

Editor's Notes

Horace's *Ars Poetica* (c. 19 BC), written in the form of an epistle, formulates the *sine qua non* of a lasting theatrical experience: "Less vividly is the mind stirred by what finds entrance through the ears than by what is brought before the trusty eyes, and what the spectator sees for himself" (qtd. in Marshall 683). Horace's notion about the power of the visual as an integral element of the theatrical art has never lost its validity through centuries and has found a most compelling application—among others—in the drama of an extraordinarily original and prolific American dramatist, Sam Shepard, who passed away on July 27, 2017. A truly American self-taught man, Shepard never received formal education in playwriting; nevertheless, the poet in ancient Rome and the naturally gifted American author in the postmodern age share a dramatic vision that centers on the necessity of creating haunting images on the stage. Since Shepard is mourned not only in the American theatrical world and in Hollywood, but also in many European countries, including Hungary, where students and scholars of American drama and theatre, as well as theatre-goers highly appreciate his more than fifty-year long dramatic career and his achievements in film, fiction, and performing arts, editor-in-chief of *HJEAS* and distinguished scholar in American, Irish, and English drama, Donald E. Morse has composed a brief "In Memoriam: Sam Shepard (1943-2017)" that opens this issue. Morse pays tribute to the outstanding multi-talented playwright by discussing the functions of the magical and sometimes bizarre visual and aural images in four memorable plays from across Shepard's career.

The memorial to Shepard is followed by a group of five remarkable essays that all explore inter-artistic connections in fiction, poetry, film, and the visual arts, as well as between music and literature, thus opening up new vistas for interdisciplinary investigations and enriching the thematic and conceptual arsenal of literary studies. By connecting and analyzing the visual and verbal modes of representation and communication in the works of art discussed in the writings, the inter-artistic critical approach enhances our understanding of particular texts and related visual forms as the reciprocal energies of the interconnecting art forms are also uncovered.

The first essay in the cluster, "Ali Smith's *How to be Both* and the *Nachleben* of Aby Warburg: 'Neither here nor there'" not only traces the origins of the dual narration technique in Scottish writer Ali Smith's puzzling and playful novel, *How to Be Both* (2014)—shortlisted for Man Booker Prize the year it was published—but also efficiently emulates the novel's double

perspective. Written by literary critic Robert Kusek and art historian Wojciech Szymański, the essay unravels the creative process of Italian Renaissance artist Francesco del Cossa painting a series of frescoes in the Hall of the Months at the Palazzo Schifanoia (translated as “The Palace of Not Being Bored”) in Ferrara. This scrupulous investigation is performed with the help of Aby Warburg’s concept of *Nachleben* and his proposition of travelling forms and images. Kusek and Szymański convincingly argue that Warburg’s iconological interpretation of the frescoes and their “after-life” serve as a major inspiration for Smith’s novel. This investigative reading, which repeats the “bothness” of the novel in an original way, reinforces that the innovation in the narrative structure of the novel can be accounted for by a surprising interrelation between visual arts and the verbal text.

Paulina Ambroży’s “‘The Third Image’: Ekphrasis and Memory in Charles Simic’s *Dime-Store Alchemy: The Art of Joseph Cornell*” takes the reader on an equally fascinating journey to explore the encounters between the poetry of Serbian-American Charles Simic (1938-) and the surrealist visual art of American artist Joseph Cornell (1903-1972). She provides a theoretically grounded engaging reading of Simic’s ekphrastic poetry as exemplified in his collection of prose-poems, *Dime-Store Alchemy: The Art of Joseph Cornell* (1999). The author seeks to uncover the specific nature and the manifold function of the “third image,” a concept introduced by Simic to describe Cornell’s shadow boxes as heterosemiotic spaces that act like a screen for the projection of verbal and visual representations of human consciousness. In her perceptive inter-artistic analyses of selected works by Simic and Cornell, Ambroży demonstrates that Simic goes beyond the traditional rhetorical understanding of ekphrasis “to activate the image in the reader’s mind,” and thus the intermedial dialogue between the sister arts “leads to a self-discovery” of the poet’s traumatic past history.

While the former two essays by accomplished Polish scholars move across different forms of artistic expression, Réka Cristian’s contribution, “The Art of Erasure: Jean-Michel Basquiat’s *Olympias*,” invites us to delve into the theme of paraphrasing and re-visiting great masters’ artistic works by postmodern artists. In addition to briefly presenting the route of the Brooklyn graffiti artist, Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960-1988), evolving to the status of the widely acknowledged and celebrated *enfant terrible* of the New York art world, the author focuses on the in-depth examination of the reinterpretations of Édouard Manet’s *Olympia* (1863) by Basquiat in his *Three-Quarters of Olympia Minus the Servant* (1982) and *Untitled (Maid from Olympia)* (1982). Cristian’s insightful analyses reinforce that the absence of cultural markers signifying

racial and gender stereotypes in Basquiat's re-paintings "talks back" in a visual narrative as a critique of colonization.

