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Is the 'Animal-Event' Possible? Animal Precariousness and Moral Indeterminacy in Performance

In this article, George P. Pefanis discusses two major aspects of the 'event', as formed and developed in late Derridean philosophy – namely, the 'possibility of the impossible' and the 'experience of *perhaps*'. These aspects are examined in order to reveal the potential for precariousness and uncertainty engendered by performance art, as in the case of the *animal-event*. With its increased degree of indeterminacy and its projected singular, here-and-now character, performance art could leave open the way to the 'other', the unpredictable, and the unexpected that is the 'animal-event', since an animal can never be fully controlled or have its behaviour predicted by the theatre mechanism. Two performances are taken as case studies to demonstrate this: the emblematic *I Like America and America Likes Me* by Joseph Beuys (René Block Gallery, New York, 1974), and *Dragon Heads* by Marina Abramović (Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, 1990). It is argued that both cases pose certain moral issues around the presence of animals on the stage. George P. Pefanis is Associate Professor in the Department of Theatre Studies at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, and also teaches theatre and cinema history at the Open University of Greece and Cyprus. His publications include *Adventures of Representation: Scenes of Theory II*, *Spectres of Theatre: Scenes of Theory III* (both 2013) and *Theatre Adherents and Philosophers* (Athens, 2016). In 2006, he received the award for best book in the study of theatre for *The Kingdom of Eugena* (2005).

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IN LATE DERRIDEAN PHILOSOPHY, the concept of the 'event' (*événement*) constitutes a focal point for the analysis of hospitality, democracy, friendship, forgiveness, and death. Here, I will initially refer to some major aspects of the event, and will then examine the possibility of its emergence through animal presence on the theatrical stage. I examine two emblematic performances: *I Like America and America Likes Me* by Joseph Beuys (René Block Gallery, New York, 1974) and *Dragon Heads* by Marina Abramović (Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, 1990, re-enacted with minor adjustments on different stages until 1994). Both cases pose certain moral issues around the presence of animals on the stage.

For Derrida, the authentic event is not simply what takes place in a specific space and time, but something that always pertains to a certain impossibility as its neces-

sary component. 'When the impossible *makes itself possible*', Derrida argues, 'the event takes place (possibility of the impossible)'. This is the paradoxical form of the event: 'If an event is only possible, . . . if it only makes explicit, unveils, reveals, or accomplishes that which was already possible, then it is no longer an event.' Thus the event 'has to be, as event, as invention, the coming of the impossible. . . . This is what has so often prompted me to speak of a *condition of impossibility*.'¹

This impossibility, however, cannot be absolute because the event would simply be impossible, and so could not take place at all. We could argue that this is a relative impossibility since it can be shifted when, and only when, the event comes to pass. In the 'experience of the impossible' already lies the paradox of the event. For the event to be able to become the object of an experience, it should be that the event can take place, therefore, for

its impossibility to be instantaneously shifted. As Derrida puts it, 'For there to be an event, it has to be possible, of course, but also there has to be an interruption that is exceptional, absolutely singular, in the regime of possibility; it must not be reducible to explication, unfolding, or the putting into action of a possibility.'²

The impossibility of the event is, therefore, a condition for its possibility. 'The *im-* of the im-possible is surely radical, implacable, and undeniable. But it is not only negative, or simply dialectical: it *introduces* into the possible, it is *its usher today*, it gets it to come.'³ It is in the '*im*' of 'im-possible', consequently, where an inconspicuous and short-lived transit passage can be located – one which bridges the area of the impossibility with the scene of the event, and, more precisely, with the experience of a scene of the event. As is shown below, this is what theatre offers us in its significant moments.

The Derridean 'experience of the impossible' should therefore be perceived as an instantaneous *experience-of-the-impossible*, as instantaneous as the broadening of the transit passage. This is an experience that is constituted by the invasion of the radical other into the conscious world within an infinitesimal fraction of time. Within the next fraction of time, the impossible (that was just experienced as such) becomes possible, and loses its impossibility. This loss seems to be the inevitable price for the coming of the event.

