

Samuel Beckett as World Literature

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BLOOMSBURY ACADEMIC Bloomsbury Publishing Inc
1385 Broadway, New York, NY 10018, USA 50 Bedford Square, London, WC1B 3DP, UK

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First published in the United States of America 2020

Volume Editor's Part of the Work © Thirthankar Chakraborty and Juan Luis Toribio Vazquez Each chapter © Contributors

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

ISBN: HB: 978-1-5013-5880-7 ePDF: 978-1-5013-5882-1 eBook: 978-1-5013-5881-4

Typeset by Integra Software Services Pvt. Ltd. Printed and bound in the United States of America

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Modernism, medium and memory

Mischa Twitchin

Beckett's ambivalence (not to say distress) concerning his reception into the canon of World Literature¹ is perhaps symbolized by his non-appearance at the award of his Nobel Prize (being represented instead by his French publisher, Jérôme Lindon (Craig et al. 2016: 160)). According to the Nobel citation, 'born near Dublin... as a renowned writer [Beckett] entered the world almost half a century later in Paris' (Gierow 1969). If, as Beckett famously observed, '[b]irth was the death of him' (1986: 425), what might be the consequence of having 'entered the world' after leaving behind his literal place of birth? What – or, indeed, where – is this Pantheon of Literature if it is conceived of as a world removed from the 'godforsaken hole' to which Mouth, for example, is introduced in *Not I* (1972) (Beckett 1986: 376)? Given that the works of many Nobel laureates are now all but forgotten, it is not in virtue of belonging to the canon of World Literature that Beckett is still read today, but, rather, because of what is particular in his writing, to the sense of what he called 'a world of [its] own'. Indeed, Beckett observes of the modern period that it is no longer possible to be a 'universal' artist (such as Leonardo was): when 'the tie between the self and things no longer exists... one must create a world of one's own in order to satisfy one's need to know, to understand, one's need for order' (McMillan & Fehsenfeld 1988: 231).

Claims about – and for – a 'world' literature (in lower case) put Beckett's example in its own perspective; not least, concerning 'the politics of untranslatability' (Apter 2013), as a question of experience to be read

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in, or between, Irish-English and French. To draw on just one of the philosophical 'heterocosms' cited by Emily Apter (2013: 190), Jean-Luc Nancy, for instance, offers reflection on an 'untranslatable' term in French, *mondialisation*, distinguishing between "'creation" (up to this point limited to theological mystery)' and "'world-forming" [*mondialisation*] (up to this point limited to economic and technological matters, generally called "globalisation")' (Nancy 2007: 29). In this context, then, distinct from the creation of 'the' world by God, Beckett's sense of creating art worlds 'of one's own' also contrasts with the colonial-capitalist era of 'globalisation', conceived not in terms of the imagination but of exploitation.

The sense of what 'world-forming' is 'limited to' – especially in its self-constituting distinction from 'creation' – echoes Adorno's analyses of linguistic modes of commodification, where the transformation of social relations into relations between things extends into their conditions of expression, now celebrated by champions of the so-called experience economy. Adorno's reading of Beckett is profoundly informed by this sense of 'pseudo-logical connections, and galvanized words appearing as commodity signs – as the desolate echo of the advertising world – [being] "refunctioned" (*umfunktionert*) into the language of a poetic work that negates language' (Adorno 2010: 162–3). How Beckett's 'refunctioning' of language in terms of 'lessness' might fit the World Literature – or World Theatre – agenda will be explored here through two examples of his work on screen.

To follow Adorno's negative appreciation of modernism 'as the obsolescence of the modern' (Adorno 2010: 171) means refusing the ornamentalism of the postmodern when engaging with what remains of art in the twentieth century. With its potential resistance to the irrepressible tide of the conventional (not least, in works of art), Beckett's principle of 'lessness' (or, in Adorno's term, 'subtraction' [Adorno 2010: 178]) advances an impossibility that is the very test of the possible, a failure that is the test of the effort required for it. In Adorno's anti-Cartesianism, what remains of and for the modern artist, rather than the ego of indubitable doubt, is 'the dust thou art' (Adorno 2010: 170, 173) – beautifully evoked in the lines of Clov's leave-taking in *Endgame*: 'I am so bowed I only see my feet, if I open my eyes, and between my legs a little trail of black dust. I say to myself that the earth is extinguished, though I never saw it lit' (Beckett

1986: 132). The balance between the tragic and the comic in Beckett is epitomized by Clov's following reflection: 'When I fall I'll weep for happiness' (Beckett 1986).

