



THE BECKETT CIRCLE LE CERCLE DE BECKETT

Newsletter of the Samuel Beckett Society

In Memoriam: Harold Pinter (1930-2008)

When Steve Gale of Kentucky State University and I began publishing *The Pinter Review* at The University of Tampa in 1987, I invited Samuel Beckett to contribute to the first volume. In a handwritten letter which I treasure, he responded that regretfully, "I am in no fit state to write an essay worthy of Harold Pinter's work and can only say how greatly I admire it and with what pleasure I learn of this tribute to his achievement." That expression of admiration and pleasure serves well as what I think might be Samuel Beckett's epitaph for his friend, Harold Pinter.

There have been many comparisons of the two playwrights. The late Martin Esslin quickly linked them together in his book on the theatre of the absurd, and those concepts offered an early paradigm for the understanding of Pinter's drama. As a way of honoring Harold Pinter, may I suggest a few other ways in which I believe the works of these two men intersect before I turn to some more personal thoughts

on a man I admire as a writer and cared for deeply as a friend.

As he did for so many, Samuel Beckett opened up a sense of possibility, a different sensibility in both the novel and the play, a new relationship to audience, theatre not as "about" but as a ritual celebration of the finally unknowable and maybe unsayable human mystery. In his excellent biography, *The Life and Work of Harold Pinter*, Michael Billington quotes Pinter's reaction to first coming on a fragment of *Watt* and then reading *Murphy*: "What I seemed to be confronted with was a writer inhabiting his innermost self. The book was also funny...but what impressed me was something about the quick of the world. It was Beckett's own world but had so many references to the world we inhabit" (43). That influence first appeared not in the theatre, but along with that of James Joyce, in Pinter's youthful novel *The Dwarfs*. There, especially in the unedited version in the British Library, is a Pinter work with no concession to audiences, abrupt jumps and shifts of style, a freedom to experiment, the presence of the unspoken beneath an inadequate language, and above all, in his character Len, the difficulty of physical or intellectual movement in a shifting

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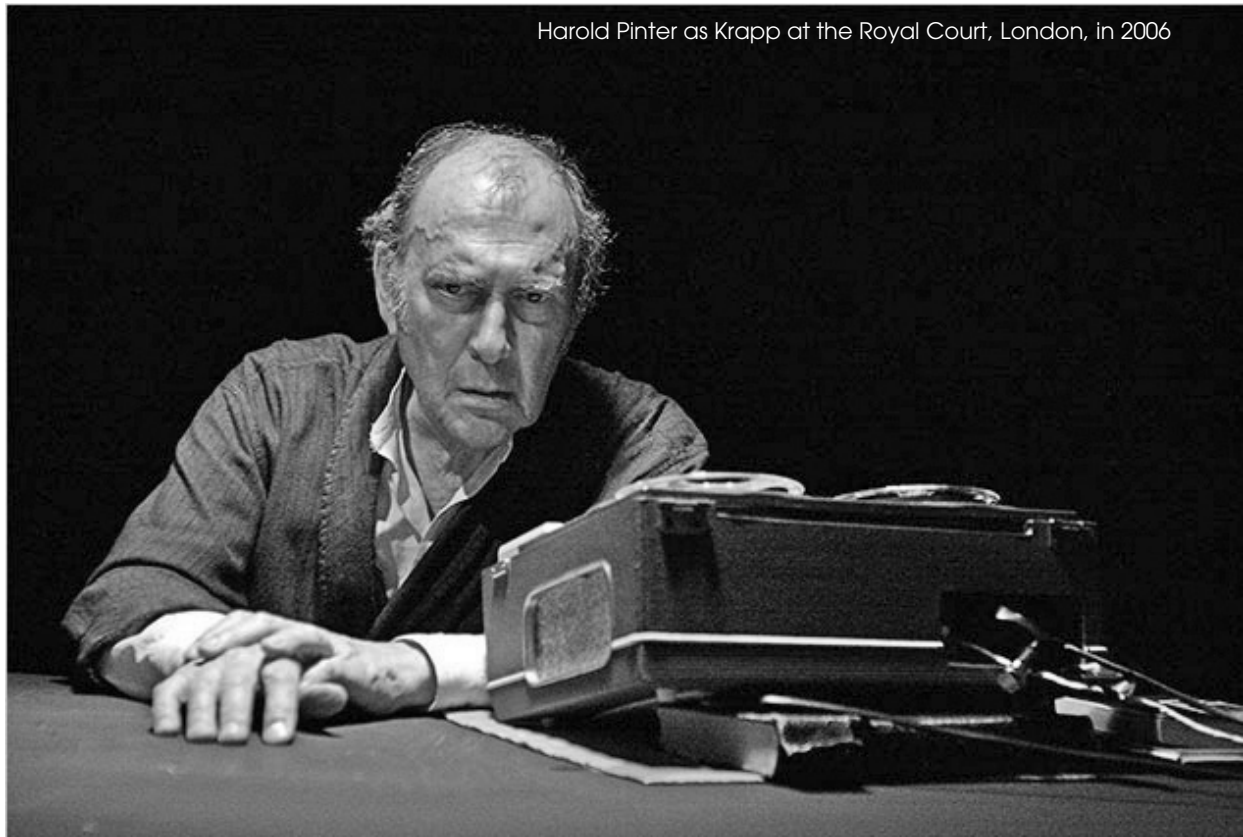
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Harold Pinter as Krapp at the Royal Court, London, in 2006



and finally unknowable universe. Here, from *The Dwarfs*, is Len speaking:

No. You think you know something about me but you don't. Do you know what I am? I'm the ragamuffin who vomits in the palace. There's a dryrot in me. Rot everywhere. What about the worm that ate a building down? That's what it's like. I could stay in this armchair for ever. Or in bed... I could stay there, always. Have people come and feed me. They could do that easily enough. Yes, you don't know. You don't know what you've got in this room. A sack of old bones. But can't you understand? I can't even commit suicide. It's got to be a decision. That's an action. I can't act. I'm not justified in committing suicide. It would be worthless, meaningless. Suicide isn't meaningless. It's an action. That's what it is. (71-72).

In such an unknowable world, the individual consciously or otherwise constructs personal narratives as lifeline and more secure shelter. What Pinter criticism has frequently described as a territorial battle within a room may often be more usefully understood as conflict of competing narratives, as indicated by the preceding quotation in which "room" and "outlook" are similar. Here Pinter, like Beckett, takes us into our post-modern world. In both, the dark humor arises in great part from the absurd inadequacy of any narrative when pitted against the larger situation which audiences grasp more fully than the characters. From Beckett's works I think now especially of characters like Pozzo and Lucky in *Waiting for Godot*, Mouth in *Not I* or Winnie in *Happy Days*, to name just a few; from Pinter's work, of Davies in *The Caretaker*, Spooner in *No Man's Land* and even Rebecca in *Ashes to Ashes*.

One of Harold Pinter's many achievements in theatre is to carry Beckett's insight regarding finally inadequate narratives into more familiar social situations. Most of his plays seem more realistic than Beckett's, beginning as they do in increasingly more easily recognizable circumstances which elicit more immediate audience identification. But such identification is usually frustrated because, since no narrative is found to be adequate, the real action simply stops. Like Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape*, so Pinter's *Moonlight* may be discussed in terms of inadequate memory narratives in the direct face of death. *The Homecoming* reveals a woman's search for a narrative and space in which she can bring together her physical, intellectual and spiritual being which the dominant male narratives have separated. The reverse chronology of *Betrayal* highlights the failures of accepted narratives of romantic love.

