Reviewed Article:

Interpreting the Interpreter: is Live Historical Interpretation Theatre at National Museums and Historic Sites Theatre?

Persistent Identifier: https://exarc.net/ark:/88735/10156

EXARC Journal Issue 2014/2 | **Publication Date:** 2015-05-15

Author(s): Ashlee Beattie [1] ✉

[1] Canadian War Museum, 1 Vimy Place, Ottawa ON K1A 0M8, Canada.

2012 OpenArch meeting at Foteviken (SE)

In his 2007 book, Living History Museums: Undoing History through Performance, Scott Magelssen describes the various reactions to his main line of enquiry: is historical interpretation theatre?

> “History is not dry facts and dates, but a fabulous dramatic story that makes for great theatre”
> –Wendy Jones

Presenting the Discussion

The majority of the people Scott Magelssen interviewed were museum curators and historical interpreters, and their answers were broken up into three main categories:

1. No (mainly because there is no script), 2. Yes, it is a form of theatre, 3. Of course it is theatre. (Magelssen 106-119)

At the 2012 OpenArch and IMTAL conference in Malmö, Sweden, I explored this topic of historical interpretation as theatre in order to expand on the similarities and differences between performing as a historical interpreter, either as a first-person or third-person interpreter, and performing as an actor. This article demonstrates that first-person interpretation is considerably more comparable to acting than third-person interpretation, albeit remaining a type of stylized performance. I apply theories such as Jiřy Veltruský’s concept of the stage figure and Michael Kirby’s continuum of acting/non-acting. For the purposes of my research I have focused on a first-person historical interpreter at the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, Canada and a third-person historical interpreter at the Dundurn National Historic Site (Dundurn), Hamilton, Canada.The Canadian War Museum is a national history museum and some of its interpretation methods are reminiscent of living history, such as first-person historical interpretation. Dundurn is a living history museum located in a historic home and relies primarily on third-person interpretation. My methodological framework is two-fold: academically as a researcher and practically as a former interpreter at both locations[1] .

An important differentiation

I would like to briefly differentiate the following two terms: theatricality and performativity.

Theatricality

In her article “Theatricality and Estrangement of Art and Life in the Russian Avant-garde” Jestrovic explains that “there are at least two kinds of theatricality” (44). Firstly, she writes on what Patrice Pavis also calls re-theatricalisation, which is a movement that came into play as a response to naturalism. Instead of maintaining the fourth wall to the extreme, as in realism and naturalism, re-theatricalisation uses “the rules and conventions of the stage, presenting the performance as playful fiction only” (Pavis, *Dictionary* 395). Most importantly, she underlines what Vsevelod Meyerhold holds to, which is that theatre “does not ‘copy’ reality, but represents it” (Jestrovic 44). This statement echoes Aristotle’s views of mimesis. According to Richard Janko’s translation of Aristotle’s *Poetics*, Plato stressed the concept that art copies life whereas Aristotle explained that art *represents* life (xv). “Epic and tragic composition, and

indeed comedy, dithyrambic composition, and most sorts of music for wind and stringed instruments are all, [considered] as a whole, representations" (Aristotle 1).

Secondly, Jestrovic explains that "theatricality functions as a distancing device when it foregrounds what is immanentto the theatre, calling attention to the fictionality and incompleteness of the representation" (42). Like re-theatricalisation, this element of theatricality calls upon the use of metatheatrical devices in order to establish an understanding that what is presented to a spectator is not real life, but an allusion to reality.

I employ the word *theatricality* the way Jestrovic first describes the use of this word. If something is *theatrical*, that implies that it has a certain level of pretend or 'make-believe' attributed to it[2] .

Performativity

Theatricality differs from performativity in that it does not have the range of meaning that performativity seems to convey today. According to Schechner, *performativity* is a broad term that points to a variety of topics in performance studies. It is often used to describe something that is "like a performance" (Schechner, *Studies* 123). In defining performance, Marvin Carlson uses"two rather different concepts [...]; one involving the display of skills, the other also involving the display, but less of a particular skill than of a recognized and culturally coded pattern of behaviour"(4). In other words, performance can denote one's intentional expression of certain signs or skills as well as the idea of *restored behaviour* that Schechner defines as "physical, verbal, or virtual actions that are not-for-the-first time; that are prepared or rehearsed" (*Studies* 29). There are various situations in which one can find this type of rehearsed behaviour: plays, dance performances, rituals. Practising a speech can fall into restored behaviour and can be considered a type of performance. In some cases, the individual may not even be performing this type of behaviour consciously (Schechner, *Studies* 29).

