THE ROUTLEDGE COMPANION TO VSEVOLOD MEYERHOLD

Edited by Jonathan Pitches and Stefan Aquilina

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

Cover image: V. Meyerhold as Gurskii in *The Powerful Man*, from promotional photographs for *The Powerful Man* (1916), *Sine-Fono*, 21–22, pp. VIII-XVII.

First published 2023
by Routledge
4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2023 selection and editorial matter, Jonathan Pitches and Stefan Aquilina; individual chapters, the contributors

The right of Jonathan Pitches and Stefan Aquilina to be identified as the authors of the editorial material, and of the authors for their individual chapters, has been asserted in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Pitches, Jonathan, 1968– editor. | Aquilina, Stefan, editor.
Title: The Routledge companion to Vsevolod Meyerhold / edited by Jonathan Pitches and Stefan Aquilina.
Other titles: Companion to Vsevolod Meyerhold
Description: Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY : Routledge, 2023. | Series: Routledge companions | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2022018367 (print) | LCCN 2022018368 (ebook) | ISBN 9780367627843 (hardback) | ISBN 9781032351629 (paperback) | ISBN 9781003110804 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Meĭerkholʹd, V. Ė. (Vsevolod Ėmilʹevich), 1874–1940—Criticism and interpretation.
Classification: LCC PN2728.M4 R68 2023 (print) | LCC PN2728.M4 (ebook) | DDC 792.02/33092—dc23/eng/20220722
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2022018367
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2022018368

ISBN: 978-0-367-62784-3 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-032-35162-9 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-1-003-11080-4 (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003110804

Typeset in Bembo
by Apex CoVantage, LLC

CONTENTS

List of Figures *ix*
List of Tables *xi*
Notes on Contributors *xii*
Acknowledgments *xxi*
Poetic frontispiece by Robert Leach *xxii*

General Introduction 1
Stefan Aquilina and Jonathan Pitches

PART I
Histories **9**

Introduction 11
Stefan Aquilina

1 Vsevolod Meyerhold and Cinema 19
Anna Kovalova

2 Meyerhold, the Musician 41
Nathan Thomas

3 Meyerhold in the 1930s: Language, Text, Performance 55
Anna Muza

4 Meyerhold's *Hamlet*: An Unrealised Dream 68
Michelle Assay

5 Looking at Meyerhold's Unseen Theatre 80
Amy Skinner

6 Performing Communism, or, What if we Took Meyerhold's Politics Seriously? 99
Teemu Paavolainen

PART II
Collaborations and Connections **113**

Introduction 115
Stefan Aquilina

7 Meyerhold and Stanislavsky: Forty Years of Cordial Disagreement 121
Marie-Christine Autant-Mathieu

8 An Unknown Legacy: Uncovering Traces of Savva Mamontov's Work in Meyerhold's Conditional Theatre 134
Donatella Gavrilovich

9 Meyerhold's Female Collaborators 147
Stefan Aquilina

10 The Influence of Giovanni Grasso on Meyerhold's Works, Theories, and Biography 160
Gabriele Sofia

11 Towards Conscious and Independent Action: Pyotr Lesgaft's System of Physical Education as Inspiration for Meyerhold's Biomechanics 176
Małgorzata Jabłońska

12 Meyerhold and Trotsky 191
Robert Leach

PART III
Sources **207**

Introduction 209
Jonathan Pitches

13 The Commedia Dell'arte Origins of Biomechanics: Part 1: Actor Training and Collective Creation at Meyerhold's Borodinskaia Street Studio 211
Dassia N. Posner

Part 2: Documents on Actor Training and Collective Creation at Borodinskaia 219
Translated and edited by Dassia N. Posner

14 Fragments of a Creative Life: Introduction to Five New Sources 251
Stefan Aquilina
Letters to Anton Chekhov, 1899–1904 256
Comments by Doctor Dapertutto on 'The Denial of Theatre' by Yury Aikhenvald, 1914 265
Theatre Pamphlets I: On Dramaturgy and Theatre Culture, 1921 278
From Meyerhold's Speech at the Discussion 'Creative Methods at the Meyerhold Theatre', 25 December 1930 282
On the Spatial Composition of Performance, 2 April 1936 290

PART IV
Practitioner Voices **297**

Introduction 299
Jonathan Pitches

15 A Theatre Company as a Meyerholdian Experiment in Grotesque 303
Paul Stebbings and Phil Smith

16 The Evolution of Proper Job: Working with Meyerhold in the Contemporary British Theatre 315
James Beale, Franc Chamberlain, and Chloe Whitehead

17 Biomechanical Diasporas: Practitioner Perspectives on the Transmission of Meyerhold's Techniques 328
Marcelo Bulgarelli, Terence Mann (Chapman), Claudio Massimo Paternò, and Robert Reid

18 Transmission Impossible 339
Ralf Räuker

19 Decoding the Riddle: Applying Meyerhold's Conception of the Director's Explication 343
Bryan Brown and Olya Petrakova

PART V
Meyerhold in New Contexts **359**

PART V.1
Transnational Migrations **361**

Introduction 363
Stefan Aquilina

20 Meyerhold's Influence on Twentieth-century Japanese Theatre 367
Min Tian

21 Nesting Dolls: Sketches in Search of Meyerhold in Australia 380
Ian Maxwell and Chris Hay

22 An Unexpected Triangle: Politis, Meyerhold, and Karaghiozis in Interwar Greece 396
Antonis Glytzouris

23 Biomechanical Resonances in Turkey: The Working Method of Studio Oyuncuları 406
Burç İdem Dinçel

24 Meyerhold's Influence on the Production Processes of PERFORMA TEATRO (Brazil) 424
Arlete Cavaliere

PART V.2
Interdisciplinarities **433**

Introduction 435
Jonathan Pitches

25 Meyerhold in the 21st Century: The Meeting Points of Biomechanics and Postdramatic Performance 439
Diana Monteiro Toombs