Behind all such works of Harold Pinter, however, lies a very Beckettian sense of the illusionary nature and comic inadequacy of all this, even as there is for Pinter a wry admiration for the attempt. It comes out in lines like that of Goldberg in *The Birthday Party*:

And you'll find – that what I say is true.

Because I believe that the world....(Vacant)...

Because I believe that the world....(Desperate)...

BECAUSE I BELIEVE THAT THE WORLD....
(LOST)...

Pinter also admired Beckett's objectivity in regard to his characters and, I believe, sought to achieve it himself. In Turin, Italy, on the occasion of his receiving the Europe Theatre Prize, I talked with him about his acclaimed role in *Krapp's Last Tape*. "He [Beckett] wrung every ounce of sentimentality out of it," Pinter said admiringly. There is a certain distance in both their theatres. They love their characters, as Pinter often said, but it is a love expressed in objective knowing as far as knowing can go, an attentive, intellectual watching, a removed engagement often expressed in the humorous and even the ridiculous, the tragicomic.

Privately I have many fond memories of Harold Pinter, and will mention a few of them only to show how different he was from the angry person many felt him to be. I think first of his great kindness. When Martin Esslin recommended I read the as-yet unpublished manuscript of Pinter's early novel, *The Dwarfs*, for an essay I was publishing, Pinter had his secretary hand me the only existing copy to take away and bring back when I was finished. When we talked over lunch about the scholars who would not have the funds to get to London to use the archive of Pinter manuscripts in the British Library, he allowed me to publish in *The Pinter Review* the successive drafts of *The Homecoming*.

When *The Pinter Review* began to be published, Harold was grateful for what he called the journal's "serious attention to my work." He felt that for the most part the British press, with a few notable exceptions like *The Guardian's* Michael Billington, wasted far too much print on his personal affairs and treated his plays superficially.

Starting with *Moonlight* he began sending me his plays and screenplays when he finished them, before they were produced, and, as I quickly found out, expected a thorough, intelligent commentary in return. *Moonlight* is one of Pinter's more difficult plays and, flattered and wanting to write back clever things, I sat on the script for two weeks. On a Sunday morning while I was out, the phone rang at home. When my late wife, Marie, answered, Harold boomed in his stage voice, "This is Harold Pinter, and I want to know what Frank thinks about my goddamn play." Marie assured him that we both liked it, that I would return the call as soon as my church devotions were over, and then skillfully turned the conversation to our recent lunch with him in London. Needless to say, my replies to successive scripts were more prompt.

About his own view of the meaning of his work, Harold never gave anything away. His response to five or six pages of critique was usually something like, "I am glad you like my play" or "Thank you for your interesting comments." Only twice did he hint that I had "gotten it." When he wrote just once that I had a "golden understanding" of one of his political plays, I was ecstatic for weeks. He told me after a lunch at which we both had drunk quite enough that *The Pinter Review* would really come of age when we could print that one of his plays was "a piece of crap." I never took that seriously, and, as a matter of

fact, when I did publish an article recently that was somewhat critical of him, he returned a line-by-line rebuttal and thanked me for "the rest of the volume."

I last saw Harold Pinter at the Turin ceremonies I mentioned earlier. He was frail, for one of the sad ironies of his life was that just when he was receiving the honors of that and the Nobel Prize in Literature, his health was declining. His spirits, though, were high. I shall never forget him waving at all of the cultural representatives of the European Union the cane he had used to walk on stage, reprimanding them for not understanding the ultimate powerlessness of military power.

Nor shall I forget sitting with him and a few close friends in the hotel bar until the early hours of the morning. He was more open than I had ever seen him be. When he finally tired and had to leave, he hugged Marie and me and the others, looking into us with deep, piercing eyes.

I know that mine was a friendship at the fringes of his life, that he was most at ease with old friends and fellow actors like Jeremy Irons, who had flown over to Turin from England that evening just to read from Harold's work at the ceremonies. Pinter's friendship was an unearned grace given me, one that, with my memories of him, and his work, will always be a part of my life.

--Francis Gillen

Launch of Beckett's Letters, Volume One



An all-star gathering of Beckettians in Dublin for the *Letters* launch

On Wednesday evening, February 18, scholars, friends and relatives of Samuel Beckett gathered in the Long Room of Trinity College Dublin to celebrate the launch of *The Letters of Samuel Beckett, Volume 1, 1929-1940*. The lighting of the Old Library may have been subdued, but the atmosphere of celebration and elation was palpable. The editors, Martha

Dow Fehsenfeld and Lois More Overbeck, in conjunction with associate editors George Craig and Dan Gunn, greeted the large network of Beckett's friends and family who supported the project, in particular Edward Beckett and Deirdre Sinclair Hamilton, and the scholars and graduate researchers who assisted the development of this ambitious four volume edition. Celeste Schenk, President of the American University of Paris joined the large contingent from Emory University, where the project is based, including Ronald Schuchard and Geraldine Higgins of the English department, and Rosemary Magee, Secretary and Vice President of the University. Beckett scholars Anna McMullan of Queens University Belfast and Everett Frost were joined by Beckett director Walter Asmus, Dennis Kennedy of the Samuel Beckett Centre at Trinity College, Barbara Wright of the Dept. of French at TCD, and Nicholas Allen of NUI Galway. Brian Cliff of the School of English at TCD and Jennifer Jeffers of Cleveland State University were among those representing the former graduate student researchers who worked on the project.

Trinity Librarian, Robin Adams, opened the proceedings by introducing Andrew Brown, Director of Humanities at Cambridge University Press, who recounted the genesis and development of the project since the early days of 1985 when Beckett appointed Barney Rosset as General Editor and Martha Fehsenfeld as Editor of his letters, with Lois Overbeck appointed subsequently that year. He paid tribute to the tenacity and commitment of the editors and to commissioning editor Linda Bree, and then read a congratulatory statement by

Nobel Prize winner Seamus Heaney who emphasised the vitality and importance of Beckett's letters for scholar and reader alike. George Craig, associate editor of the *Letters*, spoke fulsomely on behalf of the editors, emphasising the transatlantic nature of the project. The launch was brought to a close with a rousing reading by Beckett actor Barry McGovern who brought to life the wit, pathos and energy of Beckett's younger voice. As was entirely fitting for a celebration in honour of Samuel Beckett, the party adjourned to continue the festivities on licensed premises.

--Derval Tubridy

[Editorial Note: Martha Fehsenfeld and Lois Overbeck are available for interviews regarding the *Letters* project. For scheduling information please contact Jonathan Gaugler, Academic Publicist, at (212) 337-6569 or jgaugler@cambridge.org]

Tipperary Town's *Waiting For Godot*

The Gate Theatre's first All Ireland tour was mounted to celebrate its 80th anniversary and to commemorate its origins in the touring theatre tradition. Micheal McLiammoir and Hilton Edwards, members of the Anew McMaster touring company, met for the first time on the steps of the Town Hall, Enniscorthy on the 17th of June 1927 as the company prepared for the opening of their countrywide tour. Within a year, they established the Dublin Gate Theatre and the first production, *Peer Gynt*, opened on the 14th October 1928. Eighty years later the company returns to the philosophy that brought the Gate founders together, honouring McMaster's commitment to national touring.

The company is also celebrating the twentieth anniversary of its first production of *Waiting for Godot*. Produced at the request of Samuel Beckett, directed by Walter Asmus, and designed by Louis le Brocqy, this production has toured all over the world, but never all over Ireland before now. The tour began in Enniscorthy, where the Gate Theatre's founders had first met and ended in Enniskillen where Beckett had attended school. The company visited forty venues around Ireland, playing "for one night only" in each venue, with at least one performance in each of the thirty two counties.