The Experience of Perhaps

In all of the above considerations, the concept of the event is interwoven with otherness, or the other: that which cannot be guaranteed, the unthinkable, the coming, the foreign. The question that emerges is whether the non-human animal can be the other which introduces the event. In other words, is the animal-event conceivable? This question seems more approachable in the case of the event as hospitality, for example, when I let an animal cross the threshold of my home and settle in. It becomes harder to answer when this is about the taxonomic

threshold, the boundary that separates and brings together the species of living beings. Can, therefore, the non-human animal cross the ontological boundary between species and appear as event, not only in human life but *of* human life?

Derrida refers to the experience of the 'perhaps' that would position the animal-event in a particular relationship with human consciousness: 'This experience of the "perhaps" would be that of *both* the possible *and* the impossible, of the possible *as* impossible.' We have already confirmed that the possibility of the event only comes from its impossibility. There is no event if all that arises is what is already possible or capable of being anticipated and expected. The event

arises *like* the coming of the impossible, at the point where a *perhaps* deprives us of all certainty and leaves the future to the future. This *perhaps* is necessarily allied to a *yes*: yes, yes to whoever or whatever comes about.⁴

The experience of *perhaps* seems to draw from the future the minimum possible affirmation for the present, but without offering to it any security or certainty.⁵

In this precariousness and uncertainty (indecidability) of the *perhaps*, the animal-event might be able to happen. Performance art could provide such a condition of precariousness and uncertainty, a condition of the *perhaps* for the animal-event. With its increased degree of randomness and indeterminacy, and its projected singular, here-and-now character, performance art opens the way to the other, the unpredictable, unexpected, and unprogrammable that is the animal-event, since the animal can never be fully controlled, or have its behaviour predicted by the theatre mechanism.⁶

Dragon Heads by Marina Abramović

In Marina Abramović's performance, *Dragon Heads*, she shapes a field of extreme danger, where the human body is profoundly vulnerable against a biblical enemy, a field already familiar to the Serbian artist.⁷ A boa constrictor and four pythons, between ten and fifteen feet long, starved for two weeks



Above and opposite page: Marina Abramović performing in *Dragon Heads*.

prior to the show, are now allowed to slither around her body. The female body is surrounded by ice cores whose prohibitive/inhospitable surfaces prevent the reptiles from moving towards the audience, leaving her body as the only source of warmth. Abramović was aiming to create 'energy paths' on her body that would, in some way, guide the movements of the reptiles.⁸ This is a kind of performance experiment alluding to some of the artist's own experiences.⁹ Its epicentre, the female body, is a condensed version of the planet, with its warm and less warm spots among which the boa and the pythons move.

As often happens in Abramović's performances, the limits of pain, of exhaustion,

of peril – the liminal points beyond which a possibility of impossibility, and the fractionality of the event can emerge – are open challenges to transcend what is given, what is scheduled, and what is predictable. Heat and energy lines, like ice cores, are the only quasi-fixed reference points that allow for 'normal' behaviour of the pythons, for example, preventing a hostile movement towards viewers, and making the female body inviting.

Fear and allure, the strong repulsion and the subtle attraction, transform the performer into a particular snake charmer: she enchants the snakes to traverse her body, discover it, and in a way fertilize it as the danger of the radical other fertilizes the

human soul. She also commands herself to experience the danger that comes from elsewhere, from the other – the dangerous stranger who is always so close to us: underneath the ground we step on, in the depths of the earth, in the foundations of our buildings, in the basements of our logical and empirical existence, and whom we only see rarely, during particular moments of shock, or turmoil, when we are taken by absolute surprise.

In the second version of the performance (*Dragon Heads No 2*), Abramović's voice, in a hypnotic rhythm, invites the reptiles to follow her skin, which also stands for the surface of the earth, to follow her sources of energy. The woman-earth, the skin-ground, the feminine earth, the spiritualized matter are calling for the animal-event, summoning one of the the most ominous animals to appear in a surprising present, and to seek on the human animal what is hidden in the heart of the earth: energy, the source of life, the secret power that transforms matter into spirit and life.¹⁰ Abramović leaves open the possibility of the impossible – the possibility

that the animal-event can occur, the hungry animal event.

