

Photography as a Witness of Theatre

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Résumé de l'article

Cet article se penche sur la photographie de théâtre. Partant de l'axiome selon lequel théâtre et photographie peuvent générer des questionnements théoriques et philosophiques concernant la représentation et l'auto-représentation, mon étude vise à comparer les stratégies visuelles et la construction du point de vue dans ces deux arts. Plusieurs autres questions sont également soulevées : les qualités d'une photo appartiennent-elles à l'objet saisi par la lentille ou à l'oeil du photographe ? Quelle importance accorder à l'objet qui 'provoque' la vision ? Le photographe de théâtre peut-il placer son appareil où il le désire ? Quelle est la fonction de l'énonciation photographique par rapport à l'énonciation théâtrale ?

En second lieu, mon étude offre une analyse de certaines photos de *Mère Courage et ses enfants* prises par Roger Pic au cours de la performance parisienne du Berliner Ensemble en 1957. L'analyse vise à démontrer que la photographie de théâtre, habituellement conçue sous l'angle du documentaire, peut acquérir un statut artistique, à condition de s'appuyer sur des stratégies énonciatives capables de signifier ce qui ne peut être photographié de manière directe : les mots et les émotions des personnages.

Photography as a Witness of Theatre

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1. Problems in Theatre Photography

Taking up theatre as a subject in photography, that is photographing theatrical works, resembles making a speech on photography itself, its own work, means, language: it's a kind of self-evaluation. Mutually, on those rare occasions in which theatre puts photographers on stage (as in Ibsen), it is easy to discover in those slightly demiurgic figures much more than a theatrical metaphor. It is as though two mirrors, different in nature and technique, were forced to reflect each other. The vicious circle is hardly avoidable and, in any case, dangerous. (Volli 1989)

The subject of this paper is theatre photography, a practice that offers a crucial meeting place between two arts that involve light and space — photography and drama. The first part of the paper gives reasons for my theoretical interest in theatre photography, whereas the second focuses on the analysis of some pictures of Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* taken by Roger Pic, the legendary photographer of the Berliner Ensemble.

2. When Two Arts Meet

According to Ugo Volli, when theatre and photography meet it is as though two mirrors, different in nature and technique, were forced to reflect each other. Not only can photography “witness” the transitory performance of theatre, but it can ‘bend’ it to meet its own technological needs (through focusing, framing and printing). The same is true for theatre: it challenges photography’s ability to give shape to movement and to the most *elusive* thing of all: the word. Furthermore, photography is sometimes used to create dramatic scenes of its own, which implies that the theatre doesn’t necessarily set the rules for picture taking. On the

contrary, as Chantal Meyer-Plantureux maintains, theatre photography of Brecht's plays has always been used to ratify the various configurations of the stage, the shifting dimensions and size of scenes and "underscenes" (Meyer-Plantureux & Besson 1995). Photography *tests* the art of the stage and, when the stage cannot be easily photographed, it can be called into question and must re-think itself. Photography also allows the art of theatre to question itself. As for theatre, it can exert a reflexive function on photo-shooting, by "meta-linguistic" suggestions on *framing* understood as a *bodily act*. Research on photography, which considers it a technological art devoid of corporeity, often forgets the importance of this issue. Theatre allows photography to measure up with its being a hybrid art, one in which the mechanical device comes to terms with the body and its sensory-motor syntax.

Let's consider the Italian theatre first, and not the experimental one. In this art, two different forms of performance and stage meet, each one with its own value and enunciative perspectives. In this respect, it is relevant to investigate to what extent the stage can be transformed relative to the photographer's and the actors' movements.

In a sense, many theatre photographers challenge, as Volli maintains in the *Quercia del Duca*, the work of the director or scenographer. For them,

Objects [...] have been designed to be watched in one stereotyped way: in the darkness, from a certain distance and from a limited array of angles. [These] are objects already owned by an author, who is often both *jealous* and *watchful*, and yet *hopeful* that they will be photographed. (1989: 69)

Everything that *should* and *could be seen on stage* should always be calculated and set prior to the performance; according to the director, photography must restrict itself to those viewpoints that have already been accounted for.

