

INTRODUCTION: PERSPECTIVES ON PERFORMATIVITY AND CREATIVITY

Martin Procházka

This special issue has originated from an international conference on “Performativity and Creativity in Modern Cultures,” which took place at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in Prague in November 2019 as a part of the research project “Creativity and Adaptability as Conditions of the Success of Europe in an Interrelated World.” Whereas the topics of conference presentations ranged from “performativity in modern technology and media cultures” to “formation of the self and the public sphere” in theatre and rituals, this issue focuses on two major perspectives on performativity: philosophical/aesthetic and theatrical/dramatic. Apart from semiotic, existential and legal angles, the first perspective comprises more complex approaches of language and political philosophy as well as those of the theories of fiction and media. The second perspective includes models as performatives in theatrical and social practice, anthropologically defined types of play and distinct forms of media transposition. The problems of creativity, ranging from the making of aesthetic objects in poetry and modelling worlds through play to uses of masks for the construction of a public persona are discussed in the framework of these perspectives representing two major dimensions of performativity.

As a concept, performativity emerges rather late: it does not appear in J.L. Austin’s foundational lectures, *How to Do Things with Words*. It had been used quite rarely and rather reductively¹ before the early 1990s when Judith Butler put it in

¹ In “How Performatives Work” (*Linguistics and Philosophy*, 12.5 [1989]: 535-58) John Searle focuses on “special semantic properties of performativity” (554), trying to collapse the

circulation with her influential books *Gender Trouble* and *Bodies That Matter*. A new, no longer language-centred, perspective on performativity develops from Butler's alternative, non-essentialist and dynamic, view of gender based on her analysis of "drag." Viewing gender as "a kind of persistent impersonation that passes as the real,"² Butler challenged established meanings of "gender," "identity," "personality," "performance," "illusion," and "reality." Expanding and deepening the meaning of "performance," which "destabilizes the very distinctions between the natural and the artificial, depth and surface, inner and outer" (viii), she endowed the category of performativity with a specific political meaning, decentring the authority of "institutions" invoked by Austin and Searle and focusing instead on "the genealogical critique [...] investigating the political stakes in designation as *origin* and *cause* of those identity categories that are in fact the *effects* of institutions, practices and discourses with multiple and diffuse points of origin" (viii-ix). The fact that performativity of gender (and, one could add, all other important concepts used to identify and describe individuals and communities) can be "politically enforced," also implies that performativity involves "splittings, self-parody, self-criticism [...] that [can] reveal [a] fundamentally phantasmatic status" of what is called "natural" (139). In brief, "performativity," in Butler's early use, implies both the possibility (or even feasibility) of performing identities or social norms and their subversion by means of parody or critical reflection.

In *Bodies That Matter* Butler narrows down her approach, connecting performativity, broadly understood as a discursive phenomenon and an enforced

difference between its linguistic aspects and extra-linguistic phenomena, such as "intention": "intention can be encoded in the meaning of the sentence when the sentence encodes executive self-referentiality over an intentional verb" (553). Searle's reductive approach was criticized by Jacques Derrida in "Afterword: Toward an Ethics of Discussion" (trans. Samuel Weber, *Limited Inc* [Evanston, IL, and London: Northwestern University Press, 1988]), stressing "the iterability of the mark beyond all human speech acts" (134-35) and also beyond the "force" and "decidability" of certain political acts, such as, e.g., *The Declaration of Independence*: "whether independence is stated or produced by this utterance" (Jacques Derrida, "Declarations of Independence," *Negotiations: Interventions and Interviews, 1971-2000*, ed. and trans. Elizabeth Rothenberg [Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002] 49). Searle's approach is based, among others, on Carl Ginet's article, "Performativity," *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 3.2 (1979): 245-65, which sums up Austin's theory and narrows its focus on "performativity" to the contexts and semantic qualities of specific verbs.

² Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990) viii. Subsequent references are given as page numbers in brackets in the text.

social practice, with “citationality” (based on Derrida’s notions of “general citationality” and “iterability³), and using the Foucauldian notion of “materialization” in her critique of Lacan’s “symbolic order” as the “law” regulating sexual identities and desire.⁴ In her more general perspective, “performativity” is “a specific modality of power as discourse,” opposed to any “willful and arbitrary choice” and stemming from “the historicity of discourse and, in particular, the historicity of norms” (187). Despite this rather determinist view, Butler points out that “discursive performativity” fails “to finally and fully establish the identity to which it refers” and that “[i]terability underscores the non-self-identical status of [...] norms” determining identities (188). Moreover, in her analysis of “queer” performativity Butler shows that recasting its “agency” into the “chain of historicity” avows “a set of constraints on the past and future that mark at once the *limits* of agency and its most *enabling conditions*” (228). This, among others, implies that Butler defines performativity as a specific dynamic of power, which enables its self-reflexive understanding (“being implicated in that which one opposes”) and, simultaneously, a redirection “against itself to produce alternative modalities of power, to establish a political contestation that is not a ‘pure’ opposition, a ‘transcendence’ of contemporary relations of power, but a difficult labor of forging a future from resources inevitably impure” (241). As a result, Butler’s theory of performativity opens a space for creativity, which is not understood as an arbitrary act of individual will or “a ‘transcendence’ of contemporary relations of power,” but as a future-bound transformation of discourses and norms maintained by enforced “citations”:

We no more create from nothing the political terms that come to represent our “freedom” than we are responsible for the terms that carry the pain of social injury. And yet, neither of these terms are as a result any less necessary to work and rework within political discourse.

(229)

³ Jacques Derrida, “Signature Event Context,” trans. Samuel Weber and Jeffrey Mehlman, *Limited Inc* 12-23.

⁴ Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993) 8-9, 12-15. Subsequent references are marked by page numbers in brackets. Butler adapts Derrida’s notion of “citation” from “Signature Event Context,” *Limited Inc* 18. She emphasizes that “[p]erformativity is not a singular ‘act’ for it is always a reiteration of a norm or a set of norms, and to that extent that it acquires an act-like status in the present, it conceals or dissimulates the conventions of which it is a repetition” (12). Or, in a more condensed form: “performativity cannot be understood outside a process of iterability, a regularized and constrained repetition of norms” (95).

Two years after the appearance of *Bodies That Matter*, Andrew Parker and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick responded to the growing currency of “performativity” in academic discourse and a deepening difference between its usages in philosophy and theatre. While “in its deconstructive sense, performativity signals absorption; in the vicinity of the stage the performative is the theatrical.”⁵ Another gap is widening between the meaning of “performativity” as a technocratically understood efficiency of a system (in Lyotard’s criticism of Niklas Luhmann⁶) and Paul de Man’s, J. Hillis Miller’s (or Werner Hamacher’s, in this issue) emphasis on “the dislinkage precisely of cause and effect between the signifier and the world” (2). Parker and Sedgwick point out the interconnection of the traditional examination of the relationship of “speech to act” (pursued by linguistics and deconstruction) and the newer approaches focusing on “the relation of act to identity” (6). Although their identification of performativity with Derrida’s “general iterability which constitutes a violation of the allegedly rigorous purity of every event of discourse or every speech act” and “without which there would not even be a ‘successful’ performative”⁷ seems to point back towards the critique of Austin’s theory, it also establishes a new link between performativity and performance: “a pervasive theatricality common to stage and world alike” (6).

This is also true of their analysis of Austin’s “ways parasitic upon the normal use” and “etiolations”⁸ used to exclude performativity that “threatens to blur the difference between theater and world” (6). Parker’s and Sedgwick’s critique of Austin makes clear that his performative theory is based on problematic assumptions, first of the unity of the speaker and the speech act and also of the performer and the action, and secondly of the unity of the action and “the proper context” (8) or, in Austin’s phrase, “appropriate circumstances.”⁹ Given the complexity and diversity of the relations among the speaker, performer, action and context, “the link between performativity and performance in the theatrical

⁵ Andrew Parker and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Performativity and Performance* (New York and London: Routledge, 1995) 2. Subsequent references are given as page numbers in brackets in the text.

⁶ See Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1984) 63: “the system seems to be a vanguard machine dragging humanity after it, dehumanizing it in order to rehumanize it at a different level of normative capacity.”