Joseph Beuys's *I Like America*

The second example is the notorious performance *I Like America and America Likes Me* by Joseph Beuys, which keeps the level of endangerment high, while also increasing its duration. In this performance event, Beuys wanted to isolate himself from New York's environment, and from American civilization altogether, and to extract from it one of its living, breathing elements – the coyote.¹¹ He and the coyote shared a space, offered by the René Block Gallery, for eight hours daily for three consecutive days.¹²

In order to achieve his goal, Beuys did not leave the gallery at all during the five days he was in New York. Like Abramović, Beuys, who had expressed his interest in animals early on, sought an 'energy dialogue' with the wild animal (named Little John), this time not devoid of explicit political statements.¹³ Among the objects he used were two rolls of felt blankets, with which he often



wrapped his body, and also made a stack in which he placed a torch pointed towards the spectators. There was also a pair of gloves, painted brown, which he threw to the coyote to play with – an action that was interpreted to be a token for human creativity (painted gloves) and the ability to give gifts.¹⁴ Among the artefacts of the show, there were also a walking stick, a bit of straw, and fifty copies of the *Wall Street Journal*, replaced each day by the most recent version. It is these newspapers that the coyote would tear apart, and which the coyote would ‘learn’ to urinate on.

I Like America . . .: there is an ironic ring to the title which could go amiss if we do not take into account the coyote itself. Beuys chooses to stay with a coyote instead of being the guest of some hospitable citizen. This is an animal-symbol of the old, ‘wild’ America, which, for centuries, has associated indigenous peoples with the mysteries of wild nature, or, if you wish, with the secret meaning of the phenomenon of life. By choosing to cohabit with this animal-symbol, Beuys mentally skims over this long process of degeneration and destruction of a civilization.

We should not forget that, for the indigenous populations of North America, the coyote was nothing less than a zoomorphic deity. The coyote symbolized the power to transform spirit into matter, and matter into spirit, and it was believed that it could understand all spoken languages. Its anger meant great misfortune for human communities, and its appeasement was the ritualistic starting point for healing illnesses.

The shamans of the Navajo tribe fully respected it, and wore its mask when they intended to heal a patient. Beuys chose to be taken by an ambulance to the gallery, claiming the status of a patient needing treatment; he therefore summoned the transcendental power of the animal for his own purification, but also as atonement towards a deity that was literally butchered.¹⁵

Through this lens, his performance can be read as a reconciliation ritual between a ‘Western’ man and an exiled deity, but also as a ceremony urging redemption – from a phylum of animals and, through them, by an entire native human population that had suf-

fered relentless persecution by the civilized colonizers, Republicans, Democrats, and capitalists. In this case, we can discern Beuys’s political thought, according to which art can compensate for what politics has failed to carry out – that is, to emancipate the creative powers of humans, turn them into artists, and establish a society that is articulated as a work of art.¹⁶ Thus, Beuys’s mythological approach results in political thinking while his political position presupposes the transcendence of mythological and theological references.

An interesting dynamic emerges from the parameters of the performance itself that should not be missed. What can be observed is an inverse relationship between the performer’s attempt to turn himself into a shaman who composes material and spiritual forces into a greater whole, and the coyote’s ‘ferocity’: the closer to failure the first comes, the more the latter looms on the horizon. Inasmuch as the possibility for the event to emerge in the first aspect fades, its possibility for it to come in the latter is extended. In both cases, the event can occur at any time.

The ‘Non-availability’ of Animals on Stage

In this possibility, and suspension, lies the allure of this performance for those observing from a later point in time. Because one can believe in the potential of the shamanic ceremony to affect the outcome, or not, Beuys’s techniques and claims can be challenged, but it would be difficult to challenge his intentions and sincerity. So, even if there remains doubt about whether an event of transformation or transubstantiation actually took place in the New York gallery in May 1974 (even when the view is taken that what is now kept in the memory from this performance is not an attempt at redemption or for mending historical trauma, but simply the encounter of the performer with the wild animal),¹⁷ we cannot strictly exclude the possibility of an event in a moment when Beuys’s gaze met the coyote’s, a moment during which the coyote did not only operate as a sign but also as a desire.¹⁸



Joseph Beuys with coyote in *I Like America and America Likes Me*. Below: with the 'two rolls of felt blankets, with which he often wrapped his body'.