26 The New Meyerhold Theatre: Visualising A Lost Architectural Experiment 453
Rachel Hann

27 Theatrical Biomechanics and Movement Science 471
Darren Tunstall

28 Biomechanics in Lockdown: Teaching Meyerhold in the Age of COVID-19 484
Jonathan Pitches

Index *499*

13

THE COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE ORIGINS OF BIOMECHANICS

Part 1: Actor Training and Collective Creation at Meyerhold's Borodinskaia Street Studio

Dassia N. Posner

In 1921, Vsevolod Meyerhold opened the State Higher Director's (later Theatre) Workshops at the site of a former high school on Moscow's Novinsky Boulevard. According to one of the exuberant incoming students, future director Sergei Iutkevich, Meyerhold announced at the first lesson that they would be studying two subjects: directing and Biomechanics. Iutkevich describes his initial encounter with the latter, 'an experimental new programme', which, Meyerhold informed them, they would develop together:

> Meyerhold himself showed us the first exercise. . . . It was a kind of acrobatic game mixed with a clown entrée. One partner taunted the other. The latter took aim, ran through the entire audience, and gave his adversary an imaginary kick in the nose with the tip of his foot. The other responded with a simulated slap, and his assailant fell. Then the partners switched places.
>
> Meyerhold himself performed this exercise with absolute clarity and expressiveness. The exercise truly gave rise to a whole series of varied movements that yielded certain principles. This included elements like the 'counter action' (*otkaz*), 'balance', efficiency, rhythm, etc.
>
> *(Iutkevich 1990: 84)*[1]

Iutkevich's anecdote is illuminating for theatre-makers in several ways: the kick and slap – recognisable as a nascent Biomechanics exercise – take place in the context of a miniature dramatic plot, draw on slapstick movement, involve direct actor-audience engagement, and use physical research to derive core principles of theatrical training. Significantly, Iutkevich adds, the foundation of Biomechanics 'was pantomime, borrowed from the traditions of *commedia dell'arte* and circus acrobatics' (85).

It is well known that Biomechanics was influenced by commedia dell'arte. What this means and why it is important has been much less explored, especially in Anglophone scholarship and theatrical practice. There are a few reasons for this. Many scholars note commedia elements – knockabout humour, acrobatic skill, and familiar commedia plots and character types – that appear in Meyerhold's productions, with his 1906 production of Alexander Blok's *Little Fairground Booth (Balaganchik)* as the most famous example, without recognising the deeper, more

DOI: 10.4324/9781003110804-20

fundamental investigation that lies beneath. Others, such as Alma Law and Mel Gordon, superimpose the structure of Biomechanics onto earlier work by assuming an exact correspondence that does not quite exist.[2] The false division between Meyerhold's pre- and post-Revolutionary work, first made for political reasons in the Soviet 1920s, still lingers in the work of scholars and practitioners who focus disproportionately on Meyerhold's post-1917 innovations without mining critical continuities with earlier discoveries. Yet while new scientific discoveries, reflexology, and the time-motion studies of Frederick Winslow Taylor and Henry Ford provided Biomechanics with a contemporary vocabulary and up-to-the-minute relevance, the larger philosophy that gave the exercises their practical meaning is fundamentally theatrical in its origins, derived from theatre history in Meyerhold's pre-Revolutionary studio years. As Marjorie L. Hoover rightly notes, Biomechanics was 'a systematization and completion of studio methods in a new guise' (Hoover 1974: 101).

This chapter examines the principles, logic, and worldview of the earliest and most comprehensively articulated version of Meyerhold's commedia-inspired actor training system, which took shape at his Borodinskaia Street Studio (1913–17) before then becoming the practical and philosophical foundation for his post-Revolutionary Workshops. My analysis of training at the Studio is accompanied by translations – many of which appear in English here for the first time – of class notes and lectures published by Meyerhold and his closest Studio collaborator, Vladimir Soloviev. These documents are further supplemented with excerpts from vivid student memoirs that delve deeper into key terms and ideas introduced in the Studio notes.

I have selected and edited these documents with an eye towards illuminating core ideas and exercises developed at the Studio. My larger goals are to provide expanded access to practical training tools for today's theatre-makers, especially in the art of improvisation and collective creation, to place Biomechanics in its larger creative context, and to clarify the overarching purpose of Meyerhold's theatrical training: to unlock the fullest physical and creative-intellectual expression of each artist's unique improvisatory inventiveness. This chapter simultaneously challenges three common misconceptions about Meyerhold: that he and his collaborators left behind no detailed description of their training methods, that Meyerhold taught actors simply to execute his directorial will, and that Biomechanics (and, by extension, Meyerhold's directorial practice) tends towards the mechanical and dictatorial rather than the creative and empowering.

