects perform without any assigned roles. They are just themselves, unwieldy or soft, transparent or expansive, and most of all filled with sound. At first sight they don't tell you much. It is only in movement that they develop their specific world of sound and space – the world of the monsoon. Through their weight, their form and their musical qualities the objects themselves pass on movement impulses to

> the performers who allow them to resonate within themselves and then return them, intensified, to the objects to allow every possibility contained in them their full expression. The players are not only performers but discoverers. They no longer direct the flow but respond to the impulses coming from the objects. We experience how objects handled by sensitive people become personal musical instruments, and how people can be transformed into dancers by objects. We become witness to the visualisation of music.
>
> This form of object theatre rehabilitates the independence of objects. The rules and gestures of the game find themselves in a mutually respectful exchange, like a spirited dialogue between player/performer and object. The performing objects – at first sight quite peculiar – have been chosen specifically for this performance. They are the subjects of this play. The dramatic structure grows from the impulses they pass on to the performers. (in Podehl, 2002: 3–44)

For both figure-puppet and object-puppet the intention is to convince those watching that the thing contains breath, that it is inspired, that it is alive. In the course of a performance more often than not the conviction depends on many variables, including the age and experience of the spectators, their technical knowledge of the art form, and the skill of the puppet operators. All but the most naïve spectators will find themselves now convinced, now unconvinced that the creature before them has life; they will focus on the puppet, then the manipulator and the method of control (when the manipulator is visible), and back again to the puppet. If the puppeteer is hidden they will shift focus between the puppet and, say, the setting. The changing focus is evidence of an alternating belief and unbelief in the puppet's autonomous existence. The condition has no scientific label that I can find, but has been described (poetically) as the 'opalization effect' (Jurkowski, 1988: 41–42) and (confusingly) as 'double vision' (Tillis, 1992: 59). Probably the most accurate word, 'oscillation', is used by T.A. Green and W.J. Pepicello (Green, 1983: 157).

The more child-like an audience member – of any age – the more engaged by the puppet he or she will be and the oscillation effect will be less; and vice versa, the more sophisticated the viewer, the more difficult it is to enter and remain in the illusion, so oscillation between belief and unbelief is more frequent. It is, however, worth reporting the true anecdote of a worldly man of the theatre, not a Christian, who found himself reaching for his handkerchief during an amateur 'nativity' play depicting the sentimental legend of the Christmas rose. He believed in what he was seeing for the duration of the story. Similarly one was conscious at every performance of the hundreds of spectators visibly moved by the plight of the injured puppet animals in the current adaptation of Michael Morpurgo's story *War Horse*. Puppets can evoke profound emotion.

Few members of an adult public would describe themselves as 'child-like', I suspect; nonetheless the animated figure touches our collective memory of innocence, the simple acceptance of a fiction, such as normal children enjoy. We imbue the puppets with our imagination and experience a

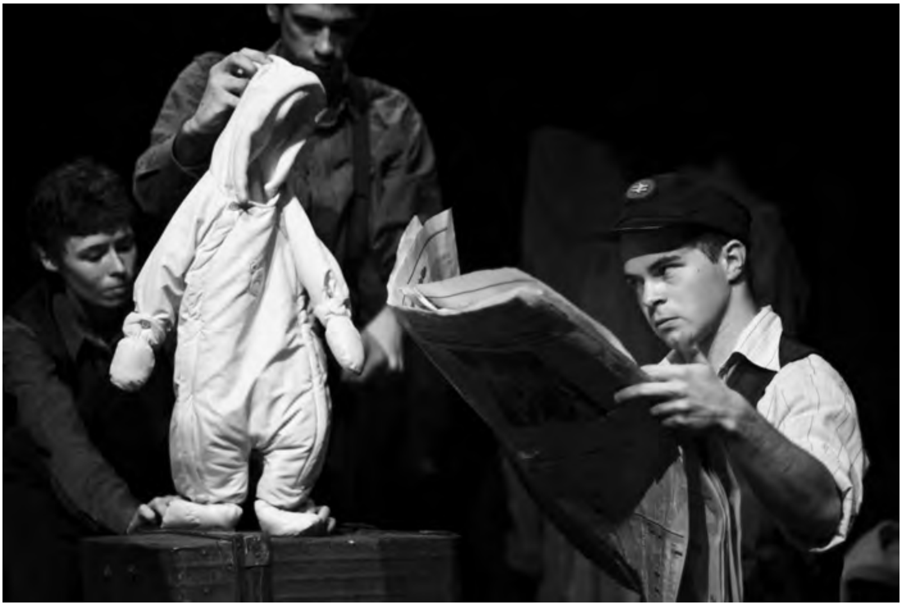

Figure 1.3 *Rubbished*, a devised production by students of the MA in Advanced Theatre Practice at the Central School of Speech and Drama, London (2004). The central character is Pinky, a toddler with attitude.

© Patrick Baldwin.

deceptive empathy, deceptive because empathy assumes feeling in the recipient. The puppet only mimics feeling through attitude and movement.

The Spanish modernist playwright Jacinto Benavente (1866–1954) described his 1908 play *Los Intereses Creados (The Bonds of Interest)*, as a 'puppetesque farce in the style of the commedia dell'arte'. In it the central character Crispin says:

> The author is well aware that so primitive a spectacle is not the most appropriate for the sophisticated audience of the present time. Therefore he begs the protection of your refinement and good will. He asks only that you become as young as possible in spirit. The world is already old and in its dotage. But Art is not resigned to growing old, and in order to seem a child plays at nonsense … And that is why these old puppets presume to amuse you today with their trifles. (Benavente, [1908] 2004: Prologue)

Simultaneous actions – inspirational, manual, vocal, mechanical – via one or more human operators, visible or screened, are what give the puppet its physical life. It acts as an outline, so to speak, for the eye to fill with character and colour, from the projection of the spectator's fantasy, born in the silence of the head, arising from memories, ideals, concerns, dreams. In successful puppet play the audience cooperates actively, and will afterwards swear that this or that figure changed expression; that it grew taller during the action, or that it effected a range of movement, all impossible.