I attended the performance at the Excel Theatre in Tipperary town. The official opening ceremony for the Gate Theatre's historical arrival in our small country town was

held in the Excel Art Gallery. The formalities were performed against a background of costumes, props and other memorabilia from Vic Loving's Touring Variety Show, *Flash Parade*, which had toured the villages and small towns of rural Ireland from the twenties to the sixties. This exhibition had been mounted by the late Vic Loving's granddaughter and its closing date had been arranged to coincide with the arrival at the Excel of another touring company. Parallels and resonances were there for discovery between these two apparently disparate companies.

There was a shared consciousness of something quite enormous about to happen. All patrons had dressed for the occasion in a way which seemed to say "we don't want to be found wanting!" There was a marked presence of people whose interest in theatre might be minimal but whose sense of occasion could not be faulted. The Gate Theatre Company was in town for the first time and everybody who was anybody was going to be seen to be there. All three hundred and seventy seats were booked out well in advance and many would-be attendees were disappointed.

Whether or not this was the audience for whom Beckett had written *Godot* would be decided by the connection the four actors achieved over the course of the performance. Early responses were tentative, but gradually Johnny Murphy as Estragon made the breakthrough and permission to laugh was granted. Barry McGovern's Vladimir remained somewhat distanced for a while longer but had thankfully got accepted before the arrival of Stephen Brennan as Lucky and Alan Stanford as Pozzo. The power expended



Johnny Murphy, Stephen Brennan, Barry McGovern, and Alan Stanford in the Gate's Irish tour of *Godot*.
Photo courtesy of Sasko Lazarov.



by Stephen Brennan was getting through to the upholstery on the seats, never mind the people! It was a superb performance. Alan Stanford is at a disadvantage in rural Ireland because of having had a very long run in an Irish soap. There was almost an audible exhalation when he came on stage. Now at last everyone could relax because they knew this guy! But did they know Pozzo? Another major stumbling block had to be stared down if not got through. After an initial struggle Pozzo was accepted as part of the unyielding puzzle they were expecting from Beckett.

Herein lay the nub of the problem, if problem there be. Attempts were made to explode the myth that Beckett wrote high-brow plays aimed at academics. Dr. Graley Herren gave extensive, informative interviews on this topic, at two local radio stations while on tour with his students in Tipperary, and the positive feedback is still coming. But people who tune in to interviews on Beckett's plays are people who already have some interest and understanding and want to engage. These people, too, came to see *Godot*. But the sustained, sincere applause at the end of the play was not the response of the few drama enthusiasts or Beckett buffs—it was an honest expression of appreciation for the performance of four immensely talented actors who had presented an impeccable performance of *Godot*.

--Nancy Leahy

Beckett International Foundation

BECKETT AT READING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Beckett International Foundation: Notice

The University of Reading has restructured its Library, Museums and Special Collections Services, necessitating a change to the citation of Beckett manuscript material. The general acknowledgement citation remains "Beckett International Foundation, University of Reading," but the abbreviation "RUL" is to be replaced by "UoR" (for example: "UoR MS 3000"). Considering the long tradition of citing material with the abbreviation RUL this change is regrettable, but necessary in the interest of accuracy in the citation of proper location.

Should you have any queries, please contact Dr Mark Nixon (m.nixon@reading.ac.uk).

Beckett Event at Reading, September 2009

A two-day Beckett event will take place at Reading from 25-26 September 2009. Events will include a conference on "Beckett and Animality" (part of Mary Bryden's *Beckett Bestiary* project), an exhibition, and a series of talks. Further information available from Rosemary Crabtree (r.a.crabtree@reading.ac.uk).

Beckett Doctoral Studentship at Reading

There is the possibility of a three-year doctoral studentship being funded at Reading University to begin from September 2009. This would be a collaborative studentship, in which the candidate would use the research resources of both Reading University Archives and the BBC Written Archives Centre (WAC), two miles away, in Caversham. The topic of the PhD will be on some aspect of Beckett and the BBC (radio and television), with supervision and guidance provided by Professor Mary Bryden and the Head of the BBC WAC. If the grant is awarded, recruitment will take place between April and July. We are therefore calling for initial expressions of interest. Contact Mary Bryden (m.bryden@reading.ac.uk).

Beckett at MLA 2008

The Samuel Beckett Society once again sponsored two panels at the Modern Language Association Annual Convention, held December 27-30, 2008, in San Francisco. The first session, "Novel(ist) Pairings: Beckett and Coetzee/Sebald/Naipul," convened on Saturday evening, and the second session, "Local and Global Beckett," met on Sunday morning.

The first session was chaired by Beckett Society executive board member Daniel Katz, who began with an announcement that Michael D'Arcy (Saint Francis Xavier University) would be unable to attend the conference. While the absence of D'Arcy and his presentation on Beckett and Naipaul was certainly regrettable, at least it did allow the other two presenters time to expand upon their papers and entertain additional questions afterward. They both certainly gave us plenty to think and talk about. Anthony Uhlmann (University of Western Sydney) set the standard high with a fine paper on "The 'Ideal Real' in Beckett and the Real in J.M. Coetzee." Uhlmann has been reflecting lately upon the critical legacy of the late Marius Buning, and he set up his argument with some initial thoughts on Buning's application of modern allegory and *via negativa* to understand Beckett's work. Uhlmann pointed out that both allegory and negative theology depend upon systems of doubling, where one set of signs doubles or reflects another set. As he put it in his meditation upon Paul DeMan's "The Rhetoric of Temporality," a Sign A is established in relation to a Sign B, where Sign A is understood as a prior abstraction, and where Sign B gains meaning through reference back to Sign A. In the case of *via negativa*, however, Sign A (the ideal) can only be inferred through its conspicuous absence in Sign B (the represented real). By wedding Buning's categories together, Uhlmann posited the hybrid term "negative allegory," a useful category for studying both Beckett and Coetzee, especially the latter's novel *Foe*.

Robert Reginio (Alfred University) presented the final paper of the session, "Archiving Oblivion in the Novels of Samuel Beckett and W.G. Sebald." The two authors gravitate toward similar characters (aimless wanderers) and themes (particularly failure), though, as Reginio conceded, their approaches to this material often differ radically. Whereas Beckett typically occludes the identifying markers of the "local," Sebald's texts are overdetermined with the particularities of locale, topography, and history. Reginio argued, however, that their deepest affinity lay in their shared concern with marginality, specifically in the relationship of the margin to the center. Proceeding in signature Sebaldian style (first-person anecdote revealing uncanny coincidence), Reginio then shared his own story about an unexpected encounter with Bruce Nauman's video installation "Low Angle Walk (Beckett Walk)," which he saw (during a break at last year's MLA) at Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art. After a long viewing of Nauman's piece, Reginio gradually sensed within the archive an infinitely sustainable compulsion to repeat that outlasts the capacity of individual endurance. This irresolvable tension—between the compulsion to endure repetition

and the impossibility of forever doing so—animates the restless work of both Beckett and Sebald.