As there is no risk of not stating the obvious here, the argument of this essay is far from concluded. Rather than the national languages into which we are born (even as these admit of bilingualism or, indeed, of multilingualism), this chapter will consider the residua of untranslatability in terms of medium. Taking as an example Beckett's last play, *What Where* (1983), the essay will explore a comparison between Beckett's own translation of the play

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for television (Beckett 1985) and the version made for the prize-winning *Beckett on Film* project (Beckett 2001b).² What conception of 'world' is evoked – or supposed – in the very title of *What Where*? How does the question of World Literature – or, indeed, of World Theatre – give us to think about this short text, and, vice versa, how might a reading of (or with) Beckett's play give us to think about such worldly concepts (or institutions) as Literature or Theatre, even as they turn to dust in the very claims of their conceptual consistency?

Although the Dublin film project aimed to give Beckett's work a global reception, it promoted itself with the stamp of a 'made in Ireland' authority. Indeed, according to a promotional article based on an interview with one of the project's producers, Michael Colgan (then director of the Gate Theatre in Dublin), 'a sense of place is provided by well-known Irish actors' (Riding 2000).³ Paraphrasing Colgan, the article proposed that the 'Beckett Film project... attempt[ed] to reclaim him as an English-language writer, and an Irish one at that'. With this 'sense of place' – of, precisely, 'what where' – conceived of in terms of the actors' nationality, the Dublin version fails to engage with the particular world of Beckett's writing – a failure not in Beckett's artistic sense (as the best that could be hoped for), but in the mundane sense of ignoring literal specificities in favour of metaphors that are themselves 'commodity signs'.

*

Caught briefly on camera, Beckett can be heard telling Stanley Gontarski that *What Where*, although 'written for the theatre', was 'much more a television play than a theatre piece', and in a letter, he comments, 'Thinking of proposing *What Where* to *Süddeutscher Rundfunk* [the South German broadcaster]. For once a stage play that invites TV – as I feel it now' (Craig et al. 2016: 624). How does writing 'for' performance in one medium or another come into question, then, through its translation between these mediums – rather than being read as simply the analogy for an 'original' intention, one which would not be specific to either medium? Beckett's own account of his play – as himself a director (Gontarski 1999) – need not involve us in an interpretative teleology, retrospectively supposing a sense of the work's inception. Indeed, the play (like all of Beckett's 'dramaticules', with their poetics of dust) offers a parable of the impossibility of such a sovereign conception of 'what where' – even for its author. Despite 'being given the works', no one finally answers the play's own questions, giving rise to its own much-quoted suggestion 'make sense who may' (Beckett 1986: 476).

This makes the Dublin film version's title (with its ostentatious possessive apostrophe), 'Samuel Beckett's *What Where*', all the more odd – especially given that its claims to textual 'fidelity' are demonstrably false in their

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own terms (as one might have expected the Beckett estate to have noted). However, it is those terms themselves that are fallacious, in supposing that the pragmatic and the conceptual be separated, even if this is the prevailing expectation of staging – one which Beckett, precisely, set out to resist. As Steven Connor notes (in discussing Enoch Brater's remarks on the earlier example of *Quad* (1981)):

In one sense the performance... is its own text, and has, if anything, a higher status than the actual written form, which in some ways it modifies and supersedes. But if this written form comes before *and after* the

performance, then both text and performance repeat and perhaps displace each other, the text being one 'original' for the production, just as the production is another 'original' for the text.

(Connor 1988: 166)

That reading in one medium becomes rewriting in another – quite literally with Beckett's changes to the play in light of his directorial experiences – complicates any assumption about its translation, but this does not mean that any interpretation is equivalent to any other. The issue remains as to the work's resistance to an interpretation that would merely assimilate it to the conventions of the medium into which it is being translated, requiring perhaps a change in the understanding of that medium – indeed, a failure, even, in its supposed literacy. *What Where's* proposal to 'make sense who may' does not forestall its translatability but, precisely, holds it open. In this way, assumptions concerning what is primary (text) and secondary (performance) – as between the what and the where of a drama – are challenged by the aesthetic truth of the 'world' of the work.