⁷ Derrida, “Signature Event Context” 17-18.

⁸ J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 2nd edn, ed. J.O. Urmson and Marina Sbisa (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975) 22.

⁹ Austin 6-8 and *passim*.

sense [...] emerges [...] as an active question" (8). Performatives are apt to exercise "transformative effects on interlocutory space" which may "associate it with theatrical performance" and "by the same token with political activism, or with ritual" (13).

In this way Parker and Sedgwick redefine the notion of performativity as agency which does not have to be connected with the identity or capacity of the speaker/performer or with the "appropriate circumstances," but is a transformative force, changing "interlocutory space" or any other site or context of the performative action. As a result, performativity must always be considered in connection with performance, which may include transformation of identities, institutions, interchanges, practices and their spaces. Although this broad perspective on performativity may almost seem to encourage its identification with creativity (especially in view of the theatrical dimension of performativity), it should be remembered that the relations between creative subjects and their creations (not only between speakers and their utterances as Parker and Sedgwick have it) are "contingent and radically *heterogeneous*, as well as [...] contestable" (14).

The articles in this issue do not discuss performativity and creativity separately, but are aware of their "contingent," "heterogeneous" and even "contestable" relationships, agencies and forms. This is a major difference from the past approaches to creativity based on the analogy between divine and human creation as two interdependent agencies. Although its roots can be traced back to Platonism, this analogy grows in importance in early modernity and develops towards its transformation in the late Enlightenment and Romanticism.¹⁰ The two

¹⁰ For Renaissance notions of creativity see, e.g., George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie* (London: Richard Field, 1589) 19: "A Poet is as much to say as a maker. And our English name well conformes with the Greeke word: for of [Greek: poiein] to make, they call a maker *Poeta*. Such as (by way of resemblance and reuerently) we may say of God: who without any trauell to his diuine imagination, made all the world of nought, nor also by any paterne or mould as the Platonicks with their Ideas do phantastically suppose." Puttenham's description sounds very similar to the quote attributed to Torquato Tasso: "il Poeta era cosa divina, e i Greci li chiamano con un attributo, che si dà a Dio, quasi volendo inferire, che *nel mondo non ci è chi meriti nome di creatore, che Dio e il Poeta*" (the Poet is a thing divine and the Greeks called him using that God-given attribute, meaning that there is none in the world who would deserve the name of creator, but God and the Poet). Pierantonio Serassi, *La Vita di Torquato Tasso* (The Life of Torquato Tasso) (Roma: Stamperia Pagliarini, 1785) 492-93 (emphasis added). Tasso's alleged quotation was still cited, in a modified form, in P.B. Shelley's *Defence of Poetry* (1821). For S.T. Coleridge's famous analogy between divine and artistic creation see his definitions of "primary" and "secondary" imagination in *Biographia Literaria* (1817), ed.

poles of this analogy seem to merge in the Romantic notion of the work of art as an “organic form.”¹¹ In spite of this, the distinction between divine and human creation does not disappear. It survives not only thanks to the identification of the work of art with the process of natural growth (often explained as a God-given necessity), but also in the analogy between organisms and works of art in Kant’s *Critique of Judgement*.

Kant’s approach is based on the teleological concept of the organic form, understood as “intrinsic natural perfection,” which is “unthinkable and inexplicable on any analogy to any known physical, or natural, agency [...], not even excepting [...] the suggestion of any strictly apt analogy to human art.”¹² Even though the gap between the “natural perfection” and “human art” seems to be bridged by the overarching concept of “moral teleology,” which gives the purpose to all existence, the duality of the divine and the human still remains: humans must recognize and fulfil “the final purpose of the being of all things [...], the supreme Cause [...], whereby it is able to subject the whole of nature to that single design (for which nature is merely the instrument), – i.e. to think it as a Deity.”¹³

The divine/human duality is transformed in the nineteenth-century approaches to creativity, but it leaves traces even in Nietzsche’s philosophy notorious for its proclaiming the death of God. As Gilles Deleuze shows, for Nietzsche any proper creation means making “use of excess in order to invent new forms of life [...]. But this task is not completed in man. Going as far as he can man raises negation to a power of affirming. But *affirming in its full power, affirming affirmation itself – this is beyond man’s strength.*”¹⁴ In Nietzsche’s view of creativity, God is replaced by “the Overman as a new form of life” and art “realises the whole of this programme: the highest power of the false, Dionysian affirmation or the genius of the superhuman.”¹⁵

James Engell and W. Jackson Bate, *The Bollingen Series*, vol. 75 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983) 1:305.