THE PUPPETEER

The primary characteristic of puppeteers is a belief in the hidden life of *things*. A crushed piece of paper, a kitchen chair, a box or a book can appear to breathe in their hands. Another hallmark, especially of the designer-maker, is a visual creativity that they wish to express in scenic terms. They see a performance text through a prism of moving pictures; they see camels in clouds, dancers in daffodils, an old man in a black bin liner, wolves in walls.

Peter Schumann, world famous founder of the Bread and Puppet Theatre, wrote:

> The considerable talents for the puppeteer's bag-of-tricks showmanship all originate in their preoccupation with things. The puppeteers harvest piles of human-like and yet other worldly qualities from their observation of objects, especially from their practice of moving these objects [...] The manipulation of puppets is over and above the wilful targeting which aims for certain results from an audience. The puppeteers' only hope of mastering their puppets is to enter their puppets' delicate and seemingly inexhaustible lives. (see Staub, 1992: 22)

Puppeteering as a profession and even the word puppeteer are as yet an immature presence in theatre histories. After the 1930s, the formally trained professional arose only through the establishment of the first higher education specialist schools throughout the Soviet Union and its satellites as in Bialystok (Poland), Jaroslavl (Russia), Prague, Budapest and East Berlin. They were provided by the authorities in order to mobilize and prepare the human resources needed for the scores of state puppet theatres established throughout eastern Europe.

The puppeteer, trained or not, can be showman or shaman, exhibitionist or poet. Practitioners in western countries with no specialist formation will usually have a qualification in sculpture, painting and/or scenic design, even architecture – rarely in acting. Many play musical instruments, and you will be hard put to it to find one who is not musical. Most vocational puppeteers were in the past male and many I have met identified their vocation at a pre-pubescent age, a fact that may well be of interest to anthropologists. In northern Europe since the 1980s the profession has by contrast attracted many women and at least half the younger puppeteers are now, I estimate, female.

Their ranks may be divided into three: the builder of puppets and sets who may also be the overall designer of a show, the performer-operator, and those adept at both construction and performance. At the time of writing the majority belong to the third group, but scenography for puppetry is being slowly recognized as a specialist discipline.

The first group, the designers and/or makers, often prefer to remain in the workshop, with little desire to confront an audience. In this category you see the Pygmalion, the sculptor or painter wishing his or her creations to be endowed with breath and motion. Although the best puppet-makers are fine artists their figures and settings are rarely seen in art galleries however high their plastic value. They are primarily making theatre, a theatre of movement and transformation difficult to reconcile with still-life exhibits.

The second group, the freelance performers, is the smallest, but it is growing rapidly. Puppeteer-performers are rarely actors, although they understand many of the techniques of acting. They are a different breed. They do not create their puppets, only animate them, manipulating and often speaking for one or more of the characters. Sometimes they themselves act in a human role alongside their puppet(s), and this duality of performance demands great skill. If they can act, dance or sing they have a better chance of employment in today's multi-disciplined performing companies. Although they are the animators, not the makers, any of them will tell you that it is difficult to work comfortably with a figure not custom-fitted to suit the manipulator's physique. As with all performing objects the puppet should handle and be handled as if it were an extension of its operator.

In the third group are the all-rounders, the puppeteers as capable of designing and crafting as performing. Amongst professionals of the western tradition this group has been until now the most commonly found, but their numbers as a proportion of the whole are diminishing. Reasons for this lie in the structuring of the formal training now available in schools and courses all over the world. In the pioneering Soviet establishments, many of which continue their activity, the actor-puppeteers and the designer-puppeteers have found themselves in separate schools. In most western training grounds the separation of performance from design and construction is not an appealing policy, as most would-be puppet practitioners wish for at least some knowledge of both, for reasons practical, artistic and economic. A few schools offer all-round training, as for example the prestigious Institute in Charleville-Mézières, France, which gives the students theories and practicalities of theatre, construction and manipulation, and in addition encourages creative theatre-making in a three-year course.

The training of puppeteers gives rise to much debate and examination of alternative methods. While formal provision is everywhere growing most would-be professionals still serve an apprenticeship with existing companies, learning on the job. The prospect facing most of them, although their horizons are expanding, is in some respects unchanged from the end of the twentieth century. Those who are producers, builders and performers will be likely to earn their bread within an independently formed small-scale touring company of two to six people, answering the demand for imaginative and educational entertainment for children and families. They play at weekends and through school holidays, in puppetry festivals, arts festivals and folk festivals. Many tour abroad. Their life is a hardworking round of preparing shows, fundraising for the periods of preparation (when performance income can normally not be earned), booking venues and tours, and finally performing a new or revived show for the public. They frequently act as their own production, stage and accounting managers, driving a van all over the country and humping sets and puppets into and out of the playing space. The most active accept as many bookings as they can fit into the schedule, sometimes playing four shows in a weekend in four different venues, sometimes luxuriating in a week when a show has been booked into a single venue. The temptation to experiment with a production based on an unknown story is small: the safe repertoire is the fairy and folk tale or (as at present) an adaptation of a popular children's book or television favourite. However the statutory funding bodies (at least in Europe) encourage adventurous work that explores new dramaturgies and modes of expression, and it is hoped that the circuits will gradually present more and more of it.

Freelance performer-puppeteers with no company of their own have a precarious existence, like any actor. They wait to be engaged, perhaps by a puppet group, or a theatre company needing specialist input, or most lucrative of all, a television or a film company making a commercial (of which a surprisingly large number feature animated figures and objects). Certainly the freelance category of puppeteer has swollen to a surprising extent since the 1990s.

The designer-maker puppeteers have also increased their market share. More productions mean more work, and the best have plenty of work. Theatre prop-makers are of course asked to make puppet figures, but the experience of the specialist puppeteer is irreplaceable, involving as it does knowledge of the arcane arts of jointing and weighting, of the materials suitable for the production's aesthetic and so on.