Just as there are many different types of performance, there are also different types of performers. Schechner differentiates between a "professional performer" and a "Goffman performer"; one "who masters the techniques of performance" and the other who is unaware of the fact that he or she is performing (Schechner, *Theory* 300-301). For example, actors hired to perform at the National Arts Centre, Ottawa, are considered "professional performers." They have received training and gained significant experience to perform in a theatre production. With regards to a "Goffman performer," any one person can become one, whether he or she realises it or not. In his book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Ervin Goffman defines performance as any "activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers" (22). For example, when having guests over most hosts and hostesses will try to make their guests feel welcome, without necessarily being aware that

they are performing hospitable acts. Carlson points out the dangers of seeing a social event as performance. He states that "the recognition that our lives are structured according to repeated and socially sanctioned modes of behaviour raises the possibility that all human activity could potentially be considered as "performance", or at least all activity carried out with a consciousness of itself" (4-5). This last clarification, indicating that intention is required for an action to be considered a performance, echoes Pavis' thoughts on the matter as well.

For Pavis, performance exists as long as there is "the object of the gaze" (*Dictionary* 346). A performance is something that can be seen or viewed and performativity is something that denotes a level of performance attributable to an action (or even to displayed objects) within a museum or at an historic site which are intended to be viewed by the public and exert some degree of influence over them (Schechner, *Studies* 168[3] .

In Practice

The first case study that I would like to examine is that of my experience as a first-person interpreter at the Canadian War Museum. "The Canadian War Museum traces its origins back to 1880 when it consisted primarily of a collection of militia artefacts. The Museum opened at its new location on the LeBreton Flats site in downtown Ottawa [Ontario] on May 8, 2005. Its opening not only marked the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe (V-E Day), but also the 125th anniversary of the Museum itself" (Backgrounder 2). As part of its key messaging the Museum aims to tell the stories of everyday men and women who experienced times of conflict or war. One of the methods which the Museum uses to represent the ordinary person is in providing living history presentations using first-person theatrical techniques. Anthony Jackson and Helen Rees Leahy point out that the use of theatre techniques in museums "can inject personal narratives into global histories—demonstrating and offering insights into the global via the personal [...]" ("Seeing it for Real..." 321).

The most common theatrical presentations offered by the Canadian War Museum staff are called Group Orientations and are delivered in May and June to each visiting school group. These presentations are performances done in a first-person interpretation style, in costume, and the historical characters depicted are a combination of existing facts and personal stories (Lyons 3). Kathryn Lyons, the Interpretive Planner at Canadian War Museum who originally worked on the concept of the Group Orientation writes on the subject:

"The group orientation emerged as a 15-minute personal story of one individual in wartime. The story is told through the use of a reproduction work of art, a few genuine and reproduction artefacts and a costumed interpreter who gradually becomes one of the characters in the painting. That character then shares their story and objects in first-person." (3)

There are 10 different first-person historical interpretations offered at the Canadian War Museum; they cover various periods of conflict from the Seven Years War in the mid-18th century to Canada's recent engagement in Afghanistan. Although each story is unique, they share a common catch phrase: "you are going to get the chance to hear and see stories about ordinary Canadians, like yourselves, who were asked to do extraordinary things" (*Nursing Sister* 1). The interpreters reinforce the fact that these stories are about *ordinary*, everyday individuals. In this way, the people presented become like characters in a play. Aristotle describes characters as relating to one of three types of qualities; "[they] are either (i) better than we are, or (ii) worse, or (iii) such as we are [...]" (3). A character I played is a First World War Nursing Sister named Madeleine and although time and experience separates the students from my character, I stressed that she is an ordinary woman, with basic human needs and dreams, in order to allow the students to identify with this historical persona (See Figure 1).