¹¹ For a detailed interpretation of “organic form” and its history in the Enlightenment and Romanticism see M.H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (1953) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) 156-225, especially 177: in Coleridge’s aesthetics “these concepts of growth, assimilation and biological law are translated from nature to the poetic mind.”

¹² Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement* (§ 65), trans. James Creed Meredith, rev. and ed. Nicholas Walker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) 203.

¹³ Kant (§87) 376, 377.

¹⁴ Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (London and New York: Continuum, 1986) 185.

¹⁵ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 185.

Devoid of metaphysical and mythological connotations, the duality of creation seems to re-emerge even in later twentieth-century approaches to creativity, such as Maturana's and Varela's theory of "autopoiesis," reformulated by Niklas Luhmann. While Maturana and Varela use autopoiesis as an "explanatory analogy,"¹⁶ based on the performative notion of observation as "embodied action,"¹⁷ which can produce "a unity in *different* domains, depending on the distinctions" made by the observer,¹⁸ Luhmann employs a different, disparaging analogy between the (early) modern subject's "ennui" or "boredom" and "the empty circularity of pure autopoiesis" of "self-referential systems," whose "theory [is] able to formulate this latent unity of the subject and its ennui – a theory of the self-despairing subject, a theory of dynamism achieved through self-desperation [...]."¹⁹ In brief, both approaches to creativity as "autopoiesis" depend on different articulations of the duality of creation in terms of an analogy, one time between the observation as "embodied action" (a "human" dimension) and the unity of a system (a substitute of "the divine") consisting of "*different* domains," another time between the modern subject ("human") and the dynamism of a "self-referential system" (again, a substitute of the "divine").

This persistent dualism has been overcome in Gilles Deleuze's concept of the artwork as a machine, based on a transversal approach to systems, signs and their sense, and first formulated in his *Proust and Signs* (1964, 1969, 1973). The basis of Deleuze's approach to creativity is performance as "style," a dynamic wholeness manifesting itself in the rhizomatic, proliferating flow of time, which, in keeping with Bergson's thought, "signifies that not everything is given; the Whole is not givable."²⁰ Deleuze's "style" is self-referential but, in contrast to Luhmann's autopoiesis, does not produce an "empty circularity." It "gather[s] up the ultimate fragments, to sweep along, at different speeds all the pieces, each one that refers to a different whole, to no whole at all, to no other whole than that of style."²¹ This notion of performativity/creativity cannot be reduced to the machinistic aesthetics and automata of the early avant-garde: it can be posited as an objective of major

¹⁶ Dedre Gentner, "Are Scientific Analogies Metaphors?" *Metaphor: Problems and Perspectives*, ed. David S. Miall (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1982) 118.

¹⁷ Francisco J. Varela, Evan Thompson and Eleanor Rosch, *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience* (Cambridge, MA, and London: The MIT Press, 1991).

¹⁸ Humberto R. Maturana and Francisco J. Varela, *The Tree of Knowledge: The Biological Roots of Human Understanding*, rev. edn (Boston, MA, and London: Shambhala, 1987) 135.

¹⁹ Niklas Luhmann, *Essays on Self-Reference* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990) 118.

²⁰ Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000) 129.