On Sunday morning the Beckett Society held its second session, organized and chaired by outgoing president Linda Ben-Zvi. Despite the wretchedly early 8:30am starting time, a large crowd assembled to hear an outstanding talk from the featured speaker, Herbert Blau. Drawing from his forthcoming autobiography *As If*, he appropriately focused upon his early San Francisco years, from the co-founding of The Actor's Workshop of San Francisco with Jules Irving in 1952, through the stormy rehearsals on his first production of *Waiting for Godot*, to the legendary performance of the play at the California State Penitentiary at San Quentin in 1957. Blau entertained the audience for the better part of an hour with humorous anecdotes, surprising revelations, provocative analysis, and hard-won practical insights into Beckett's masterpiece—long before its canonical status was conferred or its welcome reception by an audience assured. Blau confided some of his early uncertainties about the play, including that "there was something about the play that was essentially un-American"—a concern he confided directly to Beckett. He also shared a good deal of his directorial notes from those early rehearsals, effectively recapturing both the thrill and the anxious confusion of setting out into such deep uncharted waters. Best of all, Blau reflected in detail about San Quentin. We all know about that production from Martin Esslin's *Theatre of the Absurd*, but Blau's vivid recreation of the event reminded us of just what a daring and dangerous exploit that particular *Godot* was for the cast. He even intimated that Rick Cluchey—whose life was essentially changed forever by this seminal performance—was actually confined to his cell during *Godot* and only heard it broadcast over the loudspeaker. News to me! But typical of the sort of rare and glimmering revelations Blau illuminated us with throughout the morning.

The executive board plans to follow a similar format for the Society's two sessions at next year's MLA, having one scholarly panel devoted to a subject of deep interest to Beckett scholars, and another session featuring a single speaker with wide cross-disciplinary appeal. One can only hope that the approach yields results as stimulating in Philadelphia as it did in San Francisco.

--Graley Herren



Herbert Blau and Linda Ben-Zvi at MLA 2008 in San Francisco

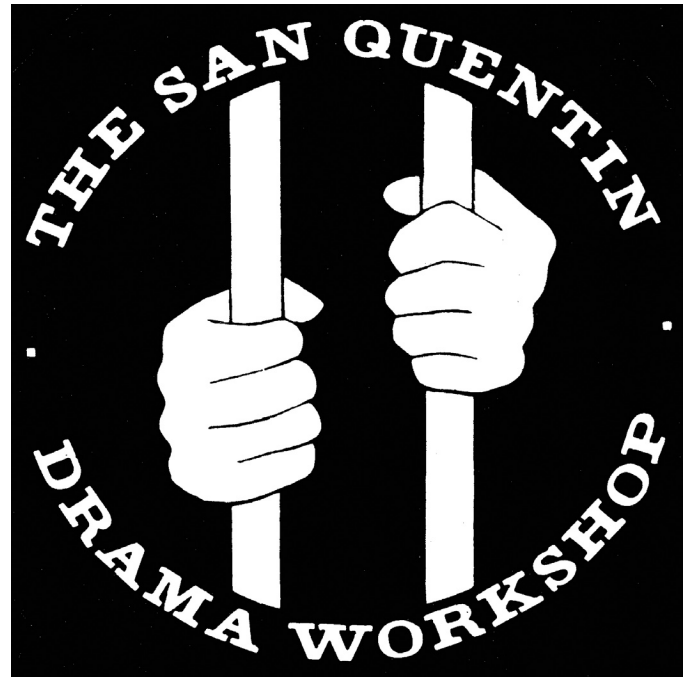
Beckett Behind Bars

In July 2008, I had the privilege of accompanying Rick Cluchey and Nora Masterson (his actress wife) to Volterra (in Italy's Tuscany region), where Rick was invited to give two performances of his San Quentin Drama Workshop production of *Krapp's Last Tape* (as directed by Beckett) at the Teatro Persio Flacco during Volterra's 22nd International Theater Festival (July 14-27).

What makes the Volterra Festival unique (in addition to its beautiful Tuscan setting) is the fact that it is also the site of Italy's most progressive penitentiary. The Fortezza State Prison houses 200 inmates in a magnificent 15th century structure, constructed by the Medicis. Last July was also the 20th anniversary of the prison's own theatrical company (Compagnia della Fortezza), created by Armando Punzo, as well as the 50th anniversary of the SQDW, founded by Rick Cluchey and Alan Mandell. Mandell was a member of the San Francisco Actors Workshop in 1957 when Herbert Blau brought their production of *Waiting for Godot* to San Quentin. 2008 was thus also the 50th anniversary of the SQDW Theatre in Prisons (TIPS) project, dedicated to promote the development of theatrical groups in penal institutions around the world. With SQDW and its legendary Beckett connection as TIPS' flagship company, one could say that the 2008 Volterra Festival was also the occasion to honor 50 years of "Beckett Behind Bars."

The significance of Rick Cluchey's appearing on the scene inside the Fortezza (the day after we arrived in Volterra) was made dramatically clear, when the three of us were ushered into the prison's minuscule laboratory theater where a dozen or so actors of the Compagnia della Fortezza (all serving 20-years-to-life) had congregated to welcome Rick. The encounter between them was extraordinarily moving: there they were, the incarcerated and tattooed fellow actors, in various stages of costume dress (they were preparing for a premiere performance of a work written by A. Punzo), surrounding and embracing Rick, with liberating tears flowing on both sides. Our interpreter explained to us that these imprisoned thespians all regarded Rick as the incarnation of theatre as redemption for lifers such as themselves. Later that afternoon, Rick was invited to serve on a panel, including Fortezza's progressive warden Maria Giampiccolo, to evaluate the progress of theater work in prisons over the past fifty years, with a particular focus on Punzo's work at Fortezza over the past twenty years.

In addition to Rick's two stunning performances of *Krapp's Last Tape* for the general public (July 22 and 23), he and Nora gave three workshops over the next three days. The workshops, focusing on *Come and Go* and *Eh Joe*, were offered for a select group of actors, directors, and therapists involved in prison work in Italy. During our week's stay in Volterra, we were treated to several productions of A. Punzo's Compagnia della Fortezza. The two most notable were an "in-house" workshop performance of *L'Ultimo*



Nastro di Krapp (directed by A. Punzo himself, with Placido Calogero—an inmate—as a hilariously energized Krapp), and a dynamic production of Peter Weiss' *Marat-Sade*, with a cast of 34 inmates.

Two weeks after the Volterra events, Rick proceeded to Glasgow, Scotland, for more of "Beckett Behind Bars." The tour consisted of two performances of *Krapp's Last Tape* at Glasgow's Tron Theater (August 15 and 16) and one for the inmates of Barlinnie Prison (the U.K.'s largest). This 50th anniversary tour of the SQDW / TIPS performances of *Krapp's Last Tape* in Scotland was organized under the auspices of Glasgow's Theatre Nemo (an outreach group founded by Isobel McCue). SQDW / TIPS associate in the U.K., Linda Duncan, paved the way with her invaluable P.R. skills for a highly praised program of performances and constructive encounters with Barlinnie inmates and their warden.

Rick was recently invited to present the SQDW / TIPS project in Sicily in March 2009. He will be featured as special guest for a series of workshops focusing on *What Where* and *Come and Go* to be held at the Casa di Augusta, a prison near Catania, where he will also perform *Krapp's Last Tape*. Plans for a return visit to Glasgow are also already in the works, as are other theatre in prison visits in the U.S. Clearly, "Beckett Behind Bars" is in the wind, as evinced (among others) by Erin Post's discussion of "Godot beyond the Wall" at the "Beckett in Rome" Conference last April, and the April 2008 issue of *PMLA* devoted to the general topic of reforming prisoners through the arts.