A first-person interpreter communicates using gestures and speech. Depending on the mandate of the museum or historic site, a first-person interpreter will adopt the accent and vocabulary appropriate to his or her historical character. Often, this is to increase the "historical verisimilitude of their environments [... For example, at] Plimoth [Plantation, a living history museum in Massachusetts, U.S.A.], interpreters study "personation biographs" written out in colonial English script [...]" (Schechner, *Studies* 291). At the Canadian War Museum, I was given a script entitled "Nursing Sister in Doullens, France – Female" to play Madeleine. A first-person interpreter differs from other types of representations in that its object is a historical character, created based on an accumulation of facts. Sometimes the character is a known historical figure (for example Phineas Pratt at the Plimoth Plantation); however, the performances I have done as Madeleine are a representation of a fictional character based on an accumulation of data and historical research: she is a representation of the women who joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force during the First World War. At 24-years old, Madeleine left Montreal, Canada, to go and join the fight in France. In her time there, she made friends, she traveled to Paris and even London, she saved the life of a young man from Ontario (a neighboring province to her native province of Quebec) and she survived the bombing of her hospital in 1918. She also worked 12-hour shifts at the Canadian hospital in Doullens (30 km from the front line), lost patients, endured secondary-lung infections from mustard gas poisoning, and witnessed the death of nurses and doctors.

This type of presentational style bears the elements of an acting sign. In her book *The Path of a Character*, Yana Meerzon describes Jiřy Veltruský's concept of the stage figure as being "a part of a three-part structure known as the acting sign (actor – stage figure – dramatic figure)" (37). In a similar manner, first-person interpreters also create this type of structure. Meerzon explains that in this structure, "the actor signifies the "I" of an actor" (37). This first term can be easily interchanged with the term "interpreter" throughout these explanations. Although this substitution changes the meaning slightly, as an actor is not *technically* an interpreter,

the comparison between actor and interpreter can thus be made more clearly. Let us now hypothetically define this same structure, with the small alteration, as an interpretive sign: interpreter – stage figure – dramatic figure.

"The stage figure signifies the function of an actor [read: *interpreter*] as both an originator of the action and its product" (Meerzon 37). There is the "I" that is the interpreter, in my case, Ashlee's "I", and there is the stage figure that is *Madeleine*. As Erika Fischer-Lichte explains in her introduction to *The Semiotics of Theater*, everything the actor does to represent the character is done for the spectators (9). Everything that I did when I pretended to be Madeleine as a first-person interpreter was done to impress upon the spectators a certain emotion or idea regarding Madeleine, not myself. Madeleine was clearly a character that I adopted and that I tried to convey to my audience. I made sure to change my accent, so that when I spoke in English I sounded French given that Madeleine came from Montreal (a principally French-speaking city in the province of Quebec). I adopted certain mannerisms that alluded to a First World War nurse's behaviour, such as adjusting a white nurse's veil. Additionally, my overall behaviour as Madeleine was different than my own. As Madeleine, I adopted an attitude of ram-rod military determination tinged with weariness. ; All of these characteristics I took on in order to perform my stage figure effectively for whatever audience. My goal was to perform my part so convincingly that Madeleine's story would become an extension of the Canadian War Museum's First World War narrative for the visitors.

The third and final part of this acting/interpreting sign is the dramatic character, which Otakar Zich describes as "what the audience sees and hears" (quoted in Quinn 76) and what Michael Quinn explains as the "dynamic image in the minds of the perceiving audience" (Quinn 76). It is the fabrication that is created in the mind of the spectators, or visitors, based on the performing elements that stimulate their imagination (Quinn 76). This is easily applicable to the character of Madeleine as she became alive in the imagination of the audience. As an example, at the end of one of my presentations in May 2007 after I had explained that I was a museum interpreter and not a veteran of the First World War, a boy who seemed to be around ten years old lifted his hand and stood up all at once asking "so that was like a play?" When I said yes, the room was silent for a moment and then everyone burst into applause. It was a very rewarding moment to know that in the short time I had had with the group, I was clearly able to convey Madeleine's personality.