The Borodinskaia Street Studio

In 1913, Meyerhold and several core collaborators launched the experimental studio that became known as the Borodinskaia Street Studio.[3] Their simple yet ambitious goals were to train a new kind of actor to create an improvisatory, playful, self-referential, physically expressive kind of theatre. At the heart of the Studio's experimental practice was a commitment to rediscovering and reimagining commedia and other audience-centric historical performance forms in a contemporary context. Studio participants were taught to cultivate keen responsiveness to their stage environment, to develop physical plasticity that was both precise and heightened, to place the audience at the centre of the actor's joyful, inventive play, to bring the formal structures of music to movement and spoken text, and, above all, to emerge, through these skills, as actor-creators who could improvise and collaboratively devise their own work.

The Studio pursued these idealistic aims (no less than the reinvention of theatre itself!) with modest means. Its leaders worked without pay, teaching a student body that ranged in size from over a hundred students to a dozen, with several staunch regulars in the mix, many of whom went on to have lifelong careers in the theatre as actors, directors, and artistic directors. Of necessity, Studio classes were part-time: they ran from 4–7 pm, four afternoons a week from

September to May ('Studiia' 1916: 150). Student dues paid for basic supplies – which they were encouraged to treat 'economically' ('Studiia' 1915: 204) – and for subscriptions to the journal Meyerhold edited, *Love for Three Oranges: The Journal of Doctor Dapertutto* (hereafter *LTA*). Aside from informal showings for a few invited guests (ranging from Marinetti to Rimsky-Korsakov) and for wounded World War I soldiers (with whom the Studio shared the building), the Studio premiered only one public presentation.

Depending on their interests and previous experience, students were divided or self-selected into various groups – including a commedia group, a grotesque group, an eighteenth-century group, and a group for actors with previous professional experience. Over the course of their studies, students were presented with increasingly complex creative challenges, especially once studio leaders concluded they had earned the title of 'Player' (*komendiant*). All students, regardless of level, took three core classes: Speaking Drama Musically, taught by composer Mikhail Gnesin;[4] Commedia dell'Arte, taught by Soloviev; and Stage Movement Technique, taught by Meyerhold himself. As recalled by Alexei Gripich, Soloviev's commedia class functioned as a 'stepping-stone' to Meyerhold's movement class.[5] Soloviev and Meyerhold often treated the same themes from different angles or introduced exercises in one class that were built upon in the other. In 1914–15, the two also taught a joint class in which this interconnected material was mined more deeply.

Although, as Valentina Verigina suggests, the core classes seem like an idiosyncratic combination,[6] an important Studio assumption was that the actor's fantasy flourishes best in the fertile soil of theatre-specific practices, where one is freed from the limitations of imitating daily life and can focus on what theatre itself does best. In what we might think of as an early example of 'practice as research', Studio leaders used research to inspire and feed their practice, drawing on historical and popular theatre forms for the specific purpose of extracting and adapting their most essential elements as they developed a new performance grammar for a new kind of theatre.

For most of his post-Revolutionary years, Meyerhold simultaneously maintained a school, a laboratory, and a theatre, living in practice his belief that theatre artists should train in, experiment with, and perform theatre simultaneously – that each part of this process necessarily feeds the others. Although some Borodinskaia students performed in Meyerhold's outside productions at the Imperial theatres and elsewhere, at this early stage of discovery and distillation, when Meyerhold had no theatre of his own, the director's focus was on the inseparable combination of historical study, training, and improvisation. Within this, commedia was the most important pragmatic inspiration. As Gripich recalls, 'Commedia dell'arte was the richest (in terms of theatrical traditions) intermediate means of studying the laws of the theatre and the practical craft of stage technique'.[7] What the Studio meant by commedia is complex and multi-layered, however. I'll therefore briefly discuss each of the most relevant layers and then illuminate its Studio use.

Commedia and its Refractions

Because commedia originated nearly five hundred years ago and has been reimagined in many contexts since, there is substantial variation within the performance tradition. Even the name, commedia dell'arte (professional plays/performance), came into wide use only in the late eighteenth century. A popular, often (but not always) comic form first developed in the mid-sixteenth century by professional, itinerant players, *commedia Italiana* (Italian plays/performance), as it was initially sometimes known,[8] featured fixed character types (*tipi fissi*) who wore leather half masks (except for lovers and female servants). The *tipi fissi* generally included two old men (*vecchi*, often Pantalone and Dottore), two comic servants (or *zanni*, variations on famous individual

names being Arlecchino/Harlequin, Truffaldino, and Pedrolino/Pulcinello/Pierrot), a pair of lovers (or *innamorati*),[9] a female servant (or *servetta* – including Colombina or Smeraldina), and a bombastic Spanish military *Capitano*. In the commedia tradition, the word 'mask' can mean either the physical object or *tipi fissi* in general. Meyerhold used the word in both senses, as well.

Commedia is equally famous for its use of improvisation: actors posted scenarios (*canovacci* or *scenarii*) in the wings as loose outlines for improvised shows that were not fully scripted in advance. Performances were not completely invented on the spot either, however, as the word improvisation might suggest to a modern reader. Rather, highly skilled commedia actors 'employed a repertoire of set speeches, mots, and gestures that could be combined to achieve different ends depending on the play and role' (Clayton 1993: 23). Most famous within this were the *lazzi:* modular, elastic bits of verbal or physical business, usually comic, typically unrelated to the main plot, that the actor could insert at will and adjust freely based on audience response.[10] Actors, often the *zanni*, became famous for certain *lazzi*, such as the *lazzo* of hunger (devised by the ever-ravenous Arlecchino), the *lazzo* of night (based on characters not being able to see each other in the dark), or any number of *lazzi* that involved beatings with a slapstick. As Domenico Pietropaolo clarifies, commedia improvisation is not limited to the actor's flexible invention of comic business but includes a much broader ability to bring together a variety of skills and sources to create a performance onstage in real time, before an audience, in an act of 'impromptu composition'. He adds, 'a play in the commedia style cannot be written out in full simply because it is partly composed during the act of performance' (2021a: 103).