For detailed information on the groups discussed in this article please visit their respective websites at www.theSQDW.org and www.TheatreInPrisons.org

--Charles Krance

Lovett in Love: *First Love* in New York

In his introduction to *The Complete Short Prose of Samuel Beckett: 1929-1989*, S. E. Gontarski discusses the ways in which Beckett's "short prose inhabits the margins between prose and poetry, between narrative and drama, and finally between completion and incompletion" (xii). Gontarski continues: "Even as Beckett expanded the boundaries of short fiction, often by contracting the form, his stories retained that oral, performative quality of their Irish roots" (xiii). The performative quality of Beckett's prose has not escaped the attention of the Gare St. Lazare Players Ireland, who presented a theatrical rendition of *First Love* January 29-18, 2009, at the Public Theater in New York, as part of a festival called Under the Radar.

The Gare St. Lazare Players Ireland is a two-person operation run by Judy Hegarty Lovett and Conor Lovett. The former directs; the latter acts. According to the program notes, their first production was a 1996 staging of *Molloy*, and the company's repertoire includes 18 Samuel Beckett works, ranging from *Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, and *The Unnamable* to *Waiting for Godot* and *A Piece of Monologue*, which was guest-directed by Walter Asmus in 2004. Together, the duo has extensive experience in the theater. Judy Hegarty Lovett joined the original Gare St. Lazare Players Chicago in 1991, and Conor Lovett, who looks like he would make a decent Clov, has performed in 23 Beckett plays in countries around the world.

For their production of *First Love*, the company has chosen to travel light—at least from the looks of the set. The only props are two upturned benches, representing, one would assume, the bench encounters of the protagonist and Lulu/Anna throughout the short story: "I met her on a bench, on the bank of the canal, one of the canals, for our town boasts two, though I never knew which was which" (30). The benches never serve a practical purpose, though the narrator does approach them at one point during the performance.

For the most part, Conor Lovett's character stands at center stage and recites the story to a good-sized audience. We never see Lulu/Anna, and we never get even a glimpse of the house they share. This is less a dramatization of events than a recalling (re-imagining) of memories. According to Gontarski's accounts, Beckett would have likely preferred such a recitation, though he might have found fault with the "unity of character and narrative" (Gontarski xviii). Indeed, Beckett suggested to several directors of his prose works, including Shivaun O'Casey, that the actor stumble upon a document and read it to the audience (Gontarski xvii-xviii).

Conor Lovett knows the piece very well and, unlike the narrator when it comes to singing, demonstrates an impressive ability to retain words. Lovett also understands the timing, which is considerably important in a work such as *First Love*. Puns abound: "Personally, I have no bones to pick with graveyards" (25). On occasion, Lovett's char-



Conor Lovett in *First Love*. Photo courtesy of Ros Kavanagh

acter, who is bald and dons a suit and hoodie, appears to drift off into temporary psychological turmoil, a condition which readers of the text must infer from words rather than the facial expressions of a performer.

Personally, I have a few bones to pick with the production. While Judy Hegarty Lovett and Conor Lovett have clearly spent much time on this piece, it is rather mundane, and I often fought to stay interested. A short attention span will simply not do. Beckett himself knew that recitation has its drawbacks, which is why in a letter he explained that a performance of a prose piece "can be piecemealed by all kinds of business—such as returning [found document] to bin (on which [the narrator] sits to read)—exiting and returning to read to the end—looking feverishly for a flea or other vermin—chewing a crust—getting up to piss in a corner with back modestly to audience—etc. etc.—making the poor best of a hopeless job" (qtd. in Gontarski xviii).

While I found *First Love* to be lacking, I do not doubt the talent of the Gare St. Lazare Players Ireland. In fact, seeing their production and contemplating its merits as well as its faults has helped at least one "Critic" contemplate further the performative possibilities of Beckett's fiction.

If you're looking for exciting drama, *First Love* is not for you. If you're interested in learning more about the theatrical potential of Beckett's prose, the production is worth the \$15, which is what they asked at the Public Theater.

But there it is.

--Paul Shields

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Beckett at NEMLA

"Samuel Beckett and His Legacy," one of the seven special panels sponsored by the NEMLA Board of Directors at the 2009 Convention in Boston, marked two coinciding 40th anniversaries: that of the organization itself, and that of Beckett's Nobel Prize for Literature. Two Beckett sessions were organized this year at NEMLA: the anniversary panel, which took place on February 28th and which it was my great pleasure to moderate, and a Beckett seminar scheduled the following morning. In keeping with the trans-generic, interdisciplinary and cross-cultural character of Beckett's work, the three speakers who participated in the panel tackled the issue of Beckett's legacy in relationship to theater and prose fiction, literature and philosophy, and French and Anglo-Irish literary-cultural traditions.

In her paper titled "From Ontological Disdain to Revolutionary Anger: Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter," Cristina Ionica (The University of Western Ontario, Canada) revisited the legacy of "ontological disdain" that Beckett-the-playwright inherited from the French Avant-garde and Surrealism. She argued that Harold Pinter later took up this legacy from Beckett, restoring to it the social feature of "revolutionary anger" that it had lost in Beckett's existential appropriation. Ionica also discussed some of the means through which Beckett's "ontological disdain" and Pinter's "revolutionary anger" achieves theatrical expression. She first examined Beckett's plays (e.g. *Waiting for Godot* and *Endgame*), where the dialogue and stage directions do not convey either an actual or a potential progression and resolution of conflict by the time the "end" of the performance is reached. She then contrasted this approach with Pinter's works (e.g. *The Birthday Party* and *No Man's Land*) which, even if they do not actually stage an ultimate and clear-cut "end," nevertheless suggest a strong possibility of what this very likely is.

In his paper "The Self and Forgiveness in Beckett, James and O'Neill," David Palmer (Massachusetts Maritime Academy, USA) tackled Beckett's legacy of impotence from a philosophical perspective. Reminding the audience of the author's famous statement that he worked with impotence and ignorance, Palmer made a case that Beckett's "people" are impotent insofar as they lack guiding narratives that would allow them to make sense of themselves in/and the world. Throughout Beckett's oeuvre, Palmer argued, human figures are represented in between paradigms of self, i.e. at transitional moments where an old narrative of personhood has broken down and a new one has not yet been endorsed. Beckett's selves are quite able to create and multiply new personal narratives, but they invariably fail at assenting to the truth of any of them. Palmer supported his interpretation by drawing on the work of philosophers William James and Thomas Kuhn. He highlighted James and Kuhn's pragmatic and subjective conceptions of truth, the first in relationship to individually acting subjects, the second in relationship to scientific communities. In both cases, several new hypotheses can exert a self and world explanatory function at times of "crisis" when old paradigms are no longer satisfactory. However,

among these many new narratives only one is ultimately considered true, namely that which meets with the individual and/or the scientific community's agreement. In the final section of his paper Palmer discussed *Ohio Impromptu* and the relationship between Listener and Reader as the visualization of a failed self-conscious attempt to come to terms with an old personal guiding story and to assent to a new one. He noted that at the end of the play "nothing is left to tell," while the two protagonists are buried not in "thoughts" but in "profounds of mind. Of mindlessness." From the perspective of Beckett's legacy of impotence, Palmer argued, one might create a new narrative of self, yet endorsing it "is not something we do; [but] something that happens to us."

Pascale Sardin (University of Bordeaux 3, France) read a paper on "Irony and Nostalgia in Beckett's French and Anglo-Irish Heirs or the Journals of Many Melancholics." She started by delineating several levels of paradox and complexity in the very notion of Beckett having a literary legacy. Having rejected the notion of generation and "breed" in his writings (such as *The Unnamable*) and contested the literary canon by an early-career practice of pastiche

THE IMPOSSIBLE ITSELF

On November 19, 1957, the Actor's Workshop of San Francisco mounted a now legendary performance of *Waiting for Godot* at San Quentin penitentiary. Independent filmmaker Jake Adams has produced a fascinating documentary on the subject, including extensive interviews with director Herbert Blau and the surviving cast members from the production. Adams also expands his scope beyond the San Quentin production to study the reception of *Godot* in other highly volatile performance contexts.