²¹ Deleuze, *Proust and Signs* 115.

modern artistic developments transcending the organic analogy and the concept of autopoiesis. It has a potential to close the deepening gap between art and science, understanding both as – to use Ilya Prigogine’s words – “a dialogue with nature.”²²

The articles in this issue have not been selected to illustrate the above narrative, but to show its incompleteness and limitations. Within the two major perspectives described in the introductory paragraph, they open different views of performativity and creativity in modern art and culture starting with Romantic drama and ending with recent post-conceptual poetry. They imply that the understanding of the links between performativity and creativity does not depend only on the above discussed notions of identity, discourse, agency, organic form or autopoiesis, but also, for instance, on grasping “the basic semiotic principle of differentiality,” as Andreas Mahler’s opening article on “Performing Objects: On the Verbal Making of Things” demonstrates. Mahler’s detailed comparison of selected works of English Romanticism, French Symbolism, later nineteenth-century novel and twentieth-century modernist poetry and drama shows how the substitution of the “classical” aesthetic values based on mimesis by “textual events” stressing the fictionality of the artwork as an aesthetic object and creative process triggers the “imaginary” and involves it in the “tilting game” of performing.

Jeffrey Bell’s article “To Live a Problem: Deleuze and Existential Politics” points out another vital aspect of performativity – the life in “good faith,” which, according to Deleuze’s ethics, means “to embrace life as a problem” to affirm “a reality that gives us no determinate reasons or hopes upon which to justify our affirmations.” This gains importance at present, when the classical “republican values” (especially the “predictable alignment between ‘being good and doing good,’ between the actions that will perfect one as a person and those that will achieve one’s ends”²³) are not only challenged by mere “arbitrary” abuse of power, but chiefly by “a system, or ideology, that presents itself as a solution without a problem, or a forced solution.” Bell’s approach is valuable since it demonstrates a positive political use of Deleuzian concept of performativity (in its relatedness to an existentialist reflection of “good” and “bad faith” ranging from Nietzsche to Sartre and Camus) as an ethical guidance in the time of fake news, populist manipulation of public opinion, and their general condition, the existence of political practice “which presents itself as a solution without a problem.”

²² Ilya Prigogine and Isabelle Stengers, *Order out of Chaos: Man’s New Dialogue with Nature* (New York: Bantam Books, 1984) especially 213-32.

²³ William Clare Roberts, *Marx’s Inferno: The Political Theory of Capital* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017) 63.

Gergő Balogh's "Afformative, Afformance, Afformativity: The Critique of Performativity in Werner Hamacher's Work," discusses Hamacher's deconstructive theory of language, law and justice in connection with Walter Benjamin's reflections about the relationships between language, law-making, violence, state power and its breakdown. Balogh points out a crucial problem of reductive understanding of performativity as agency, which can be traced in the work of Butler, Kosofsky or Parker. Both in politics – in the general strike as "the unconditional suspension of state power" – and in poetry, which "suspends the performative processes of law," there are important moments of "exception," which excludes "any system that can still operate with the political opposition of legal norm and state of emergency." This exception is an "afformative" alternative to performativity, an alternative opening a new dimension of freedom based on the "real state of emergency" which includes the encounter with the other.

David Vichnar and Jean Bessière's reading of Levé's experimental poetry in "The 'Work' of Post-Conceptual Writing: The Strange Case of Édouard Levé" is introduced by a detailed interpretation of the historical development of the theory of Conceptualism from Vilém Flusser's *Towards a Philosophy of Photography* (1983) and Gérard Genette's *Paratexts* (1989) to Kenneth Goldsmith's, Vanessa Place's and Christian Bök's writings. The authors focus on the differences between Levé's works and the writings of his predecessors. They conclude that Levé's intermedial art can be interpreted as "a deconstruction" of the Conceptualist "mystification," which performs the work of art as a "'system of [...] internally coherent signs', in which a residual Humanism persists in its attempts to produce the real."²⁴ This also means that Conceptualism has developed misleading notions of performativity and creativity by means of which "a single literary work can face and handle what surpasses it – the media flow, the extensions of the internet, the continuous sequences of any single life, the broad public implications of any discourse even if merely reiterated." In contrast to this rather megalomaniac approach, Levé's late work, as well as his life terminated by suicide, show the importance of "the limited contexts of subjectivities (*Autoportrait, Suicide*), which eschew systematic writing and privilege contingencies." Vichnar and Bessière thus demonstrate the limitations of performativity after the expansion and internal transformation of the philosophical and aesthetic scene by modern media and intermediality.

The second part of this special issue is focused on performativity in theatre and related social practices. It opens with Pavel Drábek's article "Heterotelic Models

²⁴ Louis Armand, "The Conceptualist Ends of Writing and the End of Conceptualism," *CounterText* 6.1 (2020): 76.

as Performatives: From Speech Acts to Propositionality.” Drábek’s critique of the speech act theory and its deconstructive criticism points out the way to “a theory of performative models as autonomous forms that are (1) propositional (to be worked with), (2) reified (things in their own right), and (3) inherently heterotelic (shifting in their purpose between models-of and models-for, and are always put to uses outside the epistemological system that created them).” In contrast to speech acts, these models are received by the audience as “acts of recognition (that a certain event is happening) and consensus (that the event is valid and constitutes a new social reality).” These acts are analysed both in theatre practice and in social communication. In the cases that are investigated, “the nature and validity of performatives made in performance” becomes evident, which are “more complex and holistic than in real life.”

Drábek’s theory of theatre performatives as heterotelic models is corroborated by the results of Russell Gilbert’s case study “Between Professional Wrestling and the Public Arena: Construction of the Public Persona.” The article examines the use of masks in professional wrestling, especially in the Mexican *lucha libre*. As the “masks, both literal and figurative, have been documented as [...] a means of creating stage personas and archetypal figures in professional wrestling since the nineteenth century,” the performative use of masks may be said to produce a “mythopoeia,” blurring the difference between the wrestler’s *persona* and personality. In this way, the stage performance of masks has a direct impact on public activities of legendary fighters outside the wrestling arena.

The links between creativity and performativity in the process of intermedial transposition are explored in Anna Wołosz-Sosnowska’s article on “Comics as Creative Inspiration for Performative Art Forms.” Wołosz-Sosnowska’s approach is based on recent interdisciplinary debates at the Prague Quadrennial 2019, which have demonstrated “significant contributions” of comics “to creative imagination outside its own domain,” especially in the new area of “comics scenography.” The article illustrates in detail the new dimension of performativity especially in the comics adaptations of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, as well as in the intertextual adaptation of several Shakespeare’s plays entitled *Kill Shakespeare* (2011), which has been transformed into a board game meeting “the constitutive rules formulated by Roger Caillois.” In this way, comics and its stage adaptations demonstrate the game-like dimension of performativity discussed by Wolfgang Iser in *The Fictive and the Imaginary* (1994). Apart from the creation of aesthetic objects discussed by Andreas Mahler in the first article of this issue, performativity can shape the imaginary in many diverse ways, from the semiotics of the layout of the comic book page to the algorithms of board games.

Caillois's game theory and its use in the literary anthropology of Wolfgang Iser are in the focus of Mirka Horová's article "Romantic Play: From *Ludus* to *Paidia*, from *Agon* to *Ilinx*." Horová shows that Romantic drama, traditionally viewed as unperformable and even undramatic, as a mere manifestation of "failures, eccentricities of renowned poets whose egotistical hubris or pecuniary need led them astray," can be seen as experimental art exploring the so-far disregarded aspects of stage play, such as the ties among "heterogeneous elements of existence,"²⁵ or performativity, namely "the subordination of *agon* to the performative vortex of *ilinx*," and the prevalence of *paidia* (free play) over *ludus* (rule-governed play), "which manifests itself in the breaking-up or recasting of hierarchical structures." Horová's analysis of English Romantic drama, focusing on William Wordsworth's tragedy *The Borderers* (1796, 1842) and S.T. Coleridge's *Osorio* (1797, rewritten as *Remorse*, 1813), demonstrates its affinities to modernist dramatic forms, such as the theatre of the absurd, Artaud's theatre of cruelty or Peter Brook's "holy theatre." The performativity of free play in Romantic drama can thus be said to go far beyond the "verbal making of things" discussed in Andreas Mahler's article. It "manifests an anarchistic tendency which releases things suppressed"²⁶ and reveals the "unbridled, all-consuming passion for play."²⁷

²⁵ James S. Hans, *The Play of the World* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1981) 11.

²⁶ Wolfgang Iser, *Laurence Sterne: Tristram Shandy*, trans. David Henry Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 104.

²⁷ Wolfgang Iser, *The Fictive and the Imaginary: Charting Literary Anthropology* (Baltimore, MD, and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994) 338.