In turning to commedia, Meyerhold and Soloviev aimed to create a virtuosic theatre of improvisation in Russia where one did not previously exist. Improvisation and *lazzi* were therefore central to Studio practice. *Lazzi* – called 'theatre-specific comic business' or '*jeux du théâtre*' in the Studio's terminology[11] – were understood at the Studio in two ways: as the tools, techniques, and building blocks the actor accumulates through training and uses in improvised performance, and as the individual audience-centric, character-specific bits each actor developed on their own. Mastering individual creative devices was the first step in using improvisation, in its commedia definition, to compose longer pieces, from short études (preparatory studies) to entire pantomimes.[12] Although Meyerhold and Soloviev did not use physical masks at the Studio, they considered character itself to be a mask in the sense that its precise, specific, recurrent qualities allow for character-driven (rather than plot-centric) storytelling; it can be donned or removed at will by the actor; and it retains enough fictional elements that it belongs more to make-believe than to reality. The Borodinskaia's stage, which was divided into two planes, also functioned like a mask in this latter sense: a raised platform represented the upstage fictional realm, while a semi-circular carpeted forestage at audience level allowed actors to present themselves directly to spectators. Studio students were taught to navigate effortlessly between these two realms by physically changing planes.

Several additional historical influences shaped the Studio's understanding of commedia. Among these, the two most important were Count Carlo Gozzi and E. T. A. Hoffmann, both of whom are referenced in Meyerhold's journal title. Gozzi's *The Love of Three Oranges* (note the slightly different Italian title) was this writer's first *fiaba* (or fairy-tale play), while Doctor Dapertutto was a sinister character in a fantastical Hoffmann tale and the source of the pseudonym Meyerhold adopted in 1910.[13] Gozzi's *Three Oranges* premiered in Venice in 1761 but wasn't published until a decade later in the unprecedented form of a 'reflective analysis', a 'pastiche' of plot description mixed with Gozzi's interjected comments on his aims (Baldyga 2021: 124), reflections on his enjoyment of the actors' *lazzi* and the audience's response at the premiere, and explanations of the piece's biting polemical parodies of his theatrical adversaries, Carlo Goldoni and Pietro Chiari. With *Three Oranges*, Gozzi introduced fairy-tale content to commedia as a manifesto for how to rejuvenate the by-then stagnating performance tradition – in

direct opposition to Goldoni having consciously shifted commedia towards everyday domestic content and fully scripted plays. The initial performance of Gozzi's *Three Oranges*, which had only a few scripted lines, was completed onstage by Antonio Sacchi and his acting troupe, some of whom had appeared at the Russian court a decade earlier. In this and his other collaborations with Sacchi, Gozzi embraced the idea that 'a play could be playwright-centred and actor-centred at the same time, with equal importance' (Pietropaolo 2021b: n.p.).

Meyerhold and Soloviev knew Gozzi's *Three Oranges* intimately, thanks to their joint adaptation of the *fiaba* with Konstantin Vogak, which the trio published in the inaugural issue of Meyerhold's journal as a shining example of a scenario that leaves 'actors free to compose' (Meyerhold 1998: 127). Several phrases from Gozzi's *Three Oranges* were also adopted as recurrent Studio terms: Meyerhold and Soloviev interpreted Gozzi's 'exaggerated parody' (Gozzi 2021: 60) – parody taken to extremes 'through ridiculous distortions' (68) – as a vital manifestation of the grotesque. They also translated Gozzi's phrase 'a fitting subject . . . for the theatre' (54), written in praise of a *lazzo* performed at the 1761 premiere, as 'comic business (*shutki*) specific to the theatre' – or theatre-specific comic business. Lastly, Soloviev and Meyerhold interpreted Gozzi's phrase *anima allegra*, 'a joyful soul' (64), to mean that actors should experience joy from their playful make-believe, regardless of a play's genre or plot (Solov'ev 1914d: 79). At this same time, Stanislavsky was experimenting at the Moscow Art Theatre's First Studio with having actors experience and relive both positive and negative emotions through 'emotion memory' – a technique to which Meyerhold was strenuously opposed.[14]

The German Romantic creative reinvention of Gozzi in the late 1700s and early 1800s provided another essential layer for Studio inspiration. According to an article in *LTA* by Victor Zhirmunsky, the Romantics were inspired by how Gozzi's characters 'reveal the illusoriness of everything happening on the stage' (in Posner 2016: 211); Ludwig Tieck therefore pioneered bold ways of playfully 'destroying theatrical illusion' in *Puss in Boots* (1791) and other plays (212), with characters who break character, plays-within-plays-within-plays, and actors who leap over the footlights to enter the audience space. The tales of Hoffmann, one of Meyerhold's most significant inspirations, are filled with authorial interruptions, incongruous collisions, eerie and unsettling elements, and self-referential commentary, with Gozzi's 'reflective analysis' as one of Hoffmann's openly declared inspirations.