Our two arts of *mise-en-scène* challenge each other, comparing their visual and visionary capacities. Their visual perspectives do not overlap at all; on the contrary, they clash: on the one hand, drama speaks to an ideal audience sitting in the centre of the middle stalls; on the other, that area is not the best place to be for the photographer, as witnessed by Pic's own practice. As a photographer, Pic often shoots from an upper, oblique angle viewpoint. Such difference in perspective means that the photographic result is not limited to surveying the play's narrative action. Not surprisingly, Roland Barthes maintained it was only through photographs that the character of Katrin revealed herself in the 1957 Berliner Ensemble's Parisian production of Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children*. Only photos let Katrin, *Mother Courage's* mute daughter, claim her role; this did not happen in the performance, where the *character* Katrin was completely dominated by the *actress* Hélène Weigel, who played *Mother Courage*.



Figure 1

In the stills taken by Pic, H el ene Weigel's strong scenic presence diminishes, and that proves that drama is an art of moving bodies and energy expressed in action, whereas photography shows bodies as fixed points and frozen gestures. Photography is able to build portraits, and succeeds in strongly characterising even Kattrin, who is mute and, apparently, subdued by her mother. In this sense, we cannot agree with Ugo Volli in maintaining that theatre photography blocks the scenic movement, and thus shows the theatre, that it shows the effort and the actor but not the performance, the representation and not the fictional character. Sometimes, as for Kattrin and actress H el ene Weigel, the photograph succeeds in making anonymous, silent characters stronger than recognizable or famed actors. Theatre photography can implement a metamorphosis, making a character shine above the actor, such as Kattrin seizing her own space beside a most powerful actress. Photography shows here a strong critical and hermeneutical power.

By stopping movement, theatre photography also succeeds in portraying introspection, a power rarely found in the visual arts. The easiest way for performing thought is, of course, soliloquy; thanks to its framing that arrests and *extracts* the character from the ongoing action, photography can be considered an autonomous generator of soliloquies. The act of framing shots and wrenching the actor from the flow of action might be defined "soliloquizing" in that it allows to dig out interiority from an exchange of dialogue. By freezing movement and plot, photography can bring to light the fact that a character is moving away from the flow of the action, and so becomes introspective. Thus, theatre photography reveals itself to be an inter-semiotic intermediary/translator moving between the literary and the theatrical: its act of *extracting* moments from the scenic continuum depicts what is *residual* in the performance.

3. Reception Practices Between Theatre and Performance

We now move from text-related problems to issues relative to usages and practices (*cf.* Basso, Fossali & Dondero 2006). Who are the spectators

of theatre photography? This audience is variegated: it is composed of journalists, past or future audience members of a given performance and, especially, of the stage directors who have, or will, stage the same play. This is why I have chosen to characterize photography as a “witness” in my title, playing on both meanings of this term. On the one hand, theatre photography is one of the few means by which we can permanently witness a theatrical performance which, by definition, is something fleeting, impermanent. On the other hand, series of photographs may allow us to compare different performances of the same play. Theatre shots are like a *relay baton* whereby a performance can be relayed to the director next in line for putting on the same play¹. Photos are witness to different and comparable performances; one photo-shot becomes a witness for the following performer, and a corpus of theatre photographs can mean the transferring of a potential set of instructions, *i.e.* giving the baton.