Adopting the role and characteristics of a historical figure (real or fictional) is undeniably a form of acting. In his book *A Formalist Theatre*, Michael Kirby establishes a continuum of not-acting/acting with five nodal points (See Table 1), and a first-person interpretation presentation fits easily into this range. He describes his desire to establish this continuum based on the need "to designate those transitional areas in which acting begins" (Kirby 6). Because many first-person interpretations are considered *interactive* theatre, a variety of

questions or comments can arise that risk leading an interpreter off track. "*Interactive* theatreimplies that audience members are acknowledged as being present and may engage in dialogue with the performer, without leaving their seats" versus *participatory* theatre which "implies that members of the audience are invited to join the performer for an activity or exercise"‖ (Bridal 21). Therefore, first-personinterpreters look to manoeuvre and manipulate a conversation back to where they have control and can insert another part of memorized text (Bridal 21-24). For example, I have had to talk my way out of "not knowing" what video games were as a First World War nursing sister and lead the conversation back to where I could relate Madeleine's "personal experience" of war with a particular group. Due to this interactive situation, which is not necessarily unique to first-person interpretation but is certainly one of its defining characteristics, a first-person historical interpreter can be classified in two different locations on the continuum. Although, there are five nodal points - nonmatrixed performing; symbolized matrix; received acting; simple acting and complex acting -, I will only discuss those that seem relevant to first-person interpretation.

NOT-ACTING				ACTING
Nonmatrixed Performing	Symbolized Matrix	Received Acting	Simple Acting	Complex Acting

TABLE 1. KIRBY'S ACTING/NOT-ACTING CONTINUUM (10)

"Acting becomes complex as more and more elements are incorporated into the pretense" (Kirby 10). For acting to be considered complex, according to Kirby, an actor must compound more than one emotional and/or physical element. These elements can be physical characteristics, such as age, emotional expressions, such as fear, or even representations of place, such as rain or sun (*ibid*). Simple acting describes acting that focuses on one element alone. ; Kirby hopes that the terms "simple" and "complex" be "accepted as objective and descriptive rather than evaluative. After all, [they] are terms that may be ascribed easily and without implied value judgement [...]" (9).

It is safe to say that first-person interpretation is a type of historical performance that falls under either simple acting or complex acting depending on the involvement of the interpreter. If an interpreter gives a high level of commitment then it is likely that he or she fits into the complex acting nodal; however, what is more likely is that a first-person interpreter performs simple acting which involves "simulation and impersonation [... and where] some emotional work is required" (Schechner, *Studies* 174). When I acted as Madeleine, there were moments when I reached Kirby's definition of complex acting. Because I was in an intimate setting where spectators could interrupt and ask questions that were either related or unrelated to the performance, I needed to have a certain amount of awareness. It could have been detrimental to the performance if I became completely emotionally immersed, which is indicative of the need to remain at the level of simple acting when performing first-person historical interpretations. However, that very argument can

support the claim that first-person interpretation is a form of complex acting. Although Kirby only describes the emotional and physical elements required in complex acting, he does indicate that there are "many other elements" (10). Because of the very challenges I just mentioned with regards to an *interactive* audience, there is an additional improvisational element in first-person interpretation that is not always present in a conventional theatre setting (Bridal 9). Therefore, without passing judgement on the quality of the interpreter, a first-person interpreter incorporates a number of elements (emotional, physical, improvisational, intellectual, educational, et cetera) and thus can deliver a complex performance of historical narrative.

For three seasons I adopted the performative style of a first-person interpreter when I performed Group Orientations and thus demonstrated strong parallels with a theatre actor. During the summer of 2008 I worked as a third-person interpreter at Dundurn National Historic Site. How then does this shift in performance style relate to the theories mentioned above?

Located in Hamilton, Ontario, Dundurn is a historic home built in 1835, restored in 1855 when the owner Sir Allen Nappier MacNab was at the height of his career as Premier of the United Provinces of Canada (this is before Canadian Confederation which occurred in 1867). As an interpreter there I wore period-appropriate servant clothing, but unlike my experience as a first-person interpreter, at Dundurn I performed as myself (See Figure 3). Therefore I, as the interpreter, acted as a performer, adhering to Pavis' statement that "[unlike] actors, performers do not play roles; they act in their own names" (*Analyzing* 62). .