This layering of commedia, Gozzi, and German Romantic refractions of Gozzi fed Meyerhold's acute interest in self-referentiality, playful ruptures of stage fiction, and the grotesque's collisions of 'the fantastical-terrifying and the joyful' (Meierkhol'd 1914a: 62). For Meyerhold, the grotesque was more than a theatrical style based on exaggeration, contrast, and juxtaposition. It represented the full inventive range of the artist's unfettered fantasy. It is no coincidence that the Studio's Grotesque Group 'not only create[d] entirely new acting methods, but also their own plays' (Meierkhol'd 1914b: 62). Studio notes also document a variety of Gozzi-inspired exercises (with a Romantic twist) that taught students to shift instantaneously between fictional representation and direct audience address.

Russian fairground (*balagan*) and pantomime provided a final layer of commedia inspiration for the Studio. As Shcherbakov explains, by the mid-nineteenth century, imported pantomimes (from France and England) that featured Harlequin, Pierrot, and Columbine in a 'classic triangle' became a staple at Russian *balagany*, temporary wooden booth theatres on fairgrounds at Shrovetide, the Russian Mardi Gras (Shcherbakov 2021: 211). By the time the Studio opened, Russian fairgrounds had essentially died out, leaving behind a jumble of associations that now included romanticised childhood memories of itinerant performers, wistful wordless pantomimes with hapless lovers and magical fairies, and a theatre in which movement, structured by music, was more expressive than the spoken word. All these elements were eagerly absorbed into the Studio's understanding of commedia, with the audience-centric virtuosity of *balagan* performers

and the wordless, rhythmical expressiveness of the actor's body rising to the fore. The Studio also conflated commedia with jugglers, circus clowns, and what they saw as similarly theatre-centric devices in Japanese and Chinese traditional theatre.

Soloviev, whose graduate research had focused on Italian commedia players at Empress Anna Ioanovna's Russian court, was well versed in commedia history, though, as Laurence Senelick notes, he also contributed several creative misunderstandings to it.[15] At times this was deliberate: Soloviev sometimes refers to a given exercise as 'pedagogical fiction', that is, a deliberate collapsing of historical details so a specific lesson emerges more clearly. In creating a 'beautiful' commedia 'myth' (Shcherbakov 2021: 207), however, Studio leaders had no intention of imitating or reconstructing their historical inspirations. Rather they distilled from them transferrable technical devices applicable to any production, on any theme, in any style – thus, in their minds, accessing the core of theatricality itself. Throughout the Studio's four years, Meyerhold worked to develop an inventory – in his description, a 'codex' – of theatrical tools and techniques that, in his view, had been lost when theatre began to imitate daily life at the expense of its own inherent modes of expression (Meierkhol'd 1914c: 96).

For the Studio, commedia, with its set form paired with free improvisation, was theatre history's clearest example of a tradition that is elastic enough to absorb creative change without losing its core elements: over centuries, its performers embraced masks, *scenarii*, improvisation, and *lazzi* while also contributing many new elements. Elsewhere I've proposed the term *refraction* to describe the process of deep engagement and inevitable change that each new artist brings when a source of inspiration passes through the prism of an individual's creativity (Posner 2016: 26–30). One cannot fully understand Meyerhold's work without understanding it as a theatre of refraction. He believed that, in my words, 'deep intellectual and artistic engagement with a source is a creative process, one in which a source is not imitated, but creatively transformed' (28). He saw plays as ultimately akin to commedia scenarios, which always require actors to complete them. This is precisely why he trained his actors to be makers.

All Meyerhold's post-Borodinskaia work was saturated with refracted commedia elements. Many of these elements that continued into the Biomechanics training at the State Higher Theatre Workshops have not been recognised in part because they do not resemble commedia in its original form (Law and Gordon 1996: 127). Yet, as will become clear in the documents following this introduction, over a dozen of the core terms and training topics in Meyerhold's 1921 Workshops were continuations of terms and practices from Borodinskaia classes. These include: the parade (123), the *plasum date*, the shout (*vykrik*) (123), 'coordination with the playing area, one's partner, one's costume, and the stage properties' (124), 'shooting with bow and arrow' (125), 'meter and rhythm', counterpoint of movement and music, the counter sign (*znak otkaza*),[16] geometrisation of the stage drawing, the rule of odd and even, theatre-specific comic business (*lazzi*), the *emploi* (*tipi fissi* or lines of business), improvisation, the grotesque, physical skills like juggling and acrobatics, direct contact between 'actor and spectator' (127), and even the use of a neutral utilitarian costume – the Borodinskaia precursor to Liubov Popova's *prozodezhda* in Meyerhold's 1922 *Magnanimous Cuckold*.

Less visible in this list of instructional topics is the philosophy that gave these exercises their meaning. Unmistakably clear in the Borodinskaia work is that this philosophy was based in celebrating fantasy, collaboration, joy, improvisation within (highly structured musical) form – and direct rebellion against a theatre of lived experience, identification, psychology, and imitation of any kind – even simple replication of the historical theatrical sources that inspired them. Most important, however, is that from the start, Meyerhold's student actor-creators at both the Studio and Workshops were taught basic exercises for the purpose of devising their own work. Exercises led to études, which students then developed into pantomimes. Through this lens,

Biomechanics can be understood as an initial means by which to free the actor-director (Meyerhold made little distinction between the two) by unlocking their imagination, their precise physical expression, and, ultimately, their capacity for collective creation.[17]

From Studio to Journal

One reason these Borodinskaia elements have not been fully recognised as a founding structure for Meyerhold's later work is that most Anglophone scholars focus on Meyerhold's words to the exclusion of those of his close collaborators. Because the Studio was a joint project, with Meyerhold and Soloviev's classes particularly intertwined, focusing on Meyerhold without including this collaborative context inevitably, however inadvertently, provokes a distorting effect. Many ideas he shared were written down and practiced by others. Another common problem is an overemphasis on written texts in general. Even foundational sources like Braun's *Meyerhold on Theatre* are partial to written theory, published sources, and finished productions of written plays. In response, then, to Pitches's lament that 'there is no overall design to [Meyerhold's] theoretical statements, no overarching system' (2003: 44), I invite those who have sought this primarily in Meyerhold's solo-authored, published theoretical writings to turn to his Studio practice, documented in his collaborative journal.