Other attentive consumers of theatre photography are actors taking on roles in a play that has been photographed. What is theatre photography for an actor? Is there some sort of relation for him/her between theatre photos and family snapshots (the latter being used mostly as mementoes)? The actor’s photo springs into life like a portrait; however, a portrait is bound to be sold to the best bidder on the market, and so it is very different from family photographs. It may also serve in a book or in a *résumé*, as a sort of professional calling card, as Barthes mentions in his notes on the Harcourt actor² (1957). In the stage shot, instead, the actor is busy doing something: he is not shot in the moment prior to becoming a character, but is depicted in his hard labour. Moreover, photography taken during performance differs from homemade photographs because the latter are always linked to leisure time, family and hobbies. How can the actor on stage watch himself, since he is blinded by the spotlight, sees the audience as an undifferentiated dark mass of people and cannot enjoy neither perspective tricks, nor choreographic effects? Photography allows him to discover the show, himself in action and the play as though he were someone else. The actor always has a disjointed view of the performance because, while he is playing, “he has [...] to think of himself, and not of the external appearance of his work” (1989: 79). As Volli maintains:

The actor playing Othello needs to see *his colleague* in Iago’s clothes, while the audience needs to see Iago (and Othello) in the two actors’ clothes. This is the biggest difference. (*Ibid.*)

“When the audience watches the show, the actor watches the theatrical structure” (*Ibid.*); since the actor lives the performance inside out, knows all the technical mechanisms and feels physical strain, photography allows him to see *between* the performance and theatre, to occupy a space that lies between the spectator’s passive distancing and the active labour of acting, *i.e.* *in-between*. From the actor’s point of

view, theatre photography reveals the meeting of these two viewpoints and compares them.

Shall photography reveal actors under characters, and fabric, wood, ropes and machines under curtains. Shall the representation show styles and culture under its performance-sensitive surface. The photographic film discloses discreetly the producer's reality: this is a great credit for this art, which shows its full theoretical character, and not only its mimetic one. (*Ibid.*: 115)

4. Theatre Photography Between Document and Art

Not only does theatre photography compare two arts of "doing", two ways of preparing viewpoints, of shaping space and movement through distinct visual apparatuses (e.g., theatrical staging *vs.* photographic framing), it also contrasts photography's documentary and artistic proclivities. Theatre photography has to be *par excellence* documentary because it has to *respect* the director's, the actors' and the author's work: briefly speaking, theatre photography cannot be fully experimental, or self-reflexive. Support for this claim can be found in the fact that stage photographs are typically untitled and usually displayed serially: they have no clearly marked aesthetic autonomy. And when, occasionally, titles are used they derive from stage directions. Unlike fully autonomous artistic works, these photographs never free themselves from their point of origin and function as illustrative documents of a performance. Here, photographs draw the line between literary text and performance, translating or even transcribing the former while at the same time remaining faithful to the latter's own translation/transcription of the text. (Moreover, photographic documents also help to compare the *mise-en-scène* of different directors.) But even though their primary function is to record and document, stage photographs can also achieve some degree of aesthetic recognition depending on contextual variables such as their place of exhibition, for instance.

The intra-textual or intrinsic aesthetic value of photographs can be difficult to determine as Jean-Marie Schaeffer argued in his book *L'image précaire. Du dispositif photographique* (1987). Indeed, how much of the aesthetic evaluation of a photograph is due to the photographer and how much is due to the object depicted? Referring to Blossfeldt's amazing photos of botanical wonders, Schaeffer asks himself: "how can we distinguish what belongs to the photographs from what belongs to the luxuriousness of nature?" (*Ibid.* :159). Schaeffer reminds us that beautiful photographs are often the result of chance, thus arguing for the importance of the object in the aesthetics of photography. Does beauty reveal itself in the object, or in its *mise-en-scène* through the photographer's sensibility? How truly important is the object regardless of the photograph? What value should we impart to it and to the photographic process? Such issues have never arisen with painting, even landscape painting. Take Canaletto, for instance, no one attributes the beauty of

his works solely to that of Venice!