As much as the puppeteers of all these three types have found their world growing and their chances of employment increasing, it is rare to find a puppeteer, however regularly employed, who does not struggle to earn a decent living. As with actors, they must break into television or lead a company whose standards of excellence will be smiled on by sponsors and awarded generous and regular subsidy if they are to pay the mortgage.

A singular example, working from New York but frequently invited to direct abroad, is Roman Paska, a puppeteer-poet and film director whose productions are of some intellectual stature and whose one-person stage company was Theatre for The Birds, now the Dead Puppet company. In 1992 he wrote:

> It's one thing to work with puppets, it's something Other to be a puppeteer … I can think of many good aesthetic and poetic reasons why I work with puppets, but they can't explain what really moved me to become a puppeteer. Or what behoves me to be one. Apparently that choice was made before the age of Reason, with the kind of unreasoning instinct that comes from below. And while I still can't make up my mind, demon instinct tells me things my mind can never

> fathom; that, for instance, the puppet is more intent on being real than being symbolic; that therefore puppet theatre is a 'theatre of possession' and that the only fully realized puppeteers are shamans or madmen, holy or insane … I try to believe that there is still some rational justification for what I do, some conventional use or necessity. But deep inside I know that puppet theatre is as irrational and unnecessary as nature. Like a bird, a planet or a disease. And despite all efforts to feather a nest for puppet theatre in contemporary society, it remains a fundamentally deviant, subversive, marginal art form. That may be the most strange and marvellous thing about it. Anyway, it's one good reason why I call it theatre for the birds … In an iron age of reason, someone has to carry the golden torch of Folly. (see Staub, 1992: 20)

Hundreds of puppet artists, few of them publicly recognized by name or appearance unless they have a television or film profile, are working all over Europe, and thousands if you include other parts of the world. After centuries of separation and concealment they and their art have 'come out' of their self-made closet, both in a physical and metaphorical sense. Even for the curtain calls of a major production instead of hiding behind their puppet character, they now by right bow on their own behalf.

It is evident that in most performances the unconcealed puppeteers have become the accepted convention, except for an uninitiated public which may still demonstrate surprise and even indignation at seeing the puppeteer at work on his puppet, as if robbed of a treasured illusion. But illusion is no longer the *sine qua non* of puppetry, as it is no longer the stuff of theatre, for the truly modern theatre-maker. The rows of bulky spotlights are unmasked, like the marionettes' wooden controls. The playwright and theatre-maker Anna Furse writes:

> Illusion and disbelief are often opposed to materiality and flatness on the live art aesthetic, while the politics of this debate remain caught up in principles of fair play. There is an idea that if you beguile the spectator, or mystify them with charisma, you are somehow cheating them, assuming authority over their freedom to interpret. But I would argue that visible puppetry offers precisely an opportunity for illusion to be stripped bare. What makes any suspension of belief exciting and fair is that it is, as we say, 'willing'. Even a five-year-old knows that a monkey puppet is a puppet when they see the puppeteer leap around the stage with it. But it is their choice to play the game – the *jeu*.
>
> It seems to me that actor-puppeteers open up all kinds of questions about collaboration, hierarchy, liveness, presence, persona, performer, actor, and most importantly what spectators are actually looking at when they sit and watch. Puppeteers are unlike any other actors because they are entirely committed to the Other […] what puppeteers contribute to the art of the performer is an almost ethical question. It is a question of attention and the places that the performer draws attention to and from. Rather than draw attention to themselves, actor-puppeteers devote their attention to guiding ours outside, leading our attention away from their own bodies via the body itself. This lack of ego, or 'indicative attention-seeking' that tells the audience 'I'm here but look at this or that now'

> produces an extraordinary concentration, and a particular kind of focus [...] You're not thinking about your own body except in how to adapt it to the need of the puppeteering activity, moment by moment. (see Margolies, 2009: 20–21)

Furse was asked to adapt the traditional Japanese story of 'The Peach Child' for the Little Angel Theatre in London. She was invited to 'extend the language of the puppet show' and bring her particular way of working with the body and visual narrative to the project, through a prolonged rehearsal period during which she worked the puppeteers hard, employing physical exercises including Tai Chi to improve co-ordination and concentration.

Some of the most effective manipulation – from the spectator's point of view – results from the puppeteer's unconscious ability to project visual and spiritual imagination into the figure being operated. The puppeteer is projecting the complete conception of a role, from above, behind or below, its character expressed in gait, clothes, gesture – as if into a reversed reflection in a mirror. The puppet is an entity which absorbs its operator's energy and is thereby able to convince the spectator of its vitality. It is a matter of transferred, not duplicated, kinesthetics. If the puppeteer is projected 'into' the puppet character, it cannot but be the cynosure, it cannot make a wrong gesture; it cannot produce the wrong voice. A distinguished Polish designer, Jadwiga Mydlarska-Kowal (1943–2001) put it in a nutshell:

> The actor in the dramatic theatre is himself the plastic material. In the puppet theatre, by contrast, the actor puts the space and the plastic forms that I have created, as the designer, to work. I think that the actor, in puppet theatre, has to have an enormously strong visual imagination. He has to make the form move, he must live the form, he must sense the form. His task is very important. And that is what distinguishes the actor in puppet theatre from the actor in the dramatic theatre. (see Jurkowski, 1998: 152)

It is to be noted that the illusion of the autonomous puppet has been ruptured and the puppeteer has emerged undisguised, in accordance with twentieth century tendencies in western modes of theatre. The influence of Brecht and various elements of post-modernist culture, when mystification and magic fell out of favour, were contributory factors: faith in the supernatural seems to many in the richer countries more and more suspect. But, as Victoria Nelson argues in her fascinating book *The Secret Life of Puppets*, on the 'displacement of the supernatural' into the realm of psychology, the 'repressed religious' is

> visible in representations of puppets, robots, cyborgs and other artificial humans in literature and film. It endures as a fascination with the spiritualizing of matter and the demiurgic infusion of soul into human simulacra – a fascination that manifested itself, in the twentieth century, both in avant-garde theatre and in popular entertainments. (Nelson, 2001: 20)

The puppeteer's presence alongside the figures and objects being animated is now taken for granted in the collage of staged media, and has given rise to a great number of deliberations on its meaning. In the chapter on aesthetics are two exemplary essays by Paska and by Roland Barthes on the subject.