Exemplifying an aesthetic 'not [of] abstraction but subtraction' (Adorno 2010: 178), or, in Beckett's own words, of 'getting rid of every superfluity' (Gontarski 1987: n.p.), Beckett's own work for television contrasts with the aggrandizement of the Dublin translation. Indeed, comparison between the two films allows us to address issues that go beyond the particular example to consider how Beckett's play resonates, in a deeper critical context, with Rosalind Krauss's sense of a modernism in which 'the medium is the memory' (Krauss 2011: 127), as key to its resistance to kitsch – or, in Beckett's own terms, to the 'parody' of his work.

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Although it is the singular term 'medium' that is invoked here (as indicating questions of aesthetics, distinct from the ubiquitous 'media' of cultural studies), performance on both stage and screen occurs through a hybrid of audio-vision. Despite the fact that we habitually refer to *watching* television, and going to *see* a play or a film, these performances are as much heard as

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seen, and it is the relation between these senses that constitutes the *theatre* of Beckett's late plays. Like the performance of music (in Beckett's preferred analogy), this is a theatre in which questions of space and time, sound and sight, constitute the 'drama', rather than the conventions of character and setting with which 'stagings' are typically conceived. As Beckett wrote to Alan Schneider, for example, about his stage characters (in this case Mouth in *Not I*): 'All I know is in the text. [The character] is purely a stage entity, part of a stage image and purveyor of a stage text. The rest is Ibsen' (cited in Harmon 1998: 283).

In the Dublin film, it is as if the play was to be read as a transferable set of dialogues, rather than, precisely, an attempt to address the very medium of its performance as Beckett proposed. This is the basic mistake of conceiving such translations in terms of a primary text and a secondary performance – as if the stage directions were not equally part of the drama. When Beckett says that a 'production that dismisses my directions is a complete parody of the play as conceived by me' (cited in Kalb 1991: 79), he addresses this misconception of a translation between mediums – a misconception engendered by reading Beckett as if he was (in his own example) Ibsen. Following Beckett's comparison of his theatre making with chess (see McMillan and Fehsenfeld 1988: 231), the pieces and the rules allow for the freedom of play. It is not the individual moves that constitute the game (or a Beckett performance) but the rules (see Twitchin 2019).

Given that *What Where* is contemporary with what Krauss called a 'post-medium condition' in the arts, why specify medium as a key for making sense of its possible 'world'? Why is resistance to the postmodern claim that medium no longer makes sense important for translatability in Beckett's case, not least in the enduring fascination of an otherwise anachronistic artistic modernism? Crucially, the questions of the work (between the what and the where that is said in the play) resist the conflation of the medium with a supposed audience. Without publicly funded facilities (such as Beckett had access to in Stuttgart for his own version), advertising – and with it, 'accessibility' – comes to define the medium in

terms of a target audience. The attempt to identify the latter – as if to write for a medium was the same as to write for a specific audience – is one of the more depressing consequences of the commercial imperative. When a work is conceived of in terms of product and ratings, the medium itself becomes a commodity, rather than being an artistic concern.

In the critical, modernist sense of the world of imagination – referring to specifically aesthetic conditions for an understanding of medium (or, perhaps, its ‘world’), addressed in the material or technical conditions of and for its concept – Beckett’s own translation of *What Where*, indeed, ‘make[s] sense’. As Krauss, one of the few critics who still invokes questions of medium specificity, observes, ‘[I]n order to sustain artistic practice, a medium must be a supporting structure, generative of a set of conventions, some of which,

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in assuming the medium itself as their subject, will be wholly “specific” to it, thus producing an experience of their own necessity’ (Krauss 1999a: 26). Although this criterion of ‘necessity’ may seem not only anachronistic but also, in the eyes of many, conservative (or even reactionary), it lies at the heart of what makes Beckett’s work still contemporary and challenging in affirming a ‘world of [its] own’. After all, not everything that may be thought of after modernism is necessarily postmodern, especially as the latter is characterized by an omnivorous mixing of genres which Beckett despaired of.

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Questions of medium (and of its corollary, aesthetic ‘autonomy’) can be related to an essay by Beckett on the poet Denis Devlin where he writes, with a merciless historical irony, that ‘[a]rt has always been this – pure interrogation, rhetorical question less the rhetoric – whatever else it may have been obliged by the “social reality” to appear, but never more freely so than now, when social reality (*pace* ex-comrade Radek) has severed the connection’ (2001: 91). This reference to the World Literature debates of the 1930s, with their diverging claims for ‘bourgeois cosmopolitanism’ and ‘socialist internationalism’, is worth recalling. Before he too fell victim to Stalin’s show trials, Radek’s suggestion that Joyce’s *Ulysses* (1922), for instance, offered the reader ‘a heap of dung, crawling with worms, photographed by a cinema apparatus through a microscope’ (1977 [1935]: 153) is among his more pithy insights addressing a cultural politics of ‘social reality’ as ‘severed’ from art. Suffice it to note that Beckett’s own cinematic point of reference, Sergei Eisenstein – with whom he had even aspired to study – was by this time himself under personal threat from the commissars of ‘socialist realism’, the totalitarian translation of ‘social reality’ into modern aesthetics.