What boundaries distinguish between the visual beauty that the photograph conveys to its object and that which the object conveys to it? To answer, Schaeffer compares photography with literature. His claim is that with literature one can identify a great writer by way of a single masterpiece, whereas no single photograph can ever turn its maker into an artist. As Schaeffer asserts:

In order to accept a single photograph as the result of a specific photographic talent, we have to serialize it with other images by the same photographer. There is a dissociation between one's personal evaluation, based on a single photograph, and the idea of "work" referred to a *regular* talent. (*Ibid.*: 208)

The series helps us in looking very carefully at a picture in order to distinguish it from others. The presence of a structured body of work enables the viewer to focus on repetitions or differences that can acquire aesthetic and semantic values. Indeed, if we are to distinguish the relevant features of the photograph we need to provide it with some common benchmark, otherwise any judgement runs the risk of being arbitrary. A series produces a rhythm of forms that allows us to interpret a single picture. According to F. Rastier:

The path in producing or interpreting needs rhythm — the basic cell of any action — that, in turn, fixes the regular segments of forms and whose variations signals its singular points (2003: 69).

Following through with the example given above, it would be interesting to analyse the corpus of *Mother Courage* together with other shots by the same photographer (Roger Pic) of other shows by the same director/writer (Brecht), as well as other playwrights chosen by Pic, such as Shakespeare or Pirandello. A comparative analysis would be useful in understanding differences, similarities and constant elements in Pic's photographic style. (Unfortunately, we cannot deal with this issue in this paper, but hopefully we will report about this project in the future.)

What are the criteria for the aesthetic judgement of a theatre photo, and what are its aesthetic traits? Of course there are different benchmarks for "artisticness" or, better yet, different degrees of semantic and syntactic saturation according to the type of picture (*cf.* Nelson Goodman). The criteria of "artisticness" in theatre shots are very distinct from those of war, sport, or landscape pictures. Definitely, the photo must be able to problematize various degrees of faithfulness and inter-semiotic translation between different arts. Theatre photography is a meditation on different media, expressive matters and figurative syntax. Possibly, a theatre photo can be defined as artistic when, textually speaking, it can relate significantly to the different media involved: literature, staging, acting, body movement and spoken word. Let us now examine our corpus of Pic photographs to see whether it can help us with these issues.

5. *Mother Courage and Her Children*. Analysis of Pic's Photographic Work

The above preliminary remarks introduce the analysis of a special body of work. It might not be considered fully representative of what theatre photography is nowadays, yet it remains interesting if only because it evidences a strong relationship between a great theatre author, Bertolt Brecht, a famous company, the Berliner Ensemble, and the best-known theatre photographer, Roger Pic, (whose work was commented by none other than Roland Barthes). The photographs are of *Mother Courage and Her Children*, as staged by the Berliner Ensemble in 1957 in Paris at the Théâtre des Nations. This was the French translation of a play first performed in German, in 1954, and it aroused bitter controversy between, on the one hand, Roland Barthes and Bernard Dort, both strong Brechtian supporters, and, on the other, Marxists, right-winged critics and other intellectuals³. Not only did these pictures mark a turn in the critical career of Barthes, but they are crucial in the history of French theatre photography, made up previously of shots of actors fallen from the stage. Furthermore, these pictures are the only available visual record of the Berliner Ensemble performing in Paris.

We are going to focus on some moments of *Mother Courage*, starting with her gay entrance with the cart dragged by her two children and accompanied by her mute daughter Kattrin (figs. 2-3). Afterwards, we are going to analyse some shots showing her prosperous trading times (figs. 4-5), and others displaying her grief at the loss of her two children (fig. 6). Then, we are going to look at *Mother Courage's* decline, alone with the Cook and Kattrin (fig. 7). Finally, *Mother Courage* is depicted in her physical decadence together with the Cook (figs. 8-9).



Figure 2



Figure 3

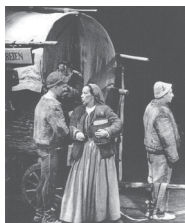


Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9

In the first place let's note that any full investigation of theatre photography should consider complete series of shots taken by a photographer. This is necessary in order to understand how photography succeeds in rendering the rhythm of a play and how it attempts to record or transform it. As Barthes asserts in his fine article "*Sept photo-modèles de Mère Courage*", the corpus in this case should be made up of approximately one hundred photos. For this paper, I have chosen some of the most significant images that attest (or witness) to the multi-faceted performance of *Mother Courage*. This multi-faceted vision is a strategy adopted by Pic in order to *sample* different moments in the story, and to *collate* different details of it. The first shots *tail* closely the performance, as they follow closely the play's length and rhythm. This series shows that photo-shooting is ruthless and breathless, and it expresses a kind of *pathos* that aims at creating a sample of the various phases of the performance. However, this panting search has a counter-effect, namely it induces in the spectator a "melancholy of lost movements" which can never be repeated.