Puppets are operated by many different categories of visible performer – dancer, singer, dramatic actor, comedian, musician, and the convention of the hidden puppeteer is usually reserved for shows following tradition. However, in spite of its ceremonial connotations, Asian puppetry, as seen in the technique of the Bunraku-za, the Indonesian wayang, the dance puppetry of Cambodia, for example, all display the puppeteer as an essential physical element of the spectacle. This must be accepted as a fact which has exerted another strong influence on western performance.

Writing as a puppeteer-designer-producer and film-maker, Julie Taymor, best known for her authorship of the staged production of *The Lion King*, enlarges on this:

> In my work in the theatre I often choose to juxtapose live actors with puppetry and masked dancers. This allows for the pinspotting of human elements of the live characters. In most naturalist theatre the human face along with the details of the body, its flesh and gestures, are taken for granted. But when you isolate the exact moment of exposing these human elements their presence is magnified and the humanity of the character is heightened. The scale and form (shadow, hand, rod, bunraku, etc) of the stylised figures in the production determine their importance and depth of meaning and emotion. In designing or choosing the style of puppet or mask an artist has complete control over the depth of meaning and range of expression of a given character or image. Through the juxtaposition of humans, puppets, and masks a work can have a multilayered texture operating on many levels of reality.[9] (see Staub, 1992: 26)

For some the presence of the puppet operator is 'not so much a disruption of illusion as the potential for a different kind of focus, with the imagination of the spectator now engaged as much with the visible craft of the puppeteer'[10] as with the otherness of the puppet. The exposure of the techniques, for example the source of the puppet's voice and the control of its movement, the absorption of the performers in their puppet, or their interaction when playing two separate characters, intensifies the interest for many of the spectators, rendering the 'oscillation' of their focus a deliberate, not an involuntary choice. Illogically the process rarely destroys the spectator's belief in the life of the character, if it is animated and not a simple prop. Halina Waszkiel, Polish critic and teacher, wrote that 'the essence of puppetry lies in the mysterious bond linking the puppet and its manipulator'. This was for her the crux of the matter – 'there can be no magic of the puppet theatre without masterly manipulation' (Waszkiel, 2008: 23).

---

[9] Simon Shepherd, editorial comment on a draft of the chapter.

[10] Ibid.

Perhaps the revelation of the puppeteer is a fashion of the times and the pendulum may swing. We may witness a renewed pursuit of mysteries and magic, a return to the hidden manipulators wishing to give all the focus back to their puppets, or to restore a pre-secular repertoire. Even in the 1980s a stirring of dissent was detected in the words of a respected German producer and performer: Peter Waschinsky declared himself tired of revealing all the secrets of puppet theatre to the audience. Believing that this particular experimental process had been exhausted as a scenic genre, he decided 'to restore the puppet's right to its illusionist function':

> I do not say that this 'deconstructive' kind of theatre can never be interesting, but in most cases it is not: first of all the rather primitive 'alienation effect' within it is quickly exhausted. Brechtian actors, at least the best ones, knew perfectly well how to create illusion in their acting. They applied the distancing effect in order to emphasize certain moments so they would seem special to the audience, so that they really would be alienated. This means that in order to limit or to distort illusion it is necessary to create it first. The same applies to the puppet theatre. (see Jurkowski, 1998: 330)

Since Waschinsky's disquiet has not stemmed the tide of *distanciation* in puppet play, it will by now be clear that there must be a growing demand for the puppeteer with acting skill to complement that of manipulation. In parallel there is a growing demand for actors who can manipulate a puppet. In my experience few vocational puppeteers are natural actors, though they may well be able to dance, sing, speak lines intelligently, and so on. Historically, most have not entered the profession to be a performer on a stage, often preferring to remain actually or metaphorically hidden. It has already been pointed out that actors can be equally inadequate when asked to animate a puppet. There is a gap between the necessary talents of the traditionally trained actors, whose instrument is their own physique and personality, and the necessary talents of the traditional puppeteers, whose instrument is a figure, a character that is an extension of themselves, their hands and/or body, with a personality and appearance unlike him or herself. The actor must be able to interpret a verbal text, to represent the psychological makeup of a character via changes of facial expression (largely), whereas the facial expression of the puppet has been painted or sculpted so that its character is apprehended mainly through gait, clothing and gesture. Thus, if a producer demands actors who know how to operate a puppet, or puppeteers who can act, he or she has, up to the time of writing, been looking for a rarity.

Required to operate a puppet, actors, dancers or singers occasionally discover a hitherto unrealized skill, (this applies most often to dancers, used as they are to the strict control of physique and gesture). Latent talent reveals itself as soon as any performer handles a figure, in the instinctive neutralizing of their own 'presence' as their vitality is transferred to the puppet. Many performers are surprised to find how demanding puppet animation is, mentally and physically. The designer Tina Bicât, after close study undertaken for her excellent book *Puppets and Performing Objects* says:

> Actors present *themselves* onstage [my emphasis]. They may be disguised and adopting a character far from their own, but they are looking through their own eyes at the audience and hearing with their own ears. Actors must be self-conscious [in order] to perform. They have to be certain that all eyes are drawn to them [...]
>
> The puppet is selfless and breathes only with the help of its animator. The actor must discard the stability of his or her own body and learn to look through the puppet's eyes, hear through its ears and breathe for it. [...] The actor can believe in, and in many ways become, another person. It is one step further in the process to send this belief down your arm and into an inanimate object in order to make it, not yourself, the star of the show. It requires a rearrangement of many of your instincts as a performer. (Bicât, 2007: 110–11)

There is much that the actor can learn from acquaintance with puppet play. In 1921 Edward Gordon Craig, always devoted to the arts of puppetry, wrote an essay named 'Puppets and Poets' claiming the puppet was both 'the ABC of the actor' and 'the actor's primer'. He recommended the puppet as 'an example of the perfect distillation of human movement and form. Every actor should keep a puppet at hand in everyday life, so as to learn from it incessantly' (Craig, 1921: 18).