Four starved pythons, along with an equally hungry boa, and a trapped coyote – such is the non-human animal population of these two seminal performances, during which wild animals underwent an arduous process, which they did not and could not consent to. ‘Starved pythons’ cannot find food on their own because they have been detached from their natural environment and subsequently have been subjected to the ‘process’ of hunger for two weeks.

And the case of the coyote is not much better. As Fischer-Lichte notes: ‘Beuys treated the coyote as an equal partner. He tried to influence it without violating it (if we temporarily overlook the fact that the animal had to be caught and caged for this action).’¹⁹ Is it not an act of violence to confine a subject-of-a-life,²⁰ or to force a living being to starve for two weeks?²¹ Laurdes Orozco rightfully notes that, in every performance where an animal stars, or ‘co-stars’, it is not enough to look at ‘the result of training – that is, the human’s shaping of the animal – but also the willingness of the animal to be trained and his/her capacity to respond to that training’.²²

But how receptive can a coyote be to the training of its own confinement? And even more pressing are other questions. To what extent, and under what conditions, does the coyote consent to this ‘training’? What could be the compensation for the trapping of an animal, its deprivation of freedom for a shorter or longer period (did the coyote return to the zoo after the performance, or was it set free?), and for causing psychological shock, agony, fear, and possibly pain, too? And ‘if we temporarily overlook the fact . . .’, what kind of ‘overlooking’ is this, if not a speciesist discrimination enabled by an arrogant anthropocentrism in the name of art, the same art whose purpose is, as Beuys believes, to offer freedom?²³

Fischer-Lichte uses the term ‘*Unverfügbarkeit*’ to summarize and gloss over these problems. The term in German means the ‘non-availability’ of the animals on stage, but is defined as ‘elusiveness’ in English.²⁴ Indeed, this is a convenient term, neutral and harmless, equivalent to the earlier terms ‘non-

acting’ and ‘non-semiotic’ used by Michael Kirby.²⁵ But it is also akin to modern terms, weaponized by scientific research for its unreasonable experimentation with animals, and also by the livestock farming industry in order to justify the harsh ‘living’ and ‘breeding’ conditions of animals.²⁶

‘Elusiveness’ is a convenient term that alludes to the fact that ‘the animals don’t have the choice *not* to “be themselves” as actors do’, and that can simultaneously accommodate for and camouflage varied and unexpected behaviours of non-human animals on stage, such as discomfort and suffering, non-compliance and skittishness, resistance, or even an attack.²⁷ But it is also a functional term as, in a sense, the non-available animal potentially represents what is the ideal postmodern (or post-dramatic) performer: a being that is unpredictable, random, ‘untamed’ by directorial instruction, detached from stage norms and framed actions – one that allows or invites the event to occur. In this light, the performer tends to become a human animal-event.

However, the usability of the term ‘non-availability’ or ‘elusiveness’ conceals something that should not be silenced: the moral and legal problem of using animals in performances. ‘Non-availability’ only makes sense as a negation of a reference framework for which there *is* availability. In other words: ‘I avail/possess myself of’ always means ‘I want to avail/offer myself to’; ‘I choose to avail it *for*’ this or the other purpose. But snakes do not want to starve, and coyotes are not known to look for temporary shelter in art galleries.

The Ethical Connotations

‘Animals are not available’ therefore means ‘animals do *not* want to’. ‘Non-availability’ artfully conceals a negative volition that goes without saying, and, therefore, should not be used thoughtlessly as a *mot-vaalise* for the analysis of performances. It can only be used when it is surrounded by all the ethical connotations and problematizing involved. Otherwise, the term should be put to rest, found to be not only inaccurate, but mislead-

ing and deceptive, offensive towards animals, and speciesist for the people who use it.

When we theoretically legitimize the non-availability of animals, and when we allow ourselves to be charmed by it in practice, we violate a natural state and a moral right of subjects-of-a-life: the state of, and right to, access to freedom and food. This violation is silenced because it is a human deed, and, in its place, non-availability is instrumentalized, presented to be an inane animal characteristic. The non-human subject is *not available*, which means it is not voluntarily and in an orderly manner subjected to the imperative of the stage.