Let's focus now on point of view. Although the shots make Pic proximal to the actor, we cannot say that this closeness aims at adjusting the photographer's perspective to the distance created by Brecht through the "profile" and the third-person narrator. Brecht wants to sacralize the poor (Brechtian Christology) and he does so "in the third person", whereas Pic neither amends this enunciative stance, nor seeks to translate it into

an equivalent form of photographic enunciation. Despite his proximity, Pic adopts a “profile” view: Brecht’s rough drama is rough even in photography. Pic’s shots intend to be the statement of a statement. In a sense, his photography draws on the Brechtian oxymoron: this story we are looking at concerns us very significantly but, at the same time, it is transversal to ourselves. We are looking at it with a certain proximity, yet the latter isn’t frontal; rather, it is an oblique view which distances the viewer and creates a certain asymmetry between the enunciated performance and the photographic enunciation.

6. From Documentation to Infiltration

The search for a system for representing the various phases of the performance is not the only strategy adopted by Pic; let’s focus on two shots (fig. 10-11).



Figure 10



Figure 11

Up to now, Pic’s photos “witness” the “tableau-effect” of the play, and the compactness of its acts and scenes. On the contrary, these two shots intend to flush out an interstitial reality; they look for interstices inside the theatrical “tableau” which build on the movement of bodies, costumes and scenography. To some extent, these pictures want to grasp the word. But if the *pronounced word* is *interstitial* (compared to costumes and scenography, which can easily be photographed) how is it possible for photography to illustrate it since it possesses *only one* expressive plane, *i.e.* the visible, static one?

In theatre photography, the passionate “durativity” of the play is returned to with a limited stabilization and an attempt to fit the image with the character’s expression of passion. Both the picture’s “steadiness” and its ‘transparency’ correspond in fact to passionate durativity. But Pic seeks to capture its intermediacy, *i.e.*, when passion is “punctual” or when emotional bursts take place inside the flow of events. Emotional bursts are thus depicted as out-of-focus, which is something spectators watching the performance cannot actually see. These blurred images are, in a sense, foreign to the actual, physical, performance. Clearly, then, Pic’s photographs are not meant to be transparent recordings: rather, they *dig* and *seep*. Pic, then, is not afraid of committing non-photogenic acts, nor does he stop when

faced with an incomplete gesture or action. For him, a photo of an action that has not yet been fully accomplished cannot be considered ugly: it offers itself as an attempt to capture the becoming of speech, of passionate speech. If such speech represents a burst of emotion, then the blurred image can seize it. If, on the other hand, the spoken word merely serves the aim of theatrical-visual argumentation then it isn't necessary for the image to capture it through any such special process and any photographic tableau will do.

In such instances, the photo need not be amalgamated into a series so as to create a "tailing-effect" or a sequence of "tableau-effects". What is not put on display is a magnification of photographic qualities. This is where the act of photographically capturing a play truly begins. Emotion comes to life through photographic enunciation.

A different strategy can be seen at work in the photo that displays Mother Courage's scream upon seeing the dead body of her beloved son (fig. 12). Here, the enunciative gesture consists in freezing the burst of emotion. The desperate scream is turned into an absolute by the photographer's approach. This frightening scream comes back to us from the performance with one of the few close-ups of Mother Courage. A central moment in the play and a distinct image in Pic's catalogue of shots it permeates the entire performance, "runs over" all the other images and thus "spreads" everywhere.

It should be obvious by now that theatre photography can offer even more than a doorway to an impermanent performance, a past record for future performances, it can also interpret a play, offer a hermeneutic discourse regarding it.