I contend – as did George Bernard Shaw – that as a theatre discipline, the animation and manipulation of a puppet should be a mandatory discipline taught in any modern programme of performer-training. Actors learn from the puppet's disassociation from any superfluous and intrusive emotion, in the constraints of its physicality and therefore in an economy of movement; they learn about the submission of their own personality to that of the character they are playing. The puppet has no ego to shed, no self-consciousness. The point is elegantly made in the 1810 essay *On The Marionette Theatre* by Heinrich von Kleist, included in almost every treatise on the art form, including this one, in the chapter on the aesthetics of puppetry.

In stylistic contrast to this approach and as further illumination for a theatre of animated objects, I have appended to this chapter a vivid account of a puppeteer-creator's pleasure and challenge in a solo performance with objects, by the French pedagogue, puppeteer and director Jean-Louis Heckel.

FURTHER READING

Batchelder, M. (1948) *The Puppet Theatre Handbook*, London: H. Jenkins.

Bensky, Roger-Daniel (1969) *Structures Textuelles de la Marionnette de Langue Française*, Paris: Editions A-G Nizet.

Craig, Edward Gordon (1921) *Puppets and Poets, The Chapbook – a monthly miscellany,* no.20, London: The Poetry Bookshop.

Curci, Rafael (2002) *De los objetos y otras manipulaciones titiriteras,* Buenos Aires: Instituto Nacional de Teatro and Universidad de Buenos Aires.

Knight, Malcolm (ed.) (1992) 'Proceedings of the Soviet/British Puppetry Conference, Glasgow, November 1989', *Contemporary Theatre Review,* 1, 1.

Margolies, Eleanor (ed.) (2009) *Theatre Materials,* London: Centre of Excellence in Training for Theatre, Central School of Speech and Drama.

Pasqualino, Antonio (1978) *L'Opera dei Pupi,* Palermo: Sellerio.

Plowright, Poh Sim (2002) *Mediums, Puppets and the Human Actor in the Theatres of the East,* Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press.

Schechner, Richard, (1991) 'The Canon', *TDR: The Drama Review* 35, 4.

Tillis, Steve (1996) 'The Actor Occluded: Puppet Theatre and Acting Theory' *Theatre Topics,* 6, 2, 109–119.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER I

The following was written by Jean-Louis Heckel in 1993. Heckel founded a company called NADA which played a form of object theatre of original invention. He was appointed head of studies of the Ecole Supérieure Nationale des Arts de la Marionnette (ESNAM) at the Institut International de la Marionnette (I.I.M.) in Charleville-Mézières, and is also artistic head of La Nef, a training and producing centre in Paris. I have translated it from the French and have M. Heckel's permission to reproduce it, but neither of us remembers where or whether it has been published before.

TOWARDS A LUDIC DIALECTIC by Jean-Louis Heckel

Seated in the darkness, silent, attentive, impatient, they have come into this auditorium to be told a story. A new adventure, another fable, an old tale revisited, a poem, some silent moments, some images – but above all, a story.

So, I tell them a story. But I move into it with great speed: I rise up, my mouth makes the sound of wind, then a storm, then I take a twig and draw a map with it across the stage, I slide a cushion under my shirt to become fat, I borrow a scarf and become a magician. It's as simple as child's play. But the further you go into the action, the more the simplicity is perceived to be rich with digressions and transformations. My stick and my staff become a character, the cushion a mountain, my wind noises a dialogue … Little by little I am elaborating a world of objects that surround me, markers on the story of my journey. My imaginary characters become real before my eyes, and start to challenge me. With almost nothing I learn to use my body, my imagination, to express anything, to tell everything.

I renew my pleasure in play, I stop my cinema, my personal comedy, and start to make theatre. To bring the spectator into my world – sometimes even, when the show is success, into a whole new universe – I am working exclusively with two tools: the performer (body and voice) and the object (a thing manipulated on the stage, under the lights).

The author

It is impossible to play without the body. Thus the player starts by warming up his muscles, stretching his limbs; he practises control over the breath which will carry his voice, learns that certain gestures will provoke certain sensations, that each attitude he strikes will make resonances within a space, that each movement has a colour, a motivation and a purpose. We are talking about a gymnastic that is as much mental as physical. I articulate my body and my mind to reconstitute their unity. This is the first manipulation. If I do not master this prime tool, I cannot hope to aspire to my role as manipulator. That is why I cannot conceive of a puppeteer who would not be a performer, and even a distinct actor. At some stage he will make use of mask, mime, verse. He is the supreme performer, in that he should be capable not only of incarnating a character, but also of giving life to a piece of cloth or paper to make it into an animal, a person and so on.

The object

Once this first tool has been mastered (but it will always need work) it is necessary to make everything from nothing. Far from apologizing for a 'poor theatre' (a phrase now sadly pejorative) the 'nothing' is a question of choice and of artistic exactitude. To every text, every theme, there belongs a certain material. There is a strange alchemy between a story and its base matter. To the unity at the heart of a theatre text, be it libretto, drama or adaptation, there is a corresponding unity of form specific to each story. This might be stones and goatskins; vegetables (Ubu); an edible set (Hansel and Gretel). The object is more than a single element, it is one of a collection of materials that corresponds to an aesthetic statement, and also to the dramaturgy. It frames the improvisational work, an irreversible constraint. The constant resistance of the material forces the actor and the director into a constant look-out for the incongruous, the irresistible, the unconscious chance. In this risky world the decor, the costumes, lighting, sound – all should be onstage from the first day of rehearsals. The intellectual possibilities and the dramaturgical development cannot be effected without the concrete bases. One could compare this work to the starting point of a jazz musician who only discovers the joy of real freedom after absorbing and integrating a mountain of constraints.