Love for Three Oranges: The Journal of Doctor Dapertutto has, in Raissa Raskina's words 'long awaited a comprehensive rather than selective analysis in English-language scholarship' (2021: 187).[18] The journal, which was published in nine issues over four years (1914–16), documented Studio experiments, provided required readings, and, for those outside the Studio, doubled as a manifesto for the new theatre the Studio aimed to create (Raskina 2021: 193). Meyerhold wrote very few pieces in the journal himself. Of the over one hundred published essays and plays in *LTA*, he authored only five articles, two co-written plays, and the Studio notes for his classes.[19]

Meyerhold was an extremely active editor-in-chief, however – and the enthusiastic abundance of work contributed by colleagues reveals how much co-ownership those around him felt for ideas promoted in the Studio and the journal. *LTA* articles included commedia-inspired plays and pantomimes, many of which were used as working material in class, bibliographies intended as reading lists for students, up-to-the-moment polemical pieces, essays on theatre history (especially on commedia and its layers) commissioned from experts, translated excerpts from Gozzi's memoirs, full transcripts of class lectures, Studio notes that documented class activities, and a range of other readings that provided a creative and intellectual foundation for the Studio's experiments. The journal was required reading (as were a few additional books advertised in it), and, as noted, all Borodinskaia students subscribed to it as part of their dues. In 1921, Meyerhold still used the journal in his Workshops.[20]

No scholar in English has systematically considered *LTA* as a comprehensive (if idiosyncratic) textbook for the multivocal, collaborative practice of the Borodinskaia Street Studio. Nor have many examined the articles by Meyerhold's collaborators, who wrote on a mosaic of topics that together provide an exciting and much more complete view of the Studio's system of theatremaking. I invite readers to view the documents in this chapter from this perspective. I have intentionally featured pieces that provide deeper insight into the Studio's training than has previously been available in English: Meyerhold and Soloviev's class notes from the Studio's four years, organised by academic year; excerpts from commedia lectures Soloviev gave during corresponding academic years; and student memoirs on topics that align with a given year's class notes but go deeper into select themes.

These Studio documents reveal a clear curricular structure and progression over the Studio's four years. Year 1 (1913–14) introduces a wide range of physical, spatial, rhythmical, and

musical training devices that allow actors to respond with playful precision to the audience, to each other, to a director's stage 'drawing', and to the material elements of performance (space, props, costume, light); by the end of the year, more advanced students were building on these techniques to devise their own work. Many foundational terms introduced here continued in Meyerhold's creative practice for years to come. Year 2 (1914–15) reveals Meyerhold and Soloviev's growing emphasis on form, rhythm, and material responsiveness as necessary techniques for improvisation. During this period, students devised dozens of short performance pieces, some of which grew into studio 'standards' and were later adopted as training études. By Year 3 (1915–16), Studio leaders seem to have assumed that foundational training terms were familiar to all, as they mention them in passing or not at all. Emphasis in Studio notes is instead on the logistics of Studio structure and on the increased sophistication of the training, which now includes group pantomimes with complex simultaneous action and previously wordless pantomimes to which text is added for the first time. No class notes were published in Year 4 (1916–17), aside from a lengthy description, most likely penned by Meyerhold, of the Studio curriculum, audition processes, rules, and other practical matters. As readers will see from this document, most ideas pioneered in the first three years were by then standard elements of the Studio structure, even though several of the original teachers, including Gnesin and Soloviev, had left (Meyerhold 1998: 153–6).

Using the Notes

Before inviting readers to delve into the documents, I'll share a few quick thoughts on how to read them. Many theatre-makers have grown accustomed to terms by Konstantin Stanislavsky that carry specific meaning only within the context of his system: public solitude, objectives, circles of attention, given circumstances, etc. Meyerhold's vocabulary is no less precise, one difference being that he often mentions terms without defining them, probably because he assumed his own students would already know their meanings. Some will be familiar to readers already, while others inevitably sound strange in English and even in Russian, as they sometimes come from music or are based on translations from the Studio's historical sources. I gloss all terms that require more context at first mention so readers can access explanations as they read.

Studio notes often come across as talking points jotted down in advance, taken as lecture notes, or documented after the fact. This is probably exactly what they are. Together, their lists of themes and activities reveal an overall theatrical philosophy but not, in most cases, a unified narrative of sequential thoughts. Rather than trying to translate these notes as coherent theoretical essays, then, I have preserved their fragmented and telegraphic style. I suggest that these notes are to actor training what commedia scenarios are to full performances: the most important broad strokes rather than the thing itself – a commedia-style scenario version of Meyerhold's early system. In the spirit of adding another layer of refraction to the rich history discussed here, I propose that readers use these notes as prompts for the imagination and as opportunities for their own collaborative and improvisatory completion. After all, these are principles of a theatrical universe that invite those who encounter them to reinvent the theatre again and again.