While the appearance of ‘social reality’ is regularly invoked by critics with respect to the drama of *What Where* (together with *Catastrophe* (1982) and *Rough for Radio 2* (1961)), the keyword in Beckett’s reflection on Devlin – as for any modernist aesthetics – is ‘less,’ as it points to a reality that is specific to art, as *pure* interrogation, as that which is itself in question through its medium (addressing the ‘world’ as its ‘literature’). Indeed, if there is one word that characterizes Beckett’s sense of the rhetoric of aesthetic interrogation in and for the theatre, it is, precisely, ‘less’ – or perhaps, more expansively, ‘lessness’. This is not, then, a question of more *or* less, but rather of that modernist mantra that less *is* more. Beckett refers precisely to ‘the principle that less is more’ (which is usually credited to Mies van der Rohe) in the writing of *That Time* (1975), anticipating objections that its proposed relation between image and word (in any possible translation) would be thought insufficiently ‘theatrical’. And of his own translation of

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What Where, Beckett referred – with respect to the work in Stuttgart – to a ‘process of elimination’ (Gontarski 1999: 431).

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Evoking it as a ‘field of memory’ (Gontarski 1999: 415, 450), Beckett makes the question of his characters’ appearance in *What Where* specific to the play’s concept of embodied experience, examined

rather than simply located in its medium-specific sense of time and space. By contrast, the opening of the Dublin film forestalls the conceptual-pragmatic questions concerning the what-where of a performance by providing a location unrelated to the medium (or game) of the play's sense. This turns the play text into a narrative text, such as one might indeed associate with Ibsen. In a revealing interview, Alan Moloney (one of the producers of the Dublin film project) declares that '[i]n the making of a film, you need to do certain things. You need to contextualize things, and create an environment that – in its purest form – Beckett's writing doesn't require' (cited in Herren 2007: 192).

This shift (using again Jean-Luc Nancy's distinction) from 'world creating' (in 'its own necessity' [Krauss]) to 'world forming' (or 'contextualisation' [Moloney]) – where a potential acting 'environment' is applied to the text rather than derived from it – is further elaborated by the director of the Dublin screen version, Damien O'Donnell, who remarks of the playing space in 'the original play' that 'there is no set' (2001). Insisting that he 'wasn't allowed to change the text, or the staging', O'Donnell acknowledges the question of medium only by a negation that is allowed no meaning for itself (see O'Donnell 2001). That there is no set is regarded as a lack to be made up for, rather than as the very clue to the play's conception of 'staging' its own world. Paradoxically, the possibilities of time and space (as of the medium of performance) are not the least of *What Where* is concerned with – making sense with (and of) its play between light and dark, voice and vision, memory and image – even in the possibility of imagining the 'abuse of power' (or, 'pace ex-comrade Radek', its 'social reality'), for which O'Donnell sees his added library setting 'as a metaphor' (Sierz 2013: 144).

This anti-modernist (indeed, anti-Beckettian) aesthetic remains focused on an associative message or content, where the translation of (and between) 'worlds' is conceived in terms of an expectation of 'acting' which Beckett's work specifically eschews. As Beckett wrote to Deirdre Bair: 'Not for me these Grotowskis and Methods... the best possible play is one in which there are no actors, only the text. I'm trying to write one' (cited in McMillan and Fehsenfeld 1988: 16). Indeed, in contrast to its self-image, the 'universal' translation machine of 'acting' marks the Anglophone theatre as distinctly parochial in relation to European, never mind world, theatres. For the *What Where* production in Stuttgart, Beckett initially proposed 'mimes', wanting 'no "interpretation"': 'In a word a discipline and self-

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consciousness hardly to be expected of "seasoned" actors and indeed too much – or too little – to be asked of them' (Craig et al. 2016: 631–32). What is gained, in this context, by the Dublin insistence on Irish actors is hard to fathom. Exposing the contradictions of the Dublin claims to textual fidelity, these differences in translating the what and the where of the play are pertinently expressed by Eckhart Voigts-Virchow, when he observes that '[t]he real alternative that Beckett's minimalist, abstract TV vision has to offer contemporary media culture is its definition of space as a void and an absence – the denial of vision and spectacle' (2001: 121).