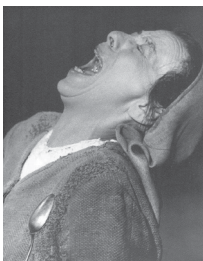


Figure 12

7. The Body's Fold And The Proper Name

Among Pic's *décollements* from the many-faceted restitution of the performance and its rhythm, we cannot forget the most important, that which finds itself displayed in the last shots (figs. 13-19).



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15

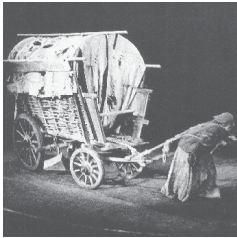


Figure 16



Figure 17

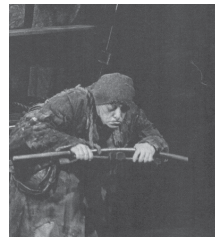


Figure 18



Figure 19

They show Pic's favourite moments from Brecht's play, and here the photographer's work is at its clearest, emerging as an authorial device. These seven pictures witness Pic getting ever more passionate and moving beyond any intent to use photography as a way of recovering a performance. Pic's style changes when Mother Courage loses her children and she slowly realizes she is now alone. If Mother Courage's ascent as a trader is retrieved from the performance through a multi-faceted strategy, that of the lonely Mother Courage is recovered through a change of rhythm as the photographer now stops chasing and monitoring events. Pic gets keener with Mother Courage's fall, he intensifies and lengthens her drama, her descent and her sunset. The circular movement of the performance is thus

dizzily expanded.

The character's fall, the circular *mise-en-scène*, doubled by the actor's movements and Pic's photos (which represent an apparently infinite circle) have much to do with Mother Courage's posture in this scene and her arching body. Let us remember that the play begins with "arrogant" and mobile bodies: Mother Courage comes onto the stage with her children dancing and singing in their cart; theirs are flexible, fast and soft bodies. In the end, however, folds on Mother Courage's face and her forward leaning body are unforgiving. From the very beginning to the end of the photo-shoot, we pass from the transitivity of the dramatic process to the intransitivity of the body's folds. While the multi-faceted photographic strategy sought to recover the multiplicity and diversity of the play's events, their reversibility and non-isotopicity, Pic's photos of Mother Courage's fall recover for us the isotopy of irreversibility with regards to the course of events and Mother Courage's exhausted body.

In the earlier pictures Pic went along capturing the rhythm of the play. Here he seizes the scene of temporal circularity and the irreversibility of the situation, yet he does *not* achieve this by recovering the play's own rhythm. In these seven photos courage is embodied by Mother Courage as by an irreversible fold. As the play moves toward its ending, courage doesn't mean one's resolve at facing a given hinderance. Rather, it becomes that which is absolute *through* the body, and it cannot be reversible because it is without hope. Throughout the play, we are told it is reckless to overcome danger, but in the end courage is rendered as an absolute because danger is *all*: there is no possibility of overcoming hinderance anymore. Mother Courage's dealings, her adjusting to worldly needs, her ability to bend to these needs, have been transformed into one final fold, that of her forever arched body.

That courage has become absolute is stressed by bodily posture, by its irreversible arching and by the closed circle of the scenography which the photos seek to reproduce. The stage's circularity, previously hidden from view now appears in the photos as another expression of the irreversibility of Mother Courage's wretched condition. We now finally encounter the true meaning of the play's title: the mother herself is courage. Courage becomes a proper name, written with a capital letter by Brecht and written in light by Pic through the circular representation of an eternally broken body.

In the end Mother Courage, a prototypical mother protecting her children, doesn't have anything to save; but, she has the courage to keep on living beyond what she had to preserve. In the first photographic sequences, Mother Courage is shot while she is looking at the horizon (fig. 20), and at what the future will bring to her, because "looking at" means having one's own aims clearly in mind (her and her children's survival); at the end of the play, she doesn't look at anything, and is photographed with her eyes shut.