One final thought on the relationship between these notes and Biomechanics: after the Revolution, Meyerhold did not adopt a scientific and industrial vocabulary instead of turning to commedia but in addition to it. His way of working was additive. His was a refracted commedia, a refracted Taylorism – a refracted shooting from a bow – broken down, taken to extremes, self-observed, and understood by the creative body and mind of the actor, then instantly reused in a fictional scenario, completed through fantasy and play in the here-and-now of artistically structured rhythm and space and objects and audience. It's a glorious way to make theatre.

Part 2: Documents on Actor Training and Collective Creation at Borodinskaia

Translated and edited by Dassia N. Posner

Year 1 (1913–14)

When the Borodinskaia Street Studio opened in September 1913, its three core classes were Commedia dell'Arte Technique, taught by Vladimir Soloviev; Stage Movement Technique, taught by Vsevolod Meyerhold; and Speaking Drama Musically, taught by composer Mikhail Gnesin. Each of these classes, in complementary ways, gave students formal structures and specific skills for an actor-centred, audience-engaged, improvisatory theatre of precise physical and vocal expressiveness. Meyerhold's and Soloviev's 1913–4 class notes, published in Love for Three Oranges: The Journal of Doctor Dapertutto*, list many of the core terms and principles that were to become an enduring part of Meyerhold's theatrical practice. Most striking in this first year is the combination of theatre history lectures, practical exercises that refine specific techniques, and études and pantomimes in which students use these techniques to begin creating their own work. Meyerhold and Soloviev's class notes for the year are translated here in full,*[21] *followed by excerpts from Soloviev's commedia lectures and descriptions by Alexei Gripich and Valentina Verigina of the Studio's core classes from their student perspective.*

Studio Notes from *Love for Three Oranges: The Journal of Doctor Dapertutto* 1 (1914)

'Nikolai Soloviev's Class'[22]

Stage acting devices of commedia dell'arte actors. *Podus beccaricus*[23] as a foundational movement sequence essential for all characters in the Italian comedy: Bergamo dance as a pedagogical fiction necessary for overcoming later technical difficulties.[24]

Volmar Luscinius's harlequinade *Harlequin the Marriage Broker*[25] as an introduction to the characteristic gestures and movements of the most commonly recurrent masks: Harlequin, Smeraldina, Dottore and Pantalone (old men), Aurielo and Silvia (tender lovers).

Brighella, Truffaldino, Tartaglia, and the second masks of the Italian comedy Eularia, Celio, etc.

Establishing geometrical patterns in groupings of masks.[26] The development and emergence of the traditional *mises en scène*, per the extant scenarios.[27]

Reviving the scenes 'night',[28] 'city scene', 'the duel', and 'the harem' in order to begin decoding the basic frameworks independently.

The principles of the parade.[29] Forestage servants and their role in performance.[30] The significance of the grotesque, called 'the manner of exaggerated parody' by Carlo Gozzi.

Staging the second interlude of the divertissement *Love for Three Oranges*.[31]

Establishing moments of intense action and beginning verbal improvisation.

Applying commedia dell'arte stage techniques to the plays *Harlequin, Refined by Love* by Marivaux and *The Cave of Salamanca* by Cervantes.

'Vsevolod Meyerhold's Class. Stage Movement'[32]

Exercises in movement *ex improviso*;[33] the human body in space; gesture as a surge that is given rise only through the movement of the body.

The kinship between the movement of the new actor and the movement of commedia dell'arte actors.

Gulielmo's treatise: *partire del terreno*; the ability to adapt responsively to the stage space the actor is given for the performance.[34]

Movement in a circle, a square, a rectangle.

Movement in a room or out-of-doors.

Movement and musical background. Differences between musical backgrounds: for Miss [Loie] Fuller and Miss [Isadora] Duncan and their disciples (the psychologisation of works of music),[35] in melodrama, in circus and variety, in Chinese and Japanese theatre.[36] Rhythm as the support structure for movement. The canvas for movement is always music that either actually exists in the theatre – or is presumed, as if it the performing actor sings along.

The actor – who, on one hand, connects intimately with the eternally reigning musical background, and, on the other, learns to correctly wield his body in space and position it correctly per Gulielmo's law – comes to understand the allure of stage rhythm and wants to play, as in a child's nursery. Joy becomes the realm without which the actor cannot live, even when he must come onstage to die.[37]

The actor's belief. The actor's in-loveness. The death of psychologism. The border between the fantastical-terrifying and the joyful. The merging of past and present. How the grotesque helps the actor show the real through the symbolic and replace caricature with exaggerated parody.

The lack of plot in the *étude* (silent scene)[38] we are using for training raises questions about form (the drawing[39] of the actors' movements and gestures) as a self-sufficient theatrical value. The difference between a plot in the usual sense and a plot that unfolds before the audience's eyes and is based not on prompts given by an author (a dramatic text) but on:

1) improvised gestures and facial expressions,
2) ever-new combinations of *mises en scène* and
3) overt agreement among the actors with the help of prompts given by the actor-director.

The actor is an artist, and his task is to live within the form of the drawing. An actor can be the one who draws, or an actor can reproduce another master's drawing, like a pianist who reads notes that someone else composed.

Why commedia dell'arte and Japanese theatre techniques are best of all to learn.

Why studying the primitives is the only sure path to understanding the significance of the stage drawing.[40]

Studio Notes from *Love for Three Oranges: The Journal of Doctor Dapertutto* 2 (1914)

'Vladimir Soloviev's Class. Commedia dell'arte'[41]

The class is divided into two groups. The first is engaged in learning commedia dell'arte stage technique; the second is beginning independent classes on playing Italian improvised comedy scenarios.