The contrast between animal non-availability and the framing of the performance is also suppressed in order to highlight the autopoietic feedback loop (*autopoietische feedback schleife*), and to establish the self-referentiality of the performance during which the performers are produced by their action within a closed autopoietic process.²⁸

At first glance, animal non-availability is at odds with the self-referentiality of the stage, given that it introduces elements that were previously unavailable to the performance's plan and schedule. However, in essence, it offers possibilities for critical moments – a possibility that the stage order will be handed over to disorder and unpredictability. It is in these possibilities that we owe the enlisting of non-human beings for the goals of human performances. To these we owe the rationalization 'if we temporarily overlook the fact', as Fischer-Lichte claims.

The term of non-availability should not be silenced. On the contrary, it should highlight the elements of speciesism that often find their way to the stage in more or less overt ways. It should also leave open to exploration whatever contradictions underlie artistic ventures such as those of Abramović and Beuys because these contradictions portray, with more clarity, the character of these performances. Otherwise, the term would have to be removed from the nexus of performance studies and remain in the texts of military or business interests, which allow collateral damage. In the end, animal non-availability makes me believe, with Lourdes

Orozco, that 'the animal brings a lot to the theatre, but that the theatre gives very little back to the animal'.²⁹

Non-human animals bring to the theatre more elements than their non-availability, among them the presence of the radical other, a sense of a dark affinity, the experience of co-belonging, the revelation of speciesist traces on behalf of human animals, and, of course, the possibility of the event. Studies of the theatre should not fall into the trap of scientism (and industrial farming), and silence, for the sake of whatever aesthetic or artistic vanguard, the blatant moral issue of speciesism, and the horrific treatment of non-human animals it fosters.

I complete my references to Abramović and Beuys with a question and a reminder. We saw that Beuys threw a pair of painted gloves to Little John, the coyote. Furthermore, we perceived this action as a symbolic gesture of approach and reconciliation, as a human gift to a non-human being. What could we say, though, if these gloves were leather? How could we reinterpret Beuys's performance if his artistic gift to the coyote was nothing but a human tool made of the skin of an animal? A tool made of living things, which are not tools, but lose their lives so that tools can be made? Would, then, Beuys's performance present yet another contradiction, this time in the form of an ironic self-undermining?

And now the reminder. When Abramović completed the big project that was her performance *The Artist is Present* at MoMA in New York in 2011, fashion designer Riccardo Tisci of Givenchy designed for her a long black dress and a coat made of the skin of one hundred and one snakes. What did the artist that lived with snakes for many hours have to say? 'I hope they [the snakes] died natural deaths.'³⁰

The Exceptional Animal-event

The concept of the Derridean event can provide an interesting road map among the various scenes of the animal which is incorporated in framed theatre action, and is exposed to the viewer's gaze. My two chosen scenes come from the stage authorship of

two great artists. The analogies that can be drawn between Derrida and Beuys, in terms of their profile, authorship, and strategies, have already been noted and identified – for example, in the didactic character of their work, or in their emphasis on creativity and inventive ability in the writing models using ideograms (Derrida) and allegoric stage objects (Beuys).³¹

The relationships between Derridean thought and Abramović's work (along with that of other artists) have not been yet explored in similar ways; hence, the concept of the event could be the starting point for such studies. The issue raised by the Derridean event addresses all non-human animals on the stage (as well as in playwriting, thus also on the linguistic 'stage'). It is posed in the form of an exemption, and it does not negatively affirm that from which it is exempted (the rule). Derrida claims that 'the event must be exceptional', as a singular exception without rules, and that 'philosophical knowledge accepts this aporia as something promising and not simply negative or paralyzing'.³² Is this singular exception in the above scenes, and in all scenes that include a non-human animal, ultimately conceivable? A positive or a negative answer would equally strip the singular exception of its exceptionality, and would undo the aporetic type of the aporia to which Derrida's philosophical thought responds.

On the one hand, 'Yes'. The exception that is the animal-event would be possible; the exception becomes possible, predictable, and programmable by directors. The repetitions, for example, of *Dragon Heads* adopt and confirm this affirmation. Abramović fatally plans the exception.

