



Harold Pinter Society Newsletter

Fall 2009

It has been a sad year for the Harold Pinter Society, and the last ten months have included a number of memorials and tributes to Mr. Pinter, beginning with the MLA Conference in San Francisco, just days after the announcement of Mr. Pinter's death. Scholars from around the world converged to discuss Pinter's works, but once the presentations were complete, most of the conversations turned to remembrances of encounters past with Pinter. And to a person, everyone who met him spoke of his generosity, his willingness to encourage, foster, and enlighten scholarship on his work, as well as his intense commitment to social justice issues. A symbolic glass was raised in his honor, and most of us gathered for lunch following the presentations, reluctant to let Pinter go.

He will be greatly missed, but as the announcements and call for papers in the newsletter make clear, he will not be forgotten. His work continues to challenge, inspire, and entertain. And it is the mission of the society to foster further study of Pinter and his influence and influences.

As many of you know, *The Pinter Review: Nobel Prize/Europe Theatre* was released in the spring, and we thank Frank Gillen for his tireless work on that project. It is an impressive volume. In addition to the Nobel speech itself, and Pinter's very moving poem, "To My Wife" (2004), contents include reflections on the Nobel Prize award by Christopher Hudgins and Susan Hollis Merritt who attended the ceremonies. Ariel Dorfmann writes on his first meeting with Pinter. Frank Gillen writes about Pinter and Greek Tragedy. And Katherine Burkman writes on Gertrude Stein and Pinter. Other essays by Luc Gilleman, John Peter, Richard Corballis, Elizabeth Sakellaridou, William Baker, and Robert Gordon are also included, as are international production discussions by Linda Renton, Mardia Bishop, Sidney Homan and Shamrock McShane, Lukasz Borowiec, Peter Munder, and Mark Taylor-Batty.

To conclude, there is much work to be done in the area of Pinter scholarship, and we hope that all of you will participate in this labor, encourage others to join us, and let us know how the society can best serve your scholarly needs.

Ann C. Hall, Harold Pinter Society President, halla@ohiodominican.edu

Upcoming Activities and Calls for Papers

Frank Gillen has plans for a memorial volume of *The Pinter Review*, and he is looking for critical essays and production and book reviews. Please submit completed work by January 15, 2010. Gillen also accepts essays and reviews on an on-going basis. Send completed manuscripts to

Frank Gillen
The Pinter Review
Box 11 F
The University of Tampa
Tampa, FL 33606

The Midwest Modern Language Association

Friday, November 13, 10:15-11:45AM, St. Louis, MO Hyatt

“Enactments of Desire: Examining the Text of Harold Pinter's *Monologue*” by Emily Kingery, University of Northern Illinois

“Mirrors Stages: Monologues, Split Selves, and a Pineresque Reality” by Craig N. Owens, Drake University

“Harold Pinter and the Transconservative Signifier” by Judith Roof, Michigan State University

**** Call for Papers. Next year's topic is Pinter's Harlequins: Pulsating, Passionate, Romances and Domestic Bliss. Papers on Pinter's romantic relationships in drama and film are welcome. Send 250-500-word abstracts to Judith Roof, roof12@comcast.net by March 1, 2010.**

The next MMLA will be held in November 4-7, 2010.

A Performance will be held on Saturday, November 14, 6:30-8:00PM

Staging of Harold Pinter's *Victoria Station* and *That's Your Trouble?*

Sponsored by The International Harold Pinter Society and Steinsemble Performance Group

Steinsemble Performance Group, a company devoted to the recovery and performance of underrepresented modernist and absurdist pieces, presents an evening of short works by Harold Pinter: *Victoria Station* and *That's Your Trouble?* These productions are underwritten by the International Harold Pinter Society.

**The Modern Language Association,
Monday, December 28, 8:30–9:45AM, Philadelphia Marriott**

Program arranged by the Harold Pinter Society

“Memory and Forgetting, Pinter and Ricouer,” Stephen Watt, Indiana Univ., Bloomington

“‘You Got to Take the Crooked with the Straights’: Memory in Harold Pinter’s *The Go-Between* and *Reunion*,” Christopher C. Hudgins, Univ. of Nevada, Las Vegas

“Extraordinary Generosity: Fond Memories of Harold Pinter over the Years,” Lois G. Gordon, Fairleigh Dickinson Univ.

“‘The Past Is a Foreign Country. They Do Things Differently There’: Encounters with Harold Pinter,” William Baker, Northern Illinois Univ.

****Call for Papers. Next year’s topic is Pinter’s Counter-Drama. Presentations on Pinter’s politics, dramatic innovations, and demands on performers and productions are welcome. Send 250-500 word abstracts to Ann C. Hall, halla@ohiodominican.edu by March 1, 2010.**

The next MLA will be held in Los Angeles January 6-9, 2011.

Other Announcements and Activities

Craig Owens is editing a collection entitled *Pinter Etc.* It should appear in November 2009. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Brigitte Gauthier edited a collection *Viva Pinter: Harold Pinter Spirit of Resistance*, 2009. Peter Lang Publishing.

Judith Roof is editing a collection entitled *Talking Drama* which includes a number of Pinter Society members. It should appear in December 2009. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Call for Newsletter Submissions

If you would like to submit announcements or reports to the Newsletter, please email me, Dr. Ann C. Hall, ohiodominican.edu. The newsletter appears twice a year.