The same acting/interpreting sign structure that was applied to the first-person interpreter can be applied to the third-person interpreter (See Table 2).

	Actor/Interpreter	Stage Figure	Dramatic Figure
1st Person Interpreter	Ashlee's *I*	Madeleine	Madeleine in the mind of the visitor
3rd Person Interpreter	Ashlee's *I*	*Ashlee the interpreter*	*Ashlee the interpreter* in the mind of the visitor.

TABLE 2. ACTING/INTERPRETING SIGN.

There is the 'I' of the interpreter (again in my case, Ashlee's 'I') and there is the stage figure that is *Ashlee the interpreter* (in costume at Dundurn, leading a tour in the third-person). Everything that I did when presenting information to visitors during the tour of the historic site was done to impress upon my spectators a certain level of knowledge regarding the home, the family, the servants or 19th century Canadian history. As a third-person interpreter, the vocabulary I chose was different to my everyday speech and the projection I used was louder than normal. Additionally, although I was constantly thinking about the spectator's safety, level of interest, and the elapsed time, that did not show through in my

stage figure's presence. This is comparable to an actor remembering his or her exits and entrances, complex blocking and line timing. The audience must not see the actor *thinking* about what he or she has to do next: the actor must appear to be fully in the moment[4] . Thus a certain distance was established between Ashlee as "I" and *Ashlee the interpreter* (stage figure).

The third element of the acting/interpreting sign is the dramatic character. Admittedly, it is difficult to see this applied to the third-person interpreter at Dundurn. Yet, many visitors who spoke with me while I was in third-person formed their own subjective idea about what made up *Ashlee the interpreter* (stage figure) and thus created a dramatic figure in their imagination. For example, questions I have been asked, to which every answer has been "no", are: "Do you have a degree in history?" "You must have worked here a long time?" or "Are you a motivational speaker?" These questions lead me to believe that certain visitors left assuming that I have a degree in history, for example, without asking.

Susan Bennett explains in her book, *Theatre Audiences: a theory of production and reception*, that "[...] the audience inevitably proceeds through the construction of hypotheses about the fictional world which are subsequently substantiated, revised or negated" (150). She further explains that audience members have constraints, such as production time, that do not always allow for these fictional constructions to be properly validated or corrected. Certain visiting tourists at Dundurn inevitably created their own hypotheses of who I was; however, unlike theatre spectators, visitors had the opportunity to ask questions, if they so wanted, and to have their speculations validated or discredited. Many of them have asked questions, and thus have included me further into their processes of reception. I certainly tried to maintain a degree of spontaneity when answering visitors. Yet their questions were so often alike and I found myself repeating the same answers over and over again. In fact, sometimes I felt as though I had practised and edited my answers so many times that they had almost become scripted. Because these acts and answers were *repeated*, Schechner calls this type of behaviour *restored behaviour* (*Studies* 73, *Theory* 324). Restored behaviour, although not scripted necessarily, is nevertheless a type of performance and falls under Kirby's second nodal: symbolized matrix.

A third-person interpreter also conforms to Kirby's symbolized-matrix nodal on his non-acting/acting continuum. Symbolized matrix refers to a "performer [who] does not act and yet his or her costume represents something or someone" (Kirby 5). I wore a recognizable historic costume representing that of an upstairs maid. Schechner further explains this performer as "someone [who] is performing actions that can be understood by spectators as 'belonging to' a character even though the performer always behaves 'as herself'" (*Studies* 174). For example, certain behaviourisms I performed as *Ashlee the third-person interpreter* were akin to an upstairs maid's behaviour. On certain tours, I would never go 'below stairs' for example, because that would not be an appropriate action for an upstairs maid of the 1850s to do.

Sometimes, I would alter my voice to suit a story or use specific gestures; therefore, although I was myself, I used certain performative elements that belonged to the maid's character I created.