On the other hand, 'No'. It would not be possible, either as an exception (solely the rule would prevail) or as a singular one. Thus exemption would constitute the negative alibi of the rule, which would not prevail, but would dominate, leaving some functional space for its *exceptions* to occur and to develop within the internal subsystem of rules. Once again, programming emerges. The 'Yes' and 'No' distance us from the animal-event of the stage.

If we must answer the question posed by the Derridean event, if we have to think, in our attempt to conceive, the animal-event in its contingency, we should move towards the thought of *perhaps*, the experience of *aporia*, the experience of the event that ensues abruptly in the fractionality of a time that grabs us instantaneously, forcing us to surrender to it. Our surrender to the event, however, can only be singular, that is, unique and unrepeatable. In a second occurrence, the rule threatens to emerge, and the event is lost.

Notes and References

1. Jacques Derrida, 'As If It Were Possible, "Within Such Limits"', in *Paper Machine* (California: Stanford University Press, 2005), p. 90. See also Derrida, 'A Certain Impossible Possibility of Saying the Event', *Critical Inquiry*, No. 33 (Winter 2007), p. 451, and *Voyous* (Paris: Galilée, 2003), p. 203.

2. Jacques Derrida, 'As If It Were Possible', p. 91.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 90. See also Jacques Derrida, *Le toucher, Jean-Luc Nancy* (Paris: Galilée, 2000), p. 71.

4. Jacques Derrida, 'As If It Were Possible', p. 74.

5. In *Politics of Friendship*, Derrida wonders: 'What would a future be if the decision were able to be programmed, and if the risk [*l'aléa*], the uncertainty, the unstable certainty, the inassurance of the "perhaps", were not suspended on it at the opening of what comes, flush with the event, within it and with an open heart?' Derrida, *Politics of Friendship* (London; New York: Verso, 1997), p. 29.

6. Marvin Carlson, *Shattering Hamlet's Mirror: Theatre and Reality* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2016), p. 96.

7. Several years earlier, on 30 November 1978, Abramović presented her performance *Three* at the gallery Harlekin Art in Wiesbaden, during which she and her partner Ulay dragged themselves on the floor, doing everything they could to attract the attention of a large python. The show lasted for four hours and fifteen minutes and ended when the snake decided to leave. Three years later, on 4 July 1981, Abramović and Ulay presented the performance *Gold Found by the Artists* at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney, which again starred a python, this time an Australian diamond Morelia spilota python named Zen. For eight hours, the two performers sat still and speechless around a table. On it were Zen and a boomerang, a tool and symbol of the Aboriginals of Australia. See Marina Abramović, *Walk through Walls* (New York: Crown Archetype, 2016), p. 8, 81, 114–15.

8. Mary Richards, *Marina Abramović* (London; New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 25.

9. See the interview Marina Abramović gave to Bernard Goy for *Journal of Contemporary Art*, at <www.jca-online.com/Abramovic.html>, accessed 18 November 2017. See also Marina Abramović *et al.*, *Artist/Body: Performances 1969–1998* (Milan: Charta, 1998), p. 20, 326.

10. For the importance of each present in the understanding of uncertainty in life according to Abramović,

see Marina Abramović, Chris Thompson, and Katarina Weslien, 'Pure Raw: Performance, Pedagogy, and (Re-)presentation', *PAJ*, XLVIII, No. 1 (2006), p. 34.

11. Uwe M. Schneede, *Joseph Beuys: Die Aktionen* (Stuttgart: G. Hatje, 1998), p. 330.

12. The performance at the René Block Gallery lasted from 23 to 25 March 1974, from 10.00 until 18.00 every day. Information about and descriptions of the performance come from Caroline Tisdall, *Joseph Beuys: Coyote* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2010); Uwe M. Schneede, *Joseph Beuys: Die Aktionen*, p. 330–53; Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance: a New Aesthetics* (London; New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 102–7; and *The Show and the Gaze of Theatre: a European Perspective* (Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1997), p. 245–8, 250.

13. Heiner Stachelhaus, *Joseph Beuys* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1991), p. 54.

14. Steve Baker, 'Sloughing the Human', *Performance Research*, V, No. 2 (2000), p. 71–81, at p. 73–4.

15. David Williams, 'Inappropriate/d Others: or, The Difficulty of Being a Dog', *The Drama Review*, LI, No. 1 (2007), p. 99–100.