A Note from Radmila Nastic, Serbia

Dear Fellow Pinterians,

I would like to inform you that the University of Kragujevac held a memorial to Harold Pinter on May 19. Students of English performed *Ashes To Ashes* and *Party Time* in the city theatre with great success. A thematic issue of faculty of philology and art's journal *Nasledje* no 12 was launched on the following day. It contains contributions in Serbian and English by some of the leading Pinter scholars. There is also A Reminder Of The Honorary Degree Award Ceremony: Harold Pinter Was Proclaimed An Honorary Doctor Of The University Of Kragujevac on June 6th 2008. Those of you interested to receive a copy of the journal and the CD with the performances, please contact me. You can read about the events in more detail and view the picture's on the faculty website:

<http://www.filum.kg.ac.rs/index.php>

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An Update from Susan Hollis Merritt

Charles Grimes and I participated in the all-day Harold Pinter Memorial Celebration/PEN Tribute to Harold Pinter held at the Martin E. Segal Theatre Center (MESTC) at The City University of New York, in New York City, on May 2, 2009, from 11:00 a.m. until about 10 p.m. Harry Burton curated, introduced, and moderated the event, and he asked Henry Woolf to join him on stage for most of the panels. I took part in the panel discussion on Pinter and the Theatre, with Henry Woolf, Emily Mann, John Guare, Neil Pepe, Todd Haimes, and Alastair Macaulay, and also in the panel on Pinter and Politics, with Charles Grimes, Emily Mann, and Alastair Macaulay. I attended the whole event, as did Henry Woolf, Charles Grimes, and several others on the program; they all enjoyed mingling with one another before their panels in the "Green Room." Harry Burton screened his documentary film *Working With Pinter* at the beginning of the program in the morning, and he showed Pinter's 2005 Nobel Prize Lecture "Art, Truth and Politics" before the afternoon Pinter and Politics panel, which was introduced by Salman Rushdie.

Several other video and audio recordings of Pinter's plays and films were scheduled simultaneously with the panels throughout the day. The evening performances included a production of *Monologue* with Henry Woolf (reprising his 2001 Lincoln Center Pinter Festival and 2007 Leeds Artist and Citizen conference performances); Eve Best, Henry Woolf, and Harry Burton reading some of Pinter's poems and prose works reprinted in *Various Voices*; and a staged reading of *The Dumb Waiter* by Jason Isaacs and Brian F. O'Byrne. Charles and I have offered to write a brief account of the PEN Tribute for the memorial volume of *The Pinter Review* that Frank Gillen is planning to publish next (probably after January 2010).

I also attended Harold Pinter: A Celebration at the Royal National Theatre's Olivier Theatre, directed by Ian Rickson, on June 7, 2009, in London. That was a spectacular experience, involving dozens of actors, on which Michael Billington and others reported in the *Guardian* and other London newspapers. I had dinner with Linda Renton before the event, and after it we joined Henry Woolf (who had taken part in the

stage performances) for the cocktail reception and mingled with the actors and other guests. Lady Antonia Fraser, who was guest of honor at the event and the reception, seemed very pleased by the evening.

I met with Lady Antonia Fraser at her home a couple of evenings later. She invited me also to attend the launch of the Harold Pinter Residency and the dedication of the Harold Pinter Room at the Hackney Empire Theatre on the evening of June 16, 2009. She formally opened the Harold Pinter Room with some brief remarks, and both Michael Billington and Simon Thomsett, the president of the theatre, provided brief introductions beforehand. (I sent her some photos that I took of her at that time.) Mr. Thomsett said: "New writing is the lifeblood of all theatres and this is a fitting way to honour Harold, who was a huge supporter of the Hackney Empire." The first recipient of the Harold Pinter Residency, Jan Woolf, whose play *Crackers* was to be performed at the Hackney Empire's Studio Theatre later in the season, gave a brief acceptance speech about her connection with Harold Pinter and read from some of her own work. It was a very enjoyable experience.

(I've posted preliminary information about these events in the Harold Pinter Community Discussion Forum linked in HaroldPinter.org.)

At Frank Gillen's request, the "Harold Pinter Bibliography" that I am compiling for the memorial volume of *The Pinter Review* is focusing selectively on obituaries, memorials, tributes, and related publications and programs, so I will be listing some reviews of those programs and others in it.

I am planning to be giving a paper at the Goldsmiths College Pinter Centre conference on Fractured Narratives: Pinter, Postmodernism and the Postcolonial being held in London (Nov. 5-7, 2009). My paper is currently entitled "Pinter Still in Play: Pinter's Legacies."

Susan Hollis Merritt, Ph.D.
Bibliographical Editor
The Pinter Review: Collected Essays

From Mark Taylor-Batty

With the support of the Habima National Theatre, the fringe Tmuna Theatre and The British Council, Director and playwright Oded Kotler and translator Avraham Oz realised a year-long project to put on a festival of Pinter's work, including full-length productions, in Tel Aviv in March this year. The Habima staged a light and pacey version of *Betrayal*, starring much loved Israeli comic actors Lilian Barreto, Avi Kushnir and Moni Moshonov, the latter also directing the performance. The Tmuna played host to a string of staged rehearsed readings of numerous texts, many of which had never been performed in Israel: *The Birthday Party*, *The Hothouse*, *Landscape*, *The Dumb Waiter*, *The New World Order*, *The Homecoming*, *Celebration*, *One for the Road*, *Night and Ashes to Ashes*. A remarkable Arabic language production of *Mountain Language*, the first ever, was also presented at the Tmuna. That little independent theatre also hosted an evening of Pinter's poetry and a number of discussion panels with important Israeli actors, directors and writers.

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October 5, 2009