The player manipulates the object, the object manipulates the player: it is a demanding dialectic, but a ludic one, a game of constant comings and goings in which the director plays the part of umpire, of leader of the game. Once it has 'taken' he has nothing more to do than to efface himself and leave things to the lonely performer-manipulators. At the point when he can no longer separate the actor from the manipulator, the gamble is won. Puppet production, theatre of figures, theatre of objects, spectacle: no more insistence on labels, categories. You learn to unlearn, to forget stereotypes, niceties of language; you whittle away and sandpaper down until you have found the mythologic figures which will, at last, lead us into the story.

So then, seated in the darkness …

Index

actor 6, 14, 15, 21, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 37, **91–95**, 119, 131, 135, 138, 143, 171, 178
Africa 7, 9, 102, 103, 116, 118, 131, 141, 145, 162
  Egypt 46, 148, 162
Americas 162
  Argentina 100, 141
  Brazil 1, 87, 141
  Canada 116
  Caribbean 87
  Guatemala 147
  Mexico 147
  USA 101, 146–7, 168
Amsden, Meg 101
Andersen, Hans C. 67, 117, 118
Artaud, Antonin 98, 101
Asia 1, 62, 99, 128, 131
  Burma 52
  Cambodia 29, 66
  China 9, 53, 65, 100, 131, 162, 170
  Cuba 170
  India 52, 65, 73, 100, 148, 170
  Indonesia 1, 9, 29, 63, 66, 100, 118, 146, 162, 163
  Japan 1, 9, 29, 44, 45, 71, 73, 100, 132, 146, 162, 168
  South Africa 162
  South Korea 1
  Sri Lanka 162
  Thailand 63, 66
  Vietnam 72
Athénée 99
Australasia 1, 162
  New Zealand 162
automaton/a 3, 35, 39, 46, 47, 135, 138, 148

Badiou, Maryse 5, 6
Baird, Bil 150, 168
Baixas, Joan 100
Baker, Rene 94
Baldwin, Peter 69
Bardsley, Julia 113
Barker, Howard 7, 80, 81, 102
Barthes, Roland 73, 121, 132, 136
Bass, Eric 13, 101
Batchelder, Marjorie 168
Baty, Gaston 165
Bauhaus 43
Beckett, Samuel 142
Bell, John 154, 165, 168
Benavente, Jacinto 23, 97
Bensky, R-D 18, 126
Bergman, Hjalmar 167
Bernus, A. von 63
Bersudsky, E. 44
  Sharmanka 44
Bicât, Tina 31, 62, 86, 90, 91
Binyon, Helen 173
Birri of Anatolia 64
Blackham, Olive 74, 95
black light (ultra-violet) **69–70**
black theatre 69, 70
Blake, Quentin 110
Blind Summit company 84
Blok, Aleksander 166
Blumenthal, Eileen 3
Boerwinkel, Henk 89
Bogatyrev, Petr 129
Böhmer, Gunter 49, 58, 62
Bonecos de Sto. Aleixo 52
Bontempelli, Massimo 167
booth 10, 89, 138, 149, 152, 159
Bouchor, Maurice 166
Bourek, Zlatko 71
Boyle, Kirsty 45
Bradshaw, Richard 18, 66
Brann, Paul 168
Bread & Puppet company 11, 87, 88, 128, 141
Brecht, Bertolt 30, 73, 130, 134
Briciole company 68
bridge 10

Brook, Peter 14, 82, 142
Browne, Maurice 168
Bryusov, V. 43
Büchner, Georg 7, 97
Buckmaster, Sue 83–84, 94, 101
Bufano, Remo 169
Bunraku 1, 18, 29, 45, 71, 72, 116, 130, **132–136**, 168
Bunraku-style **70–73**
Burkett, Ronnie **104–107**, 108
Buschmeyer, Lothar 126, 129
Bussell, Jan 169

cabaret 8, 68, 73, 137, 167, 168, 174
cabinet theatres 152, 153
Calliès, Grégoire. 7
Cannon, Andy 108
Cannon Hill Theatre 11
Caricature Theatre of Wales 11
Čapek, Karel 97
Carter, Angela 7, 99
Cervantes, Miguel de 99
Charlemagne 151
Chase, Michael 38
Chesterton, G.K. 69
children 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 12, 25, 26, 56, 60, 61, 69, 80, 101, **109–111**, 112, 128, 151, 156, 163, 170, 174, 175, 178
cinema 1, 12, 77, 137, 138, 139, 140, 165, 166, 169
circus 4, 6, 131, 137, 151, 162, 165, 169
Cixous, Hèlène 92
Claudel, Paul 97
Clist, Sophia 109
commedia 1, 4, 8, 35, 36, 39, 43, **153–156**, 161, 164
Communist era 11, **169–172**
Complicité 12, 84, 116
Connor, Steve 46
controls 5, 13, 14, 22, 52, 53, 73
Cope, Wendy 99
Corsario company 70
Craig, E.Gordon. 10, 31, 43, 98, 121, 126, 137, 141, 142, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169
critical evaluation 4, 9
Crouch, Julian 69, 85, 93, 175
Currell, David 67, 74, 90, 96, 162
Curry, Tim 86