16. Caroline Tisdall, *Art into Society, Society into Art*, (London: ICA, 1974), p. 48. Regarding the imperatives of Beuys's thinking and work, see complementarily Alain Borer, *The Essential Joseph Beuys* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1996); Claudia Mesch and Viola Michely, ed., *Joseph Beuys: the Reader* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007); Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes and Victoria Walters, ed., *Beuysian Legacies in Ireland and Beyond: Art, Culture and Politics* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2011). For Beuys's political activities, see Heiner Stachelhaus: *Joseph Beuys*, p. 107–21.

17. Steve Baker, *The Postmodern Animal* (London: Reaction Books, 2000), p. 44. Similar reservations are also expressed in Andrea Phillips, 'A Dog's Life', *Performance Research*, V, No. 2 (2000), p. 128, and David Williams, 'Inappropriate/d Others: or, The Difficulty of Being a Dog', p. 101–3.

18. Lourdes Orozco, *Theatre and Animals* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 66.

19. Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance*, p. 105.

20. I use the term coined by Tom Regan in *Animal Rights, Human Wrongs: an Introduction to Moral Philosophy* (Lanham, Maryland: Roman and Littlefield, 2003), p. 80–98; and 'Pour les droits des animaux', in Hicham-Stéphane Afeissa and Jean-Baptiste Jeangène Vilmer, *Philosophie animale: différence, responsabilité et communauté* (Paris: Vrin, 2015), p. 177.

21. See also the reservations expressed by Lisa Jevbratt, 'Interspecies Collaboration: Making Art together with Non-human Animals', p. 2, note. 4, paper

presented in July 2009 in Newcastle, Australia, during the 'Minding Animals' conference, available at <http://jevbratt.com/home_texts.html>.

22. Lourdes Orozco: 'There and Not There: Looking at Animals in Contemporary Theatre', in Lourdes Orozco and Jennifer Parker-Starbuck, ed., *Performing Animality: Animals in Performance Practices* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 189.

23. The term 'speciesism' was put forward by the psychologist Richard Ryder in *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), and was established by Peter Singer in *Animal Liberation* (New York: Harper Collins, 2002). Regarding the term and its uses, see Joan Dunayer, *Speciesism* (Derwood, Maryland: Ryce Publishing, 2004).

24. Erika Fischer-Lichte, *Ästhetik des Performativen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2004), p. 185–7. The English translation of the term as 'elusiveness' is more open, as it allows the connotation of the 'fleeting' and the 'elusive'. See Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance*, p. 105–6.

25. Michael Kirby, 'On Acting and Not-Acting', *The Drama Review*, XVI, No. 1 (1972), p. 3–15; and 'Non-semiotic Performance', *Modern Drama*, XXV, No. 1 (1982), p. 105–11.

26. The reader can find many and adequately substantiated examples in the second and third chapters of the seminal book by Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*, p. 25–157.

27. Bert O. States, 'Performance as Metaphor', in Philip Auslander, ed., *Performance: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies*, Vol. I (London; New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 121.

28. Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance*, p. 106. This is a term Fischer-Lichte borrows from the cognitive biologists Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela, *Tree of Knowledge: the Biological Roots of Human Understanding* (Boston: Shambhala, 1992), which is about the ability of the performance to self-organize and self-produce. For a critical approach to the term 'autopoiesis' used by Fischer-Lichte, see George P. Pefanis, *Adventures of Representation: Scenes of Theory II* (Athens: Papazisis 2013), p. 259–61; and Walter Pouchner, 'Aesthetics of Performativity: a Mental Dialogue with Erika Fischer-Lichte', *Parabasis*, XII, No. 2 (2014), p. 22–6 (in Greek).

29. Lourdes Orozco, 'There and Not There: Looking at Animals in Contemporary Theatre', p. 190.

30. Marina Abramović, *Walk through Walls*, p. 257.

31. Gregory L. Ulmer, *Post(e)-Pedagogy from Jacques Derrida to Joseph Beuys* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), p. 228–64.

32. Jacques Derrida, 'A Certain Impossible Possibility of Saying the Event', p. 457.