This is particularly apparent in the way that O'Donnell's film locates the play's Voice, not with the action of fading in and out, but by intercutting the actors coming and going with shots of the presiding megaphone. Paradoxically again, the megaphone – which was eliminated in Beckett's small screen production and in the subsequent Paris stage performance (directed by Pierre Chabert, under Beckett's supervision) – becomes an index of the 'filmed theatre' that the Dublin project supposedly set out to avoid (as Beckett and Marin Karmitz successfully did in their collaboration on a film version of *Play* (1963)). A curiously antique anomaly in an otherwise futuristic, automated environment, the visual presence of the megaphone anchors that of the characters in the eye of the camera rather than of the screen. Here the failure to question the medium – 'we wanted to create a cinematic feel, rather than just filmed plays', as Moloney put it (cited in Sierz 2013: 141) – returns on an epic scale, assimilating translatability to the generic conventions of that 'cinematic feel'. Any possibility of dramatic 'lessness' is precluded by additions made in the name of the play's supposedly missing 'contextualization'. It is as if O'Donnell's understanding of the film language with which to adapt *What Where's* 'field of memory' was learnt from James Cameron rather than Beckett himself (or still less, in Beckett's case perhaps, from Wilhelm Röntgen). The Dublin film version reduces the aesthetics of memory to a field of oblivion (or kitsch), pursuing a sense of 'cinematisation' that – like 'globalisation' in Nancy's account – 'has already translated everything in a global idiom' in contrast to 'preserv[ing] something untranslatable' (Nancy 2007: 28).

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Beckett's ambiguity, in the play of identity and repetition (both material and memorial), as to whether the voices speak *as*, or *about*, the 'I' who hears them (and who might, then, imagine himself to be no longer alone) is lost in the Dublin version by eliding voice and vision, memory and speech, the mental and material image, through the 'contextualized' appearance of the actors. In place of the expected synchronicity of word – or rather voice – and image, the 'action' of *What Where* involves the Voice recalling a body which may or may not be its own, oscillating between memory and imagination (as

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between face and screen). The beauty of Beckett's own translation is that the emanation of both voices and faces could be a phantasy of the medium, as if the screen were dreaming to and of itself. By contrast, O'Donnell's resort to the convention of shot/counter-shot to visually narrate the interrogation between different voices abstracts the play from its own world of medium reflexivity, that is, from its specific question of memory. Identifying *what* and *where* with the expectations of narrative cinema editing – in which dialogue is presumed to be inter, rather than intra, subjective (let alone, as it were, intra-medial) – Beckett's play is subsumed by cinematic conventions. What Moloney called the 'literacy... associated with making a film' (cited in Sierz 2013: 143), which was disparaged by Beckett as the expectations of 'industrial film' (Fehsenfeld and Overbeck 2009: 312), is emblemized from the very beginning of the Dublin version with a standard opening top shot. With this typical cinematic scene setting, the *question* of space – as that of locating memory in the world of the play (at least, in the translation between one medium (stage) and another (screen)) – is answered before it can even be posed.

The Voice is no longer the promise of an image that may or may not be seen, but the index of a narrative visibility that is not in question artistically. The ambition of the Dublin film project, to offer a 'World TV' version of Beckett's work, offers a reaffirmation – on screen – of everything that Beckett's writing for theatre sought to resist. As Martin Puchner has observed:

The sequential arrangement of gestures and speech – stage direction and direct speech – is not just an accidental feature of one text but a structuring principle of many of Beckett's plays... Beckett's technique of interruption... [is] thus directed against what since Aristotle had become the purpose of drama: the representation of action. It is a strategy that uses the dramatic text against the theatre and stage directions against the integrity of actors.

(Puchner 2011: 168, 169)

This concerns the aesthetic politics of what is – or is not – at stake in the example of medium translatability, when the paradox of the play's resistance to its own potential performance (in its writing for that medium) is simply ignored with a claim to make the work globally accessible or comprehensible in that very medium (paradoxically, here even in Beckett's name).