Dahl, Roald 110
dalang 9, 66, 162
dance 1, 4, 6, 30, 141, 175
Da Silva, Antonio Jose 158–159
Dean, Anthony 96, 125
death 7, 14, 97, 142, 155, 156, 162
Deleuze, G. 7
Delphic Oracle 46
Deux Mondes company 116
devising 114–5
directing, directors **82–85**, **141–143**
Don Juan 7, 167, 171
Don Quixote 112
Doran, Greg 2
Down, Mark 84
DRAK company 51, 112, 138, 174
dramaturgy 3, 4, 6, 9, 15, 26, 33, 80, 81, 93, **97–120**, 134, 174
Dvořák, Jan 172

editors: reference books, journals
  Baraitser, Marion 101, 102, 103
  Fisher, J. 3
  Hurlin, Dan 104
  Margolies, Eleanor 28
  Max Prior, Dorothy 104
  Neal, L. and Fenton, R 118
  Staub, Nancy L. 14, 24, 27, 29
  Taylor, Jane 77, 79, 82
Eichler, Fritz 126
electronic media **16–17**, 91
  animatronics 17
  computer graphics 17
  motion capture 17
  stop-motion 17, 138
  virtual puppet 17
Enckell, Johanna 101, 103
Enlightenment 46, 159
Eruli, Brunella 121, 140, 141
Europe 1, 24, 41, 128, 146, 149, 153, 162, 167, 167, 169, 170
  Belarus 153
  Belgium 151, 161
  Czechoslovakia 104, 172, 174
  Czech Republic 160
  Denmark 165
  'Eastern Europe' 9, 11, 24, 172, 174
  Finland 101
  France 2, 85, 151, 159, 161, 163, 167

  Germany 100, 101, 129, 130, 141, 151, 161, 160
  Greece 148, 149
  Netherlands 151, 172
  Italy 51, 52, 85, 149, 151, **154–156**, 161, 167
  Poland 5, 24, 153, 154, 172, 174
  Portugal 52
  Russia 24, 55, 60, 124, 168, 170
  Scotland 1
  Spain 12, 87, 151, 163, 167, 168, 173
  Sweden 101, 167
  Ukraine 153
fairy tale 6, 7, 53, 171
Fantoccini 9, 98, **159–160**, 166
Faulty Optic company 80, 85, 100
Faust, Faustus 7, 103, 167
festivals 1, 13, 25
Field, Rachael 102
Fielding, Henry 99
figure, figurative 4, 14, 18
film 2
fine art 1, 25, 95, 131
Flowers, Wayland 48, 61
folk tale 6, 7, 162
  Grimm 7
Foote, Samuel 99, 126
Foreman, Richard 141, 142
Foucault, M. 7
Fox, John and Sue 87
Furse, Anna 27

Garrett, T. Butler 77
Genty, Philippe 174
Ghelderode, Michel de 97, 99
giant puppets 11
Gioco Vita company 66, 85
Glass, Philip 116
glove/hand puppets 50, 52, **58–62**, 74, 81, 89, 98, 105, 131, 149, 150, 152, 154, 157, 161, 163, 165, 170
Goethe, J.W. von 67
Goldowski, Boris 145
Graves, Robert 109
Green Ginger company 164
Green, T. and Pepicello, W.J. 22
Guignol 8, **163–4**

Handspring company 77, 78, 82, 102
Harlequin, Arlecchino 35, 161, 164, 165
Heckel, Jean-Louis 31, **32–34**
Henson, Jim 48
Hoffman, E.T.A. 43
Hogarth, Ann 169
Hogarth Puppets company 169
Holden, John 159
hopi 146–7
humanettes 8, **67–68**
Hytner, Nicholas 79

Ibsen, Henryk 143
illusion 6, 27, 28, 30

Jarry, Alfred 97, 167
Jones, Basil 77, 79, 82, 83, 103
Jonson, Ben 99, 126
Joseph, Helen 40
Jouy, Jules 167, 168
Jurkowski, Henryk 3, 8, 10, 18, 19, 22, 42, 43, 52, 64, 99, 100, 113, 126, 132, 146, 148, 150, 153, 154, 155

Kabuki 45
Kantor, Tadeusz 14, 20, 99, 141, 142
Kaplin, Stephen 16
Karaghiosis 64, 65, 162
Karagöz 62, 65, 162
Karakuri ningyo 44
Kavrakova-Lorenz, K. 130
Kentridge, William 85, 102, 141
Ketturkat, Peter 19
Kilian, Adam 172
Killekyata 65
Kjellin, Gösta 101
Kleist, H. von 31, 43, 121–125, 126, 139, 142, 160
Kobialka, Michal 99
Kohler, Adrian 78, 83, 103
Kramer, Harry 44
Krofta, Josef 112, 174
Kuruma-ningyo 71

language 1, 76, 119, 141, 142, 143, 173
Law, Jane Marie 45, 71, 146
Lecoq, Jacques 37, 39
Lee, Miles 14, 53, 96
Lefort, Stephanie 163
legend 6, 53
Leierwood, Greg 88

Leith, Christopher 7, 174
Lepage, Robert 82, 141, 143
Lesage, Alain-Rene 126
lighting 4, 69, 85, **89–91**
Little Angel Theatre 2, 15, 28, 85, 111, 174
Lorca, F. García 97, 99, 167, 168

Maeterlinck, Maurice 97, 167
Magnin, Charles 161
Magritte, René 101
Mahabharata 7, 63, 100, 162
Malik, Jan 109
Malkin, Michael 146
Mander, Mark 8, 68
manipulation 9, 14, 17, 20, 25, 28, 30, 49, 51, 66, 82, 85, 95, 130
marionette **50–54**, 165
  rod 50, 51, 52, 150, 157, 166
  string 50, 52, 159, 169
mask 4, 6, **35–39**, 48, 131, 136, 138, 164, 175
material 6, 85, 94, 130, 174
Mayhew, Henry 164–5, 168
McBurney, Simon 84
McCormick, John 52, 159, 161, 165
McDermott, Phelim 69, 93, 175
McPharlin, Paul 168
Medrington, Richard 108
Melodrama 8, 69, 129, 162, 165, 175
Mélois, Barbara 85
Meschke, Michael 101, 126
Meyerhold, Vsevolod 141
Michener, James 41
Millar, Mervyn 79, 82, 83
Milne, Geoffrey 85
mime 4, 131, 137, 175
Mitchell, Adrian 99
Mnouchkine, Ariane 92, 116
model theatre 69
Modernism 2, 10, 43, 97, 98, 121, 126, 137, **166–169**
Moholy Nagy, L. 43
Molnár, F. 43
Momix company 70
Morach, Otto 167
Morpurgo, Michael 22, 77, 78
Mottram, Stephen 100
Mourguet, Laurent 163–4
Movingstage Marionettes 80
muppet 48
music Hall 43, 169
Mydlarska-Kowal, Anna 28
myth and legend 7, 165