These behaviour methods can be repeated, which according to Schechner brings them into the realm of *restored behaviour* (*Theory* 324). "Because it is marked, framed, and separate, restored behaviour can be worked on, stored and recalled, played with, made into something else, transmitted, and transformed" (Schechner, *Studies* 35). While leading people on a tour as a third-person interpreter at Dundurn, I would be performing "twice-behaved" actions. I would repeat a certain hand gesture to indicate that it was time to change rooms, or repeat a specific way of explaining something that I felt was most efficient. In fact, I performed "countless-behaved" actions, with the exception perhaps of my initial tour, which I still practised and rehearsed by myself or with colleagues first.

Ultimately, Kirby states that theatre is best described on a scale: "At one pole we have theatre, which is a performance intended to have an effect on an audience, and at the opposite pole we have everyday life, in which we usually do not perform or direct our behaviour toward an audience" (xiii). This is an ideal description in favour of a third-person interpretation, because interpreters always perform for spectators, the visitors, with the intent to have an effect on them, whether that effect is to inform or provoke them into discovering more on their own. Freeman Tilden, widely considered the father of museum interpretation, underlines the important fact that interpretation exists not only to inform, but also to provoke in order to stimulate the visitor "toward a desire to widen his horizon of interests and knowledge, and to gain an understanding of the greater truths that lie behind any statements of fact" (33). This reinforces the fact that all live interpretation is a type of performance, in that it aims to "communicate facts, concepts, and/or an historical period as effectively and memorably as possible ("Interpretation")." In order for an interpretation to be memorable, the interpreter must automatically be able to influence, positively or negatively, the experience of a visitor.

Concluding Remarks

I think Dundurn achieves Tilden's interpretative goal, that of stimulating the visitor, largely in part because it *does* employ the use of third-person interpretation. As a historic home of a highly-placed Canadian politician from the 1850s, certain restraints may be placed on a first-person interpreter that do not exist when using a third-person approach. For example, as a servant in first-person narrative it would be socially inappropriate for me, as a maid, to openly express judgement on the financial situation of my employers. Yet presenting in the third person allowed me to discuss MacNab's colourful past and his life-long financial struggles. Alternatively, presenting in first-person at the Canadian War Museum enables visiting school children to broaden their understanding of the past. The Museum is a modern building, opened in 2005, and when the student groups arrive in May and June they are often excited to be on a class trip. Given the particular nature of the content on display at the Canadian

War Museum the goal of the first-person presentations is to raise the students' level of awareness to the sensitive nature of military history and the human experience of war before they enter the exhibition galleries. Having performed countless first-person presentations as Madeleine and also led third-person tours throughout the rest of the year, I can say that based on experience, there is no better way for the students to connect with that aspect of our history than by interacting with a person who supposedly "lived" in that time.

Both first and third-person interpreters are aware that they are giving a type of performance even if, by some individuals, interpretation is only viewed as role playing. I would like to revisit the three answers outlined by Magelssen in his book on living history museums. The question was: "Is historical interpretation theatre?" The first answer was "no, because there is no script." This position can now be safely removed from the playing field, as we know that in some cases there are in fact very detailed scripts given to the interpreter, and at the very least, there is a rough outline provided. The second answer was "yes, it is a form of theatre." Third-person interpretation is a *form* of theatre, as it seems to fall more into the realm of performance and less into the area of complex acting, as described by Kirby. The third answer was "yes, of course it's theatre." When a first-person interpreter interacts with a group and successfully has them believe that they are someone they are not, that is truly *theatrical*. As a final note, whether I pretended to be a First World War nurse or whether I was relating information pertaining to Canadian mid-19th century domestic life I was blessed with rich historical narratives to share with the public. In the words of Wendy Jones "history is not dry facts and dates, but a fabulous dramatic story that makes for great theatre" (quoted in Bridal 149).

1 I have worked at the Canadian War Museum since 2005, spending the summer of 2006 as a guide at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial in France and the summer of 2008 at Dundurn National Historic Site in Canada. In 2011, I successfully defended my M.A. Thesis in Theatre Theory and Dramaturgy entitled "Performing Historical Narrative at the Canadian War Museum: Space, Objects, and Bodies as Performers". Currently, I am the Training Coordinator at the Canadian War Museum, responsible for training Program Interpreters (paid front-line staff), and for supervising the Museum's team of Volunteer Interpreters (front-line volunteers who come with a certain existing expertise in the field of military history).