With the next study, combining musicological and cultural critical approaches to investigate the representation and integration of Native American and African American folk melodies in Antonin Dvořák's Symphony No. 9, *HJEAS* embarks upon new interdisciplinary territories. "Another spirit, other thoughts, another colouring?: Performances of Race in Antonín Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 *From the New World*," an award-winning essay written by—then—MA student Nathaniel Sikand-Youngs, offers a critical reading of how Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 portrays Native American and African American folk traditions, as well as the indigenous and black peoples who produced them. In a consistent and detailed musicological analysis of themes, motifs, melodies, and structural arrangements in the symphony, Sikand-Youngs concludes that the inaccurate and unreliable allusions to Native and Black Americans require a more nuanced understanding of the racial content of this world-famous musical composition.

Balázs Sánta's "Action Hero vs. Tragic Hero: *First Blood*, Cultural Criticism, and Schelling's Theory of Tragedy" provides a new approach to Ted Kotcheff's 1985 film, *First Blood*, the first part of Sylvester Stallone's Rambo series, with the aim of situating the protagonist between Hollywood's stock-figure of the action hero and the complex character of the tragic hero in classical drama. Carefully choosing aesthetic tenets of German idealist thinkers—Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling's concept of tragedy and Friedrich Schiller's notion of the sublime—the author succeeds in reassessing the movie's aesthetic qualities and contributes to a novel reading (seeing) of the hero.

Éva Federmayer's "Migrants and Disaster Subcultures in the Late Anthropocene: An Ecocritical Reading of Octavia Butler's Parable Novels" offers an ecocritical reading of Octavia Butler's novels *Parable of the Sower* (1993) and *Parable of the Talents* (1998). The author claims that Butler's Afrofuturist novels "yield a fascinating but also horrifying fictional mapping of the Anthropocene Age, dramatizing the near-contemporary global ecological-social crises." Through a comprehensive analysis of the multiracial characters' difficulties in times of internal and external chaos, Federmayer explores how the novels make up the fictional tapestry of an evolving human *risk narrative* whose anthropogenic effects on the planet might threaten an "ecological holocaust."

Krzysztof Wasilewski's paper, "The Image of Immigrants as Anarchists in the American Press, 1886-1888," seeks to explore the American press coverage of anarchism and anarchists in 1886-1888, following the bomb explosion at a mass protest in Chicago on May 4, 1886. Relying on René Girard's concept of the scapegoat, using discourse analytical methods the author scrutinizes the substantial coverage of the protest in local and metropolitan US newspapers thus giving evidence to his claim that immigrants—including many Eastern Europeans—were labeled as collective scapegoats for the social upheaval.

The essay section of the issue concludes with the review essay written by Ildikó Limpár on Suzanne Collins's dystopian Young Adult novel series, *The Hunger Games* trilogy (2008-2010). She examines four collections of articles published recently by McFarland and argues that these volumes demonstrate the necessity of providing accessible critical material for purposes not limited to scholarly research.

As always, *HJEAS* strives to keep readers informed about new research in the fields of English, American, and Irish Studies. The review section of this issue offers critical assessments of recent publications in Irish theatre, new readings in African American literature, Native American literature and culture, travel writing, American politics, as well as books on body studies, masculinity studies, adaptation theories, heritage film, and post-millennial British fiction.

The editor wishes to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of all the blind reviewers and members of the *HJEAS* editorial board—notably copy editor Judit Szathmári, review editor Gabriella Moise, and technical editor Balázs Venkovits—who all have helped bring the current issue out.

Last, but not least, on behalf of the editorial board I extend my warmest greetings to Editor-in-Chief Donald E. Morse on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of his editorship at *HJEAS*. We greatly appreciate his unceasing professional advice and support, his mentoring and encouraging us in every possible way. We are all sincerely thankful to him and wish him many years to come so that we will work together to further advance the international recognition of the journal and maintain the high standard of contributions.

Lenke Németh
University of Debrecen

Works Cited

Marshall, David. "Literature and the Other Arts: *Ut pictura poesis*." *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism: Volume 4, The Eighteenth Century*. Eds. H. B. Nisbet, and Claude Rawson. Cambridge: CUP, 1997. 681-700. Print.

Uncorrected proof