Students in both groups are learning the principle of developing geometrical drawings in a *mise en scène* based on combinations of even and odd numbers of characters.[42] (The stage circle as the ideal geometrical figure; the three main types of parade.)[43]

Classes also focus on developing students' ability to take full advantage of a modest performance space. The curtain as practical material for creating *jeux du théâtre*.[44]

Lectures on theatre productions at the Fair of Saint-Germain.[45] The kinship between the techniques of commedia dell'arte actors and the stage devices of fairground performers (*farceurs*,[46] cinematographers, charlatans, tightrope walkers, jugglers).

'Vsevolod Meyerhold's Class. Movement on the Stage'[47]

The class is divided into several groups; Studio participants are placed into these groups based on similarities in their innate technical skills and on their consonant attraction to a specific kind of dramatic performance or to the style of paintings mounted on the stage.[48]

Those Studio participants who, before joining the Studio, had already performed onstage with old-school acting styles are placed together in a special 'Actor's Class'. Here they are invited to train with [18]30s and 40s vaudevilles[49] and Spanish drama (Calderón, *The Doctor of His Own Honour*) and to learn devices of the new theatre that are closely related to the traditional acting devices of commedia dell'arte and other truly theatrical eras. Here, too, actors will become acquainted with examples of dramas in the modern repertoire that have fallen by the wayside yet represent a mighty bulwark of the theatre.[50]

The Grotesque Group not only creates entirely new acting devices but also creates their own plays, composed at the Studio itself.[51]

Marinetti attended one of the Grotesque Group's classes.[52] He suggested the theme of *Othello* for *ex improviso* performance to the group that had shown him *Cleopatra* (with three characters and four 'forestage servants'). The students, after taking three minutes (without ever going 'offstage') to agree on the tragedy's most important moments, acted out a scene, which also lasted no more than three minutes, and presented a distillation of Shakespeare's tragedy.

Classes will begin soon for groups on 1) ancient theatre and 2) eighteenth-century theatre.

Vladimir Soloviev, 'On the History of Commedia dell'Arte Stage Technique, III', *Love for Three Oranges: The Journal of Doctor Dapertutto* 3 (1914)

Improvisation and Commedia[53]

In my lectures with you, I intentionally have not yet addressed a question that doubtlessly has come up for you many times . . . why should the actor of the new theatre learn the art of improvisation?

The idea articulated by [Edward Gordon] Craig, 'that in a rope-dancer there may be more theatrical art than in an up-to-date actor reciting from his memory and depending on his prompter',[54] posed a question of the utmost importance to the new theatre and, to a significant degree, determined how it would be answered.

The modern theory of stage art, which above all requires the actor to have an aptitude for 'experiencing' (*perezhivanie*) and 're-embodiment' (*perevoploshchenie*), denies the primary role of technique, considering it to be secondary and perhaps even unnecessary in the theatre.[55]

The new theatre, which comes entirely from . . . this thought by Craig, seeks, at a basic level, to renew theatrical traditions that have been lost in recent times and to use them to connect the new theatre genetically with the old. This kind of connection is possible only on one condition: if the new theatre identifies and masters those elements that constitute the essential foundation of the stage art of olden-day theatre. It seems to me that Italian improvised comedy should be viewed this way.

'The actor must have a joyful soul' – this is typical advice that Italian actors gave to the next generation.

A lack of psychological motivation in the overall drawing of a given role, expert knowledge of the art of gesture and pose, the ability to coordinate the movement of one's body with the space in which the action takes place, having a sense of proportion in the implementation of details, developing the ability to attend to one's partners and being able to perform the tasks they propose – these are the fundamentals of commedia dell'arte stage technique that are essential to teach the modern actor who wants to be in the new theatre.

The purpose of your classes with me is not the authentic archaeological reconstruction of the Italian theatre of masks but mastering the fundamentals of its stage technique, which will help you work out your own individual artistic modes of theatrical expression.

Figure 13.1 Louis-Nicolas van Blarenberghe (1716–1794), *The Fair of Saint-Germain*, 1763. Miniature, painted on vellum. Note the parade being performed on the balcony above the theatre entrance. © The Wallace Collection

The Parade[56]

Today I will tell you about the parade, a special kind of stage performance that was created on French fairground booth (*balagany*) and little theatre stages and later became a standard part of theatre productions of Italian-French origin from the late seventeenth century on.

I will attempt to distil the principles of the parade and, on their basis, paint a general picture that may suffer from minor chronological inaccuracies but is very convenient, as a pedagogical fiction, in its clarity.

A theatre is being prepared for a grand show. The curtain sways from the movement of actors who want to show the audience their art immediately. Music plays: wood and percussion instruments predominate. From the two edges of the curtain, which slowly rises, two figures emerge. They are the two *farceurs*, whose purpose it is to attract spectators. With drums in their hands, they leap onto the dais and, interrupting one another, shout: 'Most venerated audience! Most beautiful and charming ladies! Noble gentlemen!' Their speech, punctuated by drumbeats, consists of a thorough, detailed, clownish enumeration of the gifts and merits of this troupe[57]. . . . A gentle violin melody is heard. On a narrow stage in front of the curtain, two lovers appear: the *prima amorosa* and *primo amoroso*. Placing their hands on their hearts and declaring their love for each other, it seems they will now be united forever. But a hand appears from behind the curtain centre and separates them. The lovers are in despair. The secondary characters run out from the centre of the curtain onto the forestage and sit on their haunches, intending to watch the performance about