The Impossible Itself is available for purchase from Jake Adams. DVDs for personal use cost \$25 US dollars; DVDs for institutional use cost \$75 US dollars. For more information please contact Jake Adams directly at jake_adams@yahoo.com or visit the film's website at www.myspace.com/theimpossibleitself



and parody (in *Dream of Fair to Middling Women and More Pricks Than Kicks*), Beckett undermined the possibility of posterity for his own oeuvre. Furthermore, the Beckettian influence that several contemporary authors acknowledge is of a most peculiar sort: it is either the influence of a writing liberated from all influence, or that of a literary dead-end which calls for a completely new beginning. Finally, his bilingualism opens up the possibility that his body of work in fact “engendered *two* clearly unconnected and irreconcilable literary traditions.” Sardin devoted the remainder of her talk to the development of the latter issue. She suggested that melancholy and nostalgia are usually understood as “central to the Irish side of the Beckettian legacy,” while irony is generally regarded as “the rallying call of Beckett’s French heirs.” She then proceeded to show that the nostalgic/melancholic mood and ironic mode are in fact not mutually exclusive but complementary features

in both Beckett’s French and English works, and the works of his French and Anglo-Irish successors. Sardin proposed that the first Beckettian writing to draw on a “joyful art of impossible renouncement” is the unfinished project of his *Journal of a Melancholic* (1936). In an ensuing discussion of *The Sea* (2005) by John Banville and *Dernier amour* (2004) by Christian Gailly, Sardin substantiated her argument that the interplay between slight irony and nostalgia, which characterizes Beckett’s oeuvre from its very beginnings, can be retraced in the fiction of his Anglophone and Francophone heirs.

Questions from a receptive and knowledgeable audience, which outnumbered the seating facilities of the room in which the Beckett panel took place, generated a lively and stimulating intellectual exchange at the end of the session.

--Carla Taban

New and Forthcoming

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Samuel Beckett: Debts and Legacies, 2009

A seminar sponsored by the University of Oxford and the
University of Northampton
*Convening in the Collier Room, Regents Park College, Pusey
Street, Oxford*

Following the publication of James Knowlson's biography and the release of invaluable notebooks and diaries for scholarly scrutiny, Beckett Studies is undergoing a revolution. Beckett's major phase of intense study was in the 1920s and 30s, long before he became known as a French Existentialist after *Waiting for Godot*, and even longer before he was discovered by post-structuralist critics. This seminar will attempt to reassess Beckett's cultural position in two directions: by examining some of the recently uncovered influences that shaped his unique writing, and by refracting his image and his work through some of the authors, thinkers, composers and visual artists he influenced in turn.

Trinity Term 2008:

- | | | | |
|--------|---|---------|---|
| 1 May | Prof. Marjorie Perloff
Beckett in the Country of the Houyhnhnms:
The Response to Swift | 29 May | Dr Erik Tønning
Beckett's Unholy Dying: From <i>Malone Dies</i> to
<i>The Unnamable</i> |
| 8 May | Dr Daniel Katz
'Where now?' Samuel Beckett, Robert Smith-
son and the Local | 5 June | Dr Matthew Feldman
Beckett and Philosophy Redux: 1928-1938 |
| 15 May | Dr Russell Smith
Beckett's Psychology Notes and the Influence
of Anxiety | 12 June | Dr Ronan McDonald
Beckett and Irish Studies |
| 22 May | Dr Laura Salisbury
'The Kick in Intellectu and the Kick in Re': The
Philosophical and
Neurological Debts of Beckett's <i>Homme Ma-
chine</i> | 19 June | Prof. Steven Connor
'The loutishness of learning': Beckett and the
Academy |

A POSTGRADUATE SYMPOSIUM FROM 9AM – 3PM PRECEDES THIS CONCLUDING SESSION

ALL WELCOME. SEMINARS COMMENCE AT 4.30PM

Seminar organisers:	Dr Matthew Feldman	Dr Erik Tønning
Contact details e-mail:	matthew.feldman@northampton.ac.uk	erik.tønning@regents.ox.ac.uk
phone:	07968 991 283 (mobile)	(01865) 712587 (home)

Extensive Beckett Bibliography Service

Charles A. Carpenter offers a valuable resource for Beckett scholars in the form of *The Dramatic Works of Samuel Beckett: A Selective, Classified, International Bibliography of Publications About His Plays and Their Conceptual Foundations*. The growing database now weighs in at almost 400 pages and is available in Microsoft Word. For \$30 Carpenter provides not only his extensive and usefully organized bibliography, but he also sends his subscribers regular updates of the most recent Beckett publications.

Recent Additions include: Sections on Beckett and Other Dramatists; Beckett's Philosophy, Aesthetics, and Criticism; Translation and Bilingualism; The Irish Connection.

For younger scholars, Carpenter has compiled *A Descriptive Chronology of Beckett's Plays, Theatrical Career, and Dramatic Theories Through 1965*. The student rate for the bibliography is only \$15.

Email requests should be sent to Charles A. Carpenter at ccarpen@binghamton.edu. Payment can be sent to his home address at 908 Lehigh Avenue, Vestal NY 13850.

BOOK REVIEWS

Dirk Van Hulle and Mark Nixon (eds).
"All Sturm and No Drang": Samuel
Beckett Today/ Aujourd'hui 18.
Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007. 428pp.
\$115.

Beckett's debt to Romanticism has long puzzled critics. His fondness for Keats, "that crouching brooding quality" and "thick soft damp green richness. And weariness" is well established. Equally well-known is Beckett's keenness for certain key figures of German Romanticism, especially Schubert and the painter Caspar David Friedrich. The fact that Beckett read and took notes on Mario Praz's *The Romantic Agony*, essentially a study of decadence, has been brought to the attention of scholars by John Pilling's meticulously edited "*Dream Notebook*," which similarly alerts us to Beckett's reading of Théophile Gautier's *Histoire de romantisme*. Alongside these affinities and interests, however, runs a more complex and hostile reaction to Romanticism. Beckett's mockery of Romantic motifs, especially in the short story, "Assumption," and the early novels *Dream of Fair to Mid-dling Women* and *Murphy*, has been noted. His comments in *Proust*, on the "ineluctable gangrene of Romanticism," are similarly striking. The author's plainly contradictory attitude to Romanticism, his frequent and explicit repudiation of its central stylistic and thematic preoccupations and the simultaneously indelible trace Romantic writing, painting and music have left on Beckett's oeuvre, pose an intriguing dilemma to critics, which hitherto has not received the sustained attention it deserves.

"All Sturm and No Drang" sets out to fill this lacuna in Beckett studies. It contains nine essays on Beckett's engagement with major figures of Romanticism, such as Coleridge, Wordsworth, Goethe and Schubert, as well as thematic concerns including Romantic disillusionment, sublime irony, anthropomorphic insolence and Romantic agony. One of the many delights of this collection is its grasp of the grey canon, whether in the form of notebooks, correspondence, drafts or unpublished work, which greatly enhances our understanding of Beckett's complex debt to Romantic literature, a debt which the author himself spotted in the work of Proust and Joyce.