Nang 63
Nelson, Victoria 2, 28, 41, 46, 150, 178
Neuville, Lemercier de 99, 161
ningyo joruri 9, 71, 73, 100, 130, 132
noh 45
Novarina, V. 143

object 4, 6, 10, 13, 15, 18–22, 95, 128, 130, 137, 138, 139, 140, 174
Obraztsov, Sergei 87, 126, 170, 171, 172, 174
Okamoto, Hoichi 100
opera 1, **157–159**, 175
  Abbatini 158
  Accaioli 52
  Gluck 158
  Haydn 52
  Mozart 52, 158
  Rospigliosi 158
  Teixeras 158
O'Rourke, Peter 15, 64, 111

paper theatre, see 'toy'
parody 6, 8, 52, 137, 150, 158, 171
Paska, Roman 7, 26, 67, 121, 136
Pavis, Patrice 37
Pepys, Samuel 52, 156
Perkins, Juliet 159
Petrushka **170–171**
Philpott, A.R. (Panto) 50, 109
Philpott, Violet 80, 109, 174
phlyax comedy 149
Picasso 167
Pirandello, Luigi 113
Pitman, Mark 38
Pocci, Count 161
Podehl, Enno 21
Poe, Edgar Allen 67, 97
Potheinos 149
Proschan, Frank 6
Pulcinella 1, 8, 35
Punch 1, 8, 52, 65, 118, 135, 152, 157, 161, 164, , 165

Pupi 8, 50, 151
  Orlando 50
puppet-making 3, 25, 49
  Currell, D. 49
  Böhmer, D. 49
  Fettig, H. 49
  Fraser, P. 49
  Whanslaw, H.W. 49
  Wright, J. 49

Quay Brothers 85

Ramayana 7, 62, 63, 100, 118
Rampolokeng, Lesego 102
Recoing, Alain 20
reference journals
  Animations Online 3
  Puck (in French) 3
  Puppetry Int'national 3
  Puppet Notebook 3
  Total Theatre 3
religion 5, 6, 7, 97, 128, 149, 153, 163
  Animism 5, 145
ritual 1, 5, 6, 7, 35, 128, 147, 148
Rivière, Henri 167
rod puppet 8, 70, 74, 172, 174
Roser, Albrecht 53
  Clown Gustaf 53
Royal de Luxe 88
Royal National Theatre 1, 77, 78, 79, 174
Royal Shakespeare Co 2, 7, 83

Salis, Rudolph 167
Sand, Georges 161
Sand, Maurice 99, 161, 166
Sandglass company 101
Sarg, Tony 169
Sartori, A. and D. 39
satire 6, 8, 167
scenography, design 2, 4, 5, 73, 81, **85–87**, 90, 131, 170
Schlemmer, Oskar 43, 141
Schmid, 'Papa' 161
Schönbein, Ilka 100
Schulz, Bruno 52
Schumann, Peter 11, 24, 87, 128
Schwartz, Evgeny 52, 113
schools, see training
screen 10, 62
sculpture 6, 11, 87, 158, 178
  Bernini, Giovanni 158
Segel, Harold 43, 97, 145, 166, 167, 168
Shaw, G.B. 31
Séraphin, 'Feu' 162
set design (see scenography)
shadows 6, **62–67**, 85, 90, 117, 118, 162, 163, 167
Shakespeare 7, 12, 52, 83, 113–4
shaman 11, 24, 27
Silk, Dennis 20, 80, 103, 128
slapstick 157
Smith, Barry 72, 173
Smith, Beccy 104
social status 10
Soehnle, Frank 141
sound 4, 5, 81, **91**
Speaight, G.V. 151, 152, 155, 157, 175
spirit, spiritual 1, 5, 28, 35, 128, 146, 148, 178
stages 89
Steadman, Ian 42
Stokowski, Leopold 172
street theatre **87–88**
Strindberg, August 113
Stoppard, Tom 71
swazzle 59, 60, 156, 171
symbolism 36, 166, 167

tabletop **70–73**, 74, 79
Tam-Tam Objektentheater 100
Tartana company 12
Taymor, Julie 29, 86, 141
Taylor, Paul 114
techniques **49–74**
television 2, 12, 26, 27, 173
Thanegi, Ma 52
Theatre-Rites company 83, 101, 109
Themba, Can 14
Tilakasiri, Jayadeva 65, 162
theatrum mundi 42
Tiller, Jim 160
Tillis, Steve 16, 22, 126, 130
Toone 8, 51
touring 25–26
toy or paper theatre **68–69**, 165, 175

training and schools 3, 4, 24, 25, 91, 94, 173, 174
  Central School of Speech and Drama 3, 80
  Soviet schools 171
Tranter, Neville 100
Travis, Mandy 64
Tübingen company 101
Twist, Basil 53

UNIMA 19, 169, 173

Valle-Inclán, Ramón de 97, 167
variety 42–43, 73, 165, 166
Venus and Adonis 2, 7, 116
ventriloquism 35, 43, **46–48**
Vitez, Antoine 20, 82
Vitéz László 152
Voisard, Claire 81

Waschinsky, Peter 30
Watson, Nenagh 102
Waszkiel, Halina 29
wayang 1, 29, 63, 118, 163
Wilde, Oscar 67
Wilkowski, Jan 109
Williams, Margaret 18
Wilson, Peter J. 85
Wilson, Robert 82, 141, 142, 143
Wright, John 49, 55, 74, 174
Wright, Lyndie (Parker) 2, 55, 56, 174
Wyspianski, Stanisław 97
Yeats, W.B. 166, 168
Zaloom, Paul 19