

Abstracts

The Secret Comes Forth: the Depiction of Animals in Bozo and Bamanan Puppetry in Mali by Elisabeth den Otter

When traditional cultures are threatened by encroaching modernity, it matters to all of us. The large-scale animal puppets of the Bamana and Bozo peoples of Mali are used in ritual “happenings” that confirm and strengthen their groups’ cultural identities. Den Otter’s article gives us an inside look at, and analysis of, these performances, and notes the factors that are contributing to their demise, while also noting the recent governmental recognition that may preserve them.

Key Words: Bamanan, Bozo, puppet, Sigi, Mali, Kirango, sogow, ritual, mask, masquerade

My visit with the African Giants: *les grandes personnes to Boromo* by Heather Jeanne Denyer

Is there a danger of puppets, brought into an indigenous culture from elsewhere, supplanting longstanding traditions of spiritual and cultural significance? Heather Denyer visits a small town in Burkina Faso to see how locals are using colossal puppets to spectacular effect, while maintaining the highly stylized masks of their traditions. (A longer, peer reviewed version is available on our website.)

Key Words: Boromo, Bukina Faso, les grands personnes, puppet, parade, spectacle, festival, giants, Zangbeto

Teni-Tedji Festival by Heather Jeanne Denyer

Teni-Tedji, the annual festival of puppetry and street arts founded by Jude Zounmenou in 2010, steals the spotlight every December, when it brings together artists and enthusiasts from across the French-speaking diaspora for a week in the capital of Porto-Novo. Denyer walks us through this intimate festival and its diverse offerings.

Key Words: Benin, francophone, Porto Novo, Teni-Tedji, bamboo dancer, puppets, street arts, Congolese percussion, Yoruba, voodoo, griot

Profile on South African Puppetry by Viktoria Ambros and Lawrence Switzky

Two University of Toronto professors introduce several articles from South Africa, focusing on the influence of Handspring Puppet Company on a new generation of puppeteers, playwrights and directors, and on Handspring’s struggle to help end apartheid.

Key Words: Handspring, William Kentridge, Adrian Kohler, Basil Jones, apartheid, *War Horse*, *Woyzeck on the Highveld*

Lara Foot: Storytelling and Hope interview by Sonia Norris

Important, young, South African playwright, Lara Foot, examines her process and productions, her use of visual metaphor to present difficult subjects, and Hope, always present in her plays; she sees it as a beast with two heads—an urge that can lead us down dark paths if we are not careful.

Key words: Lara Foot, *Karoo Moose*, *Tshepang*, metaphor, object theatre, South Africa, hope

Subjects and Objects: Puppetry in the Western Cape by Jane Taylor

Handspring Puppet Company has historically engaged in projects of creative renewal in regions of scarcity, and Handspring Trust is committed to supporting that commitment. The Trust has been developing an initiative that draws together puppetry arts, universities, activists and theorists, in order to generate social renewal through an international community of makers and thinkers.

Key words: Handspring Trust, LoKO, the Laboratory of Kinetic Objects, Khiosan, South Africa, puppet, Barrydale, Little Karoo, Truth and Reconciliation Commission

The Passing of Ncedile Daki by Adrian Kohler and Basil Jones

The Handspring co-founders Kohler and Jones mourn the loss of their colleague. “Nced” began as a puppet builder, but in his brief life toured widely, built puppets for the acclaimed production of *War Horse*, and co-founded Masiphumelele Youth Development, later re-named Ukwanda Puppetry and Design Collective.

Key words: Ncedile Daki, Handspring, *War Horse*, Masiphumelele, Ukwanda, puppet, *Olifantland*

Red Earth Revisited, a Dutch/South African collaboration by Saskia Janse

The story of the international collaboration that created *Red Earth*, a play based on Xhosa history and folklore, and how it was later re-imagined as a much larger production. A wonderful example of how something designed for local impact can find its way to a world stage.

Key words: Xhosa, Nongqawuse, puppet, Speeltheater Holland, Red Earth, ASSITEJ,

Material Surprises in Africa, by Ronald Binion

A veteran of both the Muppets and puppet slams, Binion also uses puppets in humanitarian work around the globe. Here, he takes us with him to, among other places, Kalongo, Uganda – a rough, seven-hour drive from the nearest market – to train locals as puppeteers who will then use their art to increase awareness about HIV/AIDS prevention, dental hygiene, ending domestic violence and other challenges.

Key words: Puppet, Kenya, Madagascar, Uganda, Tanzania, GOAL, Lisa Buckley, No Strings International, Peripheral Vision International, humanitarian

The African Collection at the Center for Puppetry Arts Museum by Nancy Lohman Staub

Staub introduces readers to some of the highlights of the African collection of the Center's brand new museum. The many photos show traditional puppets from many cultures as well as contemporary figures such as Topthorn, one of the massive equines from the South African Handspring Puppet Company's collaboration: *War Horse*.

Key words: puppet, African, rod puppet, marionette, shadow puppet, Aragoz, Mali, Benin, Yaya Coulibaly, *Opera dei Pupi*, Morocco, Bamana, Boso, Atlanta.

History of Puppet and Doll Arts in Morocco by Siraj Mohamed

The author details his journey from enthusiast to puppet master, devoted to preserving Alargeoz (the Moroccan variant of the Egyptian Aragoz), improving the state of puppetry in Morocco, and representing his country in the international puppetry organization: UNIMA.

Key words: Morocco, Alargeoz, Aragoz, UNIMA, Al Amana, Taounate, puppet

***Egyptian Aragoz*, a book by Nabil Bahgat, reviewed by Bradford Clark**

Relatively little has been written in English about the Egyptian folk puppet traditions and, as Dr. Bahgat makes clear, the Aragoz hand puppet tradition has never commanded as much scholarly attention, let alone respect, even in Arabic. This fascinating book contains a dense treasury of primary research, well presented and interpreted. It is an important addition to primary works documenting world puppet traditions.

Key words: Aragoz, Egyptian folk puppet, Bahgat, folkloric, Punch, Karagoz

The Theatre of Robert Anton by Claudia Orenstein

Professor Orenstein visits a rare exhibition of the iconic and eccentric puppets of Robert Anton, whose exclusive, tiny theater she visited as a child with her own mother—a well-known scholar of surrealist theater. Her essay reminds us of Anton's genius and too-short life, but is also a personal journey of memory.

Key words: Robert Anton, puppet, surrealist, 1970s, New York theater, Theater of the Marvelous

Masters of the 20th Century: Puppet Theatre by Adolfo Ayuso, reviewed by John Bell

Spanish puppetry has a rich and deep history, from the marionettes Cervantes described in the pages of *Don Quixote*, to the ubiquitous and towering medieval *gigantes* and the unique three-fingered handpuppet traditions of Catalunya. Following upon such works as Francis George Very's 1957 *Historia de los Títeres en España*, Ayuso's study of over twenty puppeteers is able to consider the trajectory of Spanish puppetry in the turbulent 20th century.

Key words: Puppet, Spain, Titella, *Els Quatre Gats*, *El Retablo de Maese Pedro*, *titeres*