

Ausser-sich-Sein – Spieler und Objekt im gegenwärtigen Figurentheater

Synopsis:

Puppetry is not only a child's play anymore, if it ever was. In the last thirty to twenty years a certain development can be observed. This change reaches back to the middle of the 20th century, when the first puppeteers in Europe stopped hiding behind a small booth and stepped out onto the open stage – right next to their puppets. Every move was now fully visible for the spectator. This new way of playing the puppet opened up new opportunities for the puppeteers: New kinds of puppets and playing techniques were developed, while traditional varieties were adapted or disappeared.

However, there is hardly any academic research on this subject. This gap concerns the history of puppetry in the 20th century, as well as theories on puppetry in general and the analysis of these new techniques of open manipulation. The last important publication on puppetry is Meike Wagner's *Nähte am Puppenkörper – Der mediale Blick und die Körperentwürfe des Theaters*, that was released in 2003. Burger aims to fill a part of this great desideratum by making the puppeteer the focus of her dissertation. One focal point will be the relationship between the human puppeteer and the 'dead' openly manipulated puppet, the different techniques of playing and the function of the puppets in the theater production. Using the methods of performance analysis, Burger will examine several theatre productions of Gyula Molnár and the theater collective *Wilde & Vogel* and Gyula Molnár. Aim of these analysis is to form a new theory of acting in puppetry that takes into account the different roles puppeteers assume as they openly manipulate their puppets, as well as the self-reflexivity of theater generated by the visible puppeteers.