The section dedicated to Beckett and Romanticism opens with Dirk Van Hulle's essay on the Promethean myth of creation, in which humans emerge from a mixture of mud and rain. The myth, as we know, has a powerful prominence in Romantic writing, for instance in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. The creative affinities of the myth with Beckett's mud-crawlers are obvious, as is the coincidence

of origins with ends. The preoccupation with a return to mud also establishes a kinship with the Graveyard Poets, in whose work the figure of Prometheus—which we associate not only with creation, but also with knowledge—appears as a trope for the general frustration with an "enlightened confidence in knowability" (16). Both of these aspects of the myth resonate in Beckett's work, but in his writing creation mutates into decreation, while composition, as works such as *Lessness* and *Happy Days* attest, turns into decomposition.

Paul Lawley's essay, which reads Beckett through Coleridge (and vice versa), focuses on the closely related theme of creative failure. Elizabeth Barry's essay turns its focus on epitaphs, more specifically those of Samuel Johnson and William Wordsworth, and their legacy in Beckett's writing on death and memorialisation. Besides the more general relevance of "the idiom of death" to Beckett's work, the narrators of *First Love* and *Malone Dies* pen their own epitaphs.

Mark Nixon's analysis of Beckett's response to Romantic literature and painting in the 1930s, highlights the author's rejection of sentimentality and a wrought style, but also stresses his attraction to that strand of Romanticism that portrayed a melancholic sensibility. Nixon's essay covers impressive ground, ranging from German and French to English Romantic writers and painters. It draws from unpublished works such as "Lightning Calculation" and the short story, "Echo's Bones" (originally destined for *More Pricks than Kicks*), as well as advancing an analysis of the impact of Praz's study on Beckett's early work, where the landscapes are "literally infused with 'gangrene'" (68). What appealed to Beckett was not the Romantic hero, but "the solitary turning his back on the world, or being shorn by the world" (69). Hence, too, Beckett's fascination with a certain strand of German thought, witnessed in figures such as Schopenhauer, Schubert, Goethe, Heine and Hölderlin. As Beckett noted in his German Diaries, "Feel most happily melancholy" (73).

Closely connected is Chris Ackerley's essay, which notes Beckett's rejection of the Romantic impulse to animate landscape, in favour of a view of nature as atomistic, mineral and organic, which makes for the breakdown of rapport between self and world that forms such a salient feature of Beckett's writing. The author's rejection of anthropomorphism, Ackerley argues, can be traced back to Windelband's foregrounding of Atomist thought; Beckett, as we know, was intimately acquainted with his *History of Philosophy*. Overall, Ackerley argues, Beckett rejects not merely the dictum that "man is the measure of all things," but the more general drive in Romantic literature towards the transcendental. Instead, in Beckett's writing "the ideal has been made real," as can, for instance, be detected in

"His comments in *Proust*, on the 'ineluctable gangrene of Romanticism,' are similarly striking."

BOOK REVIEWS

the physical ailments that so often trouble his characters (87).

Franz Michael Meier offers an intriguing analysis of the revisions Schubert made to his song, *Nacht und Träume*, prior to its publication in 1825, and the Beckettian affinities that these revisions reveal. John Bolin, in turn, discusses the Romantic legacy of irrational desire in *Murphy*, drawing on comparisons with Goethe's *Werther*. Andrew Eastham advances an analysis of Romantic irony in Beckett's work, while Michael Angelo Rodriguez's focus is on Romantic agony. While Eastham's argument of the impact of the Kantian sublime on Beckett's writing is insightful, one is left wondering about Schopenhauer's more abject theory of the sublime, which in its heightened emphasis on violence, hostility and damage would appear to have affinities with the gangrenous aspects of Romantic thought that so fascinated Beckett. None the less, these essays are ambitious in their scope. Collectively, they offer the most thorough, informed and engaged analysis of Beckett's relation to Romanticism to date.

The second part of the volume is dedicated to "Beckett at Reading 2006," a highly successful conference organised to celebrate the centenary. The salient feature of these essays is again the wealth of archival information they contain. Highlights include María José Carrera's careful mapping of Beckett's reading notes of *Don Quijote*; John Pilling's analysis of the much longer manuscript version of *From an Abandoned Work* and Sean Lawlor's erudite essay on the poems "Alba" and "Dortmunder." Rónán McDonald's examination of *Play* in light of Girard's theory of mimetic desire offers intriguing reading. Other theoretically informed essays include Russell Smith's discussion of the "ethics of enunciation" in Beckett, Blanchot, Foucault and Agamben, which forms part of the third, free section of the issue.

The 29 essays in this volume offer a wealth of archival and theoretical insight. Collectively, they constitute a work of impressive range and substance, an influential resource for years to come.

--Ulrika Maude

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like to begin by thanking Linda Ben-Zvi, outgoing President of the Samuel Beckett Society, and Angela Moorjani, departing Member of the Executive Board, for their outstanding service over the last four years. Their wit, intelligence and generosity of spirit have made working with them a pleasure as well as a privilege. We will miss their sage advice and good humor.

Meanwhile, the Society is conducting an election that will bring two new Members to the Board. The candidate who receives the highest number of votes will become President-Elect for 2009-2010 and will then serve as President from 2011-12. The candidate who receives the second highest number of votes will serve as Member of the Executive Board from 2009 through 2012. SBS members will find a ballot enclosed in this issue of *The Beckett Circle* with instructions on how to vote and where to send the ballot. We will report the results of the election in the Fall issue of *TBC* and on the *Samuel Beckett Endpage*.

The Society would also like to express its gratitude to Stan Gontarski for his many years of splendid service to the Beckett community as Editor of the *Journal of Beckett Studies*. The Editorship of the journal has now been taken over by current Executive Board Member—and distinguished Beckett scholar—Anthony Uhlmann. Under his stewardship, the journal will be published by Edinburgh University Press. I am also happy to announce a new arrangement (see the enclosed Membership and Dues form), whereby SBS members may subscribe to the *Journal of Beckett Studies* at a reduced rate. Please also note that we have streamlined membership payment by permitting members to submit dues in their own national currencies or by using PayPal, which accepts payments by credit card.

Finally, the Society will be hosting two sessions at the annual Modern Language Association conference in Philadelphia in December, 2009. One session, "Beckett's Correspondence," will celebrate the publication of Beckett's letters this year with Cambridge University Press and inaugurate discussion of their scholarly significance. The second session, "Theatre After Beckett," will examine Beckett's place in modern drama and his on-going influence on the contemporary theatrical scene. We will publish full details of these sessions in the Fall issue of *TBC*.

Please feel free to contact Graley Herren or myself, if you have suggestions for *The Beckett Circle* or the Society. I very much look forward to meeting with members at the MLA conference in December.

All good wishes,

Richard Begam

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Francis Gillen is a founding editor of *The Pinter Review* and Dana Foundation professor of English at the University of Tampa. He has published widely on Harold Pinter and other modern dramatists; he is also a playwright.

Graley Herren is an Associate Professor of English at Xavier University in Cincinnati. He is author of *Samuel Beckett's Plays on Film and Television* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), as well as several articles, book chapters, and reviews on Beckett and other modern dramatists. He is a member of the executive boards for both the Comparative Drama Conference and the Samuel Beckett Society, and he edits *The Beckett Circle*.

Charles Krance lives in south-east France, and is founder of *Samuel Beckett's Bilingual Works: a series of critical genetic editions*, Brepols Publishers (Belgium).

Nancy Leahy has an M.A. in Drama and Theatre Studies from University College Cork, and has been involved in amateur drama and musical theatre since 1969, both as director and stage manager. She is currently conducting research on Touring Theatre Companies and Travelling Shows in South Tipperary in the Emergency years (1939-45) and is currently preparing an article for the *Tipperary Historical Journal*.

Ulrika Maude is Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Durham, UK. She is the author of *Beckett, Technology and the Body* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), and co-editor of *The Body and the Arts* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) and *Beckett and Phenomenology* (Continuum, 2009). She is also the co-editor of *Beckett on TV*, a special issue of the *Journal of Beckett Studies* 18, forthcoming in September

2009. She is currently writing a book on Modernism and Medical Culture.

Paul Shields is an Assistant Professor of English at Assumption College. He teaches courses in drama, literary theory, and composition. His research focuses on Samuel Beckett. His work has appeared in the *Journal of Beckett Studies* and *Samuel Beckett's "Endgame"* (ed. Mark S. Byron; Amsterdam: Rodopi Press 2007). His essay on *Endgame* will appear in *The Blackwell Companion to Samuel Beckett* (forthcoming).

Carla Taban is an Independent Scholar who lives and works in Toronto, Canada. She has been involved in amateur drama and musical theatre since 1969, both as director and stage manager, and has published articles on Beckett's work in *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui* and *Voix plurielles*. Her Ph.D. thesis on *Molloy* is forthcoming from Rodopi.

Derval Tubridy is lecturer in English and Visual Culture at Goldsmiths, University of London. Author of *Thomas Kinsella: The Peppercanister Poems* (UCD Press, 2001) and editor of a special edition of *Irish Studies Review* (16/3, 2008), she has published chapters in *A Companion to James Joyce; Contemporary Debates in Literature and Philosophy; Ireland: Space, Text, Time; Seeing Things: Literature and the Visual, The Irish Book in the Twentieth Century* and *Samuel Beckett: A Casebook*, as well as articles in *Performance Research; The Irish University Review; Irish Studies Review; The Journal of Beckett Studies*, and *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui*. Her research has been funded by the Fulbright Commission and by the British Academy. She is currently working on a book on Beckett and contemporary art called *Art after Beckett*.

The Beckett Circle Le Cercle de Beckett

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Editor-in-Chief:	Graley Herren
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All members of the Samuel Beckett Society are encouraged to submit items of interest for publication in *The Beckett Circle*. **If possible, submissions should be emailed in Word or Rich Text Format.** Please send all essays, theater reviews, letters to the editor, inquiries about advertising rates, and information on special events to:

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Inquiries concerning book reviews should be sent to:

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Please note that all materials for the Fall issue must be received by September 1, for the Spring issue by March 1.

THE SAMUEL BECKETT SOCIETY

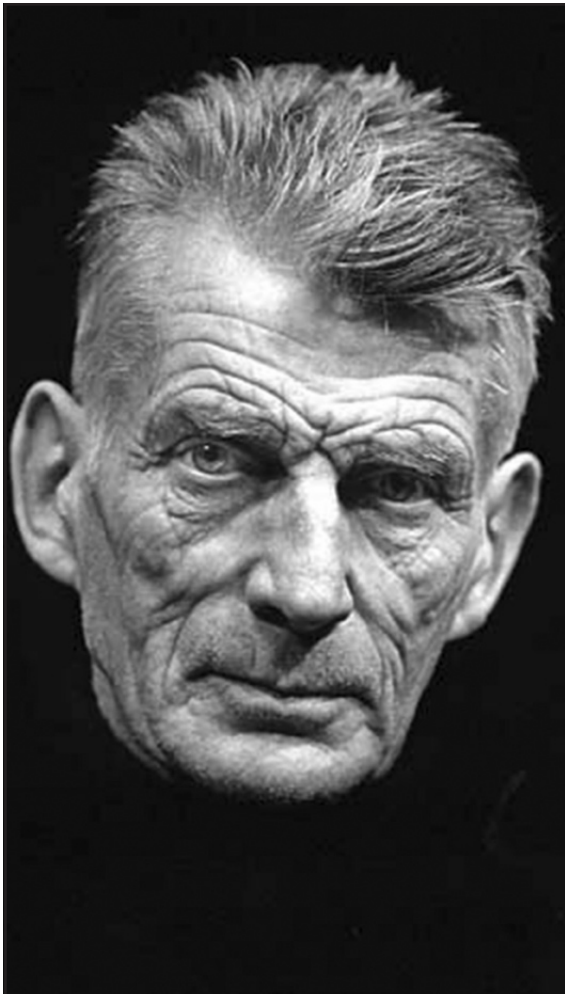
The Samuel Beckett Society is an international organization of scholars, students, directors, actors and others who share an interest in the work of Samuel Beckett. Honorary Trustees are Edward Beckett, John Calder, J.M. Coetzee, Ruby Cohn, Raymond Federman, John Fletcher, James Knowlson, and Barney Rosset.

The Society provides opportunities for members to meet and exchange information. Membership includes a subscription to *The Beckett Circle*, the biannual newsletter of the Society. The annual meeting of the Society's Executive Board is held during the MLA Annual Convention. Individual membership is \$35.00 per year and \$60.00 for two years. Library membership is \$35.00 per year. Student membership is \$20.00 per year. Donations over and above the membership fee are welcome and tax deductible.

For membership inquiries, write to:

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Members or prospective members are requested to remit their fees in US Dollars in the form of cash, checks, or International Money Orders made out to "The Samuel Beckett Society." Fees received in any other form will have to be returned.



THANK YOU

The Beckett Circle appreciates the generous support of Xavier University, in particular Dean Janice Walker, Provost Roger Fortin, and the Office of Marketing and Printing Services.

SPECIAL THANKS

The Samuel Beckett Society would like to thank the following individuals for their generous support:

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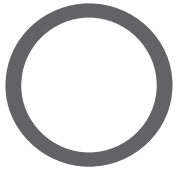
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THE BECKETT CIRCLE
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Samuel Beckett Society Executive Board Elections

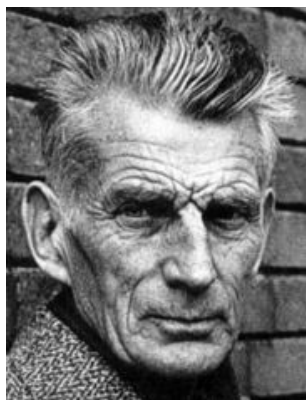
The Samuel Beckett Society is conducting an election that will bring two new Members to the Board. The candidate who receives the highest number of votes will become President-Elect for 2009-2010 and will then serve as President from 2011-12. The candidate who receives the second highest number of votes will serve as Member of the Executive Board from 2009 through 2012. The election is open to all members of the Society in good standing [a renewal form is included elsewhere in the present issue].

Please vote for no more than two nominees.

- ☐ Daniel Albright (Harvard University, USA)
- ☐ Matthijs Engelberts (University of Amsterdam, Netherlands)
- ☐ Carla Locatelli (University of Trento, Italy)
- ☐ Ulrika Maude (University of Durham, UK)
- ☐ Jean-Michel Rabaté (University of Pennsylvania, USA)
- ☐ Dirk Van Hulle (University of Antwerp, Belgium)
- ☐ Shane Weller (University of Kent, UK)

Valid ballots must be postmarked no later than JULY 15, 2009.
Mail ballots to:

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600 N. Park St. University of Wisconsin
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Samuel Beckett Society

Membership and Dues Form

One year:	\$35
Two years:	\$60
Students:	\$20 (one year only)

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- US dollars drawn on US banks, or a money orders in US dollars
- Canadian dollars drawn on Canadian banks
- Pounds sterling, drawn on British banks
- Euros drawn on banks from the European Monetary Union
- Checks in Japanese yen, Australian dollars or any other widely traded currency, so long as they are drawn on a bank using that currency

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