Figure 20



The persistence of courage will spread beyond what is “her own”, beyond her family. *Mother Courage and Her Children* begins with a family of characters guided by a brave and protective mother and ends with the *mise-en-scène* of what has become an unfamiliar character.

Conclusions

Some scholars have defined theatre photography as the representation of a *go-between* — the point of conversion between genetic and diegetic, between the staging and the final performance, between theatrical enunciation and the world of the actor intended as a fictional character, halfway between Vittorio Gassman and *King Lear*. This is because photography extracts the genetic from the diegetic, and finally recovers the scenographer’s signature from what the audience had attributed to the fiction. Photography captures what lies between the stage and the strategies of theatre in order to disclose the very apparatus of theatre. Theatre photography represents an epiphany of the productive performance that “bleeds” from the fiction.

Like many other theatre photos, our corpus does not recover the actress behind the character, as Volli maintains in his analysis of Maurizio Buscarino. In a very different way, the work of Pic gives the fictional character the dignity of a proper name. While Anna Fierling gives herself an irreversible, definite, non-local courage through her body’s arching, the photographer illuminates Brecht’s art in giving a proper, exemplary name, *Mother Courage*, to Anna Fierling.

The final pictures might look less faithful than those taken earlier during the performance; yet they are faithful to the play in a figurative sense. Pic is able to portray the proper name given by Brecht to Anna Fierling. These photos are not interstitial, offering a view of what lies between theatre as apparatus and theatre as performance. Through them, the actress disappears and the character of Courage becomes firm, irreversible and sculpted. Theatre and photography meet in her body, which is bent and covered in sores; the photo reaches theatre in

mooring the matter of sculpted passion with no compensation and no return: the matter is forever set, it is rock-hard courage without any reward.

Brecht's concealing of courage finds its counterpart in the single expressive plane of theatre photography and, in the end, it is photography that gives the character's destiny its seal.

Notes

- 1 The Italian word for relay baton is "testimone", which also means witness.
- 2 Cf. Barthes' *Mythologies*.
- 3 Some of these polemic pieces are published in *Théâtre populaire* and then were later re-published in Barthes' *Oeuvres Complètes*.

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Abstract

My paper investigates the meeting of theatre and photography in 'theatre photography'. Recognizing that both art forms can determine theoretical and philosophical views on representation and self-representation, I aim to compare their visual strategies and the way they construct point of view. In the process several questions are raised: do qualities of photographs belong to objects photographed or to photographs themselves? How important is the object that 'triggers' the view? Should the theatre photographer place his camera anywhere? What of framing?

In the second section I offer an analysis of photographs taken by Roger Pic in 1957 during the Paris performance of Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* by the Berliner Ensemble. This analysis seeks to demonstrate that theatre photography, which often seen as an example of documentary photography, can reach artistic status, provided it relies on enunciative strategies that express what cannot otherwise be photographed in a 'direct' manner, namely the characters' words and emotions.

Résumé

Cet article se penche sur la photographie de théâtre. Partant de l'axiome selon

lequel théâtre et photographie peuvent générer des questionnements théoriques et philosophiques concernant la représentation et l'auto-représentation, mon étude vise à comparer les stratégies visuelles et la construction du point de vue dans ces deux arts. Plusieurs autres questions sont également soulevées: les qualités d'une photo appartiennent-elles à l'objet saisi par la lentille ou à l'oeil du photographe? Quelle importance accorder à l'objet qui 'provoque' la vision? Le photographe de théâtre peut-il placer son appareil où il le désire? Quelle est la fonction de l'énonciation photographique par rapport à l'énonciation théâtrale?

En second lieu, mon étude offre une analyse de certaines photos de *Mère Courage et ses enfants* prises par Roger Pic au cours de la performance parisienne du Berliner Ensemble en 1957. L'analyse vise à démontrer que la photographie de théâtre, habituellement conçue sous l'angle du documentaire, peut acquérir un statut artistique, à condition de s'appuyer sur des stratégies énonciatives capables de signifier ce qui ne peut être photographié de manière directe: les mots et les émotions des personnages.

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