



The Puppetry Yearbook (Mellen Studies in Puppetry)

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In this fifth volume of The Puppetry Yearbook, regular readers will not be surprised to find that it includes a mixture of frequent contributors as well as first-timers. It is, in the opinion of editor Dr. Fisher, an eclectic group of essays and puppet plays and is a powerful demonstration of the enduring vitality of puppetry. It is difficult for me to believe that this is the fifth volume of the Puppetry Yearbook, a milestone achieved only through the support of the Edwin Mellen Press and the contributions of numerous scholars and practitioners of the art of puppetry. Regular readers of the Puppetry Yearbook will not be surprised that this volume includes a mixture of frequent contributors as well as first-timers. And, in my opinion, this eclectic group of essays and puppet plays, is a powerful demonstration of the enduring vitality of puppetry. The range of essays is typically diverse and multicultural. University of Georgia professors Farley P. Richmond and I. Nyoman Sedana examine performance and performance sites in Hindu temples, with emphasis in their penetrating analysis on two forms: kutiyattam, the Sanskrit theatre of Kerala State, South India and wayang parwa, the shadow puppet theater of Bali. Bradford Clark, a previous Puppetry Yearbook contributor, tracks the use of puppets in three different productions adapted from William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Young scholar Ben Fisler brings the discussion of back to Broadway with an examination of the artistry of director/designer Julie Taymor in what is perhaps the most vivid example of puppetry on the commercial stage in many years: *The Lion King*. Ben's thorough examination of aspects of puppetry and masks in the production is complemented by the estimable Nancy Lohman Staub's look at the influence of iconoclastic designer and director Edward Gordon Craig on Taymor's accomplishment in *The Lion King*. Frequent Puppetry Yearbook contributor Henryk Jurkowski also deals with Craig, discussing an overlooked Craig puppet scenario (Henryk also contributes a challenging essay on the aesthetics of puppetry at the beginning of the last century). In my own essay, I take the discussion of Craig in another direction, examining the influence of puppets in Craig's 1901 production, *The Masque of Love*. A somewhat more practical approach is adopted in the essay of Michael Ellison, who explores movement for actor/puppeteers and G. A. Lane. G. A. Lane, a frequent Puppetry Yearbook contributor, has penned a delightful poem, "Elves of the Vine." Regular contributor Freek Neiryck's puppet play, "The Unexpected Breakfast Guest," continues the Puppetry Yearbook's tradition of including puppet play texts, while the volume is rounded out by two excellent examinations of puppet theater past and present, as John McCormick provides a densely detailed look at the Pitou family of puppeteers and young scholar Anna Shneiderman traces puppet theater in contemporary Czechoslovakia. I am deeply grateful to our frequent contributors for continuing to provide Puppetry Yearbook with outstanding essays and I am delighted to welcome our new contributors with the hope that they, too, will become regulars. And while I am expressing gratitude, I would like to thank the Edwin Mellen Press and, especially, John Rupnow and Mrs. Patricia Schultz, who have been tremendously supportive of the Puppetry Yearbook from the beginning. I am also indebted to the late Marge Jackson, Fine Arts secretary at Wabash College, my home institution, for many years. Marge died this year, but until her final illness made it impossible, she was invaluable in preparing the Puppetry Yearbook for publication. Also, I would like to thank a series of Wabash College students who, while working as summer interns, assisted me in the preparation of the Puppetry Yearbook. These special young men include: Roy Sexton, Heikki Larsen, Trevor Fanning, Shawn Whistler, and Aaron Parks. It is my sincere hope that this and the previous four volumes of The Puppetry Yearbook will make a useful contribution to the appreciation and understanding of the history and practice of puppetry.

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