What O'Donnell describes as the 'restrictions' of the text (2001) – upon the language of film, as a medium of and for the play's translation for the screen – are precisely the potentials of and for its resistance to (or 'untranslatability' in) the medium of its performance that make it *this* play, *What Where*, and not simply a generic, filmable drama with and for actors. In terms of a modernist critical judgement, this is what makes Beckett's

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translation art and the Dublin version kitsch, where – between these two examples of imaginable worlds – there passes a dividing line of aesthetic politics which demands that one takes a position. As Rosalind Krauss writes:

If [certain examples] are not instinctively felt to be meretricious, arbitrary, and thus the simulacrum of art rather than the real thing, this is because kitsch has become the polluted atmosphere of the very culture we breathe. Their identity as kitsch derives from their feckless indifference to the idea of a medium, so

long ago condemned by Greenberg's admonishment in *Avant-Garde and Kitsch*. Kitsch he defines as the corruption of taste by the substitution of simulated effects for that recursive testing of the work of art against the logic of its specific conditions, a testing he named 'self-criticism'.

(Krauss 2011: 68–9)

This is not to advocate an artistic show trial, orchestrated by a political committee (such as in Radek's case), but to experiment with the critical demands of thinking with and through a medium. As previously noted, this work of translating involves what Beckett (reflecting on *What Where* specifically) called a 'process of elimination' – but only in the sense of 'pure interrogation', in which the possibility of autonomy in aesthetics remains a promise for that in politics.

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With respect to what Krauss identifies as 'both projective and mnemonic' as 'concerns the idea of a medium' (1999b: 296), the example of *What Where* evokes an aesthetic resistance to the sort of translation produced by the corporate recycling of media that represses the *work* of both modernist cultural memory and its historical politics. It is precisely in this context that Thierry de Duve's acknowledgement of Greenberg (generally dismissed as 'outmoded', as if the concept of history that permits such a judgement were not itself in question) is significant: 'While everyone else was crying from the rooftops that the avant-garde was an anti-tradition, Greenberg saw it as the sole authentic defence of the tradition before the erosive force of kitsch' (de Duve 2010: 8).

Perhaps the most famous counterpart of this in Beckett is his insistence on the hope of 'failure'. Film, which was once emblematic of the culture industry (before the rise of digital media), pioneered the use of audience previews for making a 'final cut', ostensibly to protect the producer's investment from the director's vision (eloquently satirized in Godard's *Le Mépris*). The model of what has already been made (and successfully sold) now feeds the cannibalism of cinema in the endless pursuit of 'remakes'.

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The Dublin version of *What Where* is itself an instance of what Friedrich Kittler called 'McLuhan's law' – 'according to which the content of a medium is always another medium' (1990: 115) – precisely in its failure of not offering 'filmed theatre'; that is, in simply reproducing the conventions of stage acting on screen. The production (and promotion) of kitsch – in the negation of medium memory – always pretends to be both de-aestheticized and depoliticized.

In conclusion, given that the power of Beckett's writing is so much bound up with its testimony to the fractured possibilities of cultural memory within modernism, it is perhaps worth quoting another of Krauss's appeals to the critical value of the concept of medium, as its own world. This again poses both the problem and the possibility of conceiving the example of *What Where* in the context of World Literature or World Theatre:

The aphorism... *the medium is the memory*... specifically opposes Marshall McLuhan's aphorism 'the medium is the message.' McLuhan exalts in the *non*-specificity of the medium, its 'message' always referring to another, earlier medium... 'The medium is the memory' insists, instead, on the power of the medium to hold the efforts of the forebears of a specific genre in reserve for the present. Forgetting this reserve is the antagonist of memory... The paradigm of the medium could thus be mapped as *memory versus forgetting*.

(Krauss 2011: 127–8)

Echoing Voice's call in *What Where* to 'make sense who may', the question here would be how the play dislocates its supposed translatability in the field of 'World Media'. How, after all, do such media engage with the relation between the senses and technology, meaning and medium, when it is a question of Beckett's *art*? To give the last word to Beckett himself, how might such translation make sense of a world in which it may be said, 'In dark and silence to close as if to light the eyes and hear a sound' (2003: 24)?

Notes

1 I have opted to capitalize the term 'World Literature' to distinguish – as Emily Apter suggests – between a 'disciplinary construct' and any reference, in lower case, 'which may be considered as a descriptive catch-all for the sum of all forms of literary expression in all the world's languages' (Apter 2013: 2).

2 I have also made a performance-film experiment with Beckett's text but will not discuss it here (Twitchin 2013).

3 In the case of *What Where*, specifically, these were Gary Lewis and Sean McGinley.

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