2 I explain further, and employ, the second kind of theatricality that Jestrovic refers to, in my M.A. Thesis, as both these elements of theatricality are useful when looking at how museum spaces and artefacts de-familiarise a visitor by showcasing a representation of reality and not the real thing.

3 At the base level, Pavis outlines the elements of a theatre performance as a performer, a space, and a spectator. These three elements are also present in a museum, where there is a performer (the institution, the designers, the objects, the staff, et cetera), a space (the building) and a spectator (the visitor).

4 Of course, certain directorial choices may influence an actor's stage presence and how visible those choices are to the audience.

Keywords interpretation
living history
theatre

Bibliography

ARISTOTLE. *Poetics*. Trans. Richard Janko. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987. Print.

BENNETT, Susan. *Theatre Audiences: A theory of production and reception*. New York: Routledge, 1990. Print.

BRIDAL, Tessa. *Exploring Museum Theatre*. California, U.S.: AltaMira Press, 2004. Print.

"Canadian War Museum: Backgrounder." Ottawa: Canadian War Museum. 10 Jan. 2014.

CARLSON, Marvin. *Performance: a critical introduction.* 2nd Edition. New York: Routledge. 2004. Print.

FISCHER-LICHTE, Erika. *The Semiotics of Theater*. Trans. Jeremy Gaines and Doris L. Jones. U.S.A.: Indiana UP, 1992. Print.

GOFFMAN, Erving. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Garden City: Doubleday. 1959. Print.

"Interpretation."‖*imtal-europe.com*. Imtal-Europe, 2010. Web. 12 Oct. 2009.

JACKSON, Anthony, and Helen REES LEAHY. "'Seeing It for Real ... ?'-Authenticity, Theatre and Learning in Museums." *Research in Drama Education*, vol. 10, no. 3, pp. 303-25, 2005. Print.

JESTROVIC, Silvija, "Theatricality as Estrangement of Art and Life: In Russian Avant-guarde." *Substance*, # 98/99, Vol. 31, nos.2 & 3 (2002): 42-56. Print.

KIRBY, Michael. *A Formalist Theatre*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987. Print.

LYONS, Kathryn. "A new approach for greeting groups: a case study in communicating the value and messages of the Museum."‖*Ontario Museums Association Colloquium on Learning in Museums VIII*. Ottawa: Canadian War Museum, 2006. Print.

MALGELSSEN, Scott. *Living History Museums: Undoing History Through Performance*. Rowman & Littlefield Pub Inc, March 2007. Print.

MEERZON, Yana. *The Path of a Character: Micheal Chekhov's Inspired Acting and Theatre Semiotics*. Germany: Peter Lang, 2005. Print.

"Nursing Sister in Doullens, France – Female." Ottawa: Canadian War Museum, 2008. Print.

PAVIS, Patrice. *Analyzing Performance: Theatre, Dance, and Film.* Trans. David Williams. Michigan, U.S.: University of Michigan Press, 2003. Print.

---. *Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts, and Analysis*. Trans. Christine Shantz. Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1998. Print.

QUINN, Michael. "The Prague School Concept of the Stage Figure." *The Semiotics Bridge: Trends from California.* Eds. Irmengard Rauch and Gerald F. Carr. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1989. 75-85. Print.

SCHECHNER, Richard. *Performance Studies: An Introduction*. 2d ed. New York: Routledge, 2006. Print.

---. *Performance Theory.* New York: Routledge, 2003. Print.

Corresponding Author

Ashlee Beattie
Canadian War Museum
1 Vimy Place
Ottawa ON K1A 0M8
Canada
E-mail Contact

Gallery Image

FIG 1. ASHLEE “GETTING INTO” HER FIST-PERSON CHARACTER AT THE CANADIAN WAR MUSEUM.

FIG 2. ASHLEE AS A THIRD-PERSON INTERPRETER AT DUNDURN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE.