

Antje Budde

Between Thing and Agent: A Vocabulary for Performing Objects

Introductory notes

Words

Objects, objectification, objectivism, objection
Object, thing, body, matter, entity, substance, product, consumption, production
Animation, manipulation, politics
Making, critical making

Agent/ Agency - tricky

James Bond film "Spectre", money, gold and diamonds as material basis for chauvinist power are replaced by chauvinist control over information and surveillance

Mata Hari (1876-1917)

Execution <http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/matahari.htm>

At the report Mata Hari fell. She **did not die as actors and moving picture stars** would have us believe that people die when they are shot. She did not throw up her hands nor did she plunge straight forward or straight back. Instead she seemed to collapse. Slowly, inertly, she settled to her knees, her head up always, and without the slightest change of expression on her face. For the fraction of a second it seemed she tottered there, on her knees, gazing directly at those who had taken her life. Then she fell backward, bending at the waist, with her legs doubled up beneath her. She lay prone, motionless, with her face turned towards the sky.

A non-commissioned officer, who accompanied a lieutenant, drew his **revolver** from the **big, black holster** strapped about his **waist**. Bending over, he placed the muzzle of the revolver almost - but not quite - against the left **temple** of the spy. He pulled the trigger, and the **bullet** tore into the **brain** of the **woman**.

Mata Hari was **surely** dead."

Mata Hari Museum

<http://www.friesmuseum.nl/het-museum/collectie/iconen/mata-hari-hoofdtoi>

One table two chairs 一桌两椅

- major convention in Beijing Opera where these three objects are used to create interior and exterior space, real and imaginative space

Ephemerality of objects, fading – crucial part of performance

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Comment [1]: The utopian text "The Communist Manifesto" talks about a different kind of spectre. Are spectres things? Who animates them?

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Comment [2]: Information as the new thing

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Comment [3]: Like a puppet implosion.

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Comment [4]: Instead of animating a non-living object, here we have an animation of a process whereby a living subject turns into an inanimate object/body. - I.e. Mediterranean Sea, refugees.

Sara Ahmed's essay on "**Happy Objects**"
Ludwig Wittgenstein's '**Simple Objects**' as discussed in Tractatus Logico
Philosophicus and evolving discourses

Etymology and tricky terms

THING

Old English, derived from German "Ding"

Early senses included 'meeting' and 'matter, concern' as well as 'inanimate object.'

1. an object that one need not, cannot, or does not wish to give a specific name to
2. an inanimate material object as distinct from a living sentient being
3. an action, activity, event, thought, or utterance

<https://www.google.ca/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=etymology%20thing>

AGENT

late Middle English (in the sense 'someone or something that produces an effect'): from Latin *agent-* 'doing,' from *agere* .

1. a person who acts on behalf of another, in particular. (spy, agency, organization)
2. a person or thing that takes an active role or produces a specified effect (a medium/ agent of change or a DOER: performer, author, executer)

<https://www.google.ca/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=etymology%20agent>

Short Bios

Sarah Blake

<http://people.laps.yorku.ca/people.nsf/researcherprofile?readform&shortname=sblake>

Sarah Blake, associate professor at York University in Classical Studies and Humanities (PhD from U. of Southern California, and u-grad at U of Toronto). My research area is technically first century CE Latin poetry, especially epigram, but I am mostly working these days on material culture as it appears in the literature and culture of the ancient world, finishing up a book called 'A World of Things: Material Culture in Flavian Rome.'

Johanna Householder

http://apache.ocad.ca/faculty_biographies/bio.php?bid=1197&fac=art

Johanna Householder has been making performance, dance, video and intermedia art since the late 1970s. Working at the intersection of popular and unpopular culture, she shapes plundered source material in order to talk back to mass forms, often working in collaboration with other artists. With Tanya Mars she is currently

editing the second volume of *Caught in the Act: an anthology of performance art by Canadian women* (the first volume came out in 2005.) She is a Professor at OCAD University.

Nicholas Sammond

Nicholas Sammond is an Associate Professor of Cinema Studies at the University of Toronto. He is the author of *Babes in Tomorrowland: Walt Disney and the Making of the American Child, 1930-1960* (Duke University Press, 2005), and the editor of and contributor to *Steel Chair to the Head: The Pleasure and Pain of Professional Wrestling* (Duke University Press, 2005).

Nic has recently finished the book *Birth of an Industry: Blackface Minstrelsy and the Rise of American Animation* (Duke University Press, 2015), which explores the historical relationship between blackface minstrelsy and the American animation industry. Professor Sammond's next major project, *The Abject Objection*, will explore the political and social uses of abjection in Cold War vernacular media.

Mark Sussman

Mark Sussman is a theatre artist and scholar working on the animation of public space and the integration of old and new technologies in live performance. He is currently Associate Dean, Academic Affairs in the Faculty of Fine Arts and Associate Professor in the Department of Theatre at Concordia University/ universit  Concordia, Montr al

As part of his ongoing research based at Concordia, and in collaboration with Roberto Rossi of Great Small Works, he is at work on two new performance projects, one based on the writings of Robert Walser and another titled "Tales from the Anthropocene," which really had its premiere at the Dukketeaterfestival, Bornholm, Denmark (September, 2015.)

In Montreal, he is the founder and member of the collective organizing Caf  Concret, an occasional cabaret of experimental puppetry and object-based performance, a forum for new works in a variety of media.

Marlis Schweitzer

Marlis Schweitzer is an Associate Professor in the Department of Theatre at York University. She is the author of *When Broadway Was the Runway: Theater, Fashion, and American Culture* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009) and *Transatlantic Broadway: The Infrastructural Politics of Global Politics* (Palgrave, 2015) and co-editor (with Joanne Zerdy) of *Performing Objects and Theatrical Things* (Palgrave, 2014). Marlis's current SSHRC-funded research project traces the movement of child actors along Anglo-American theatrical circuits in the early to mid-nineteenth century, with close attention to the objects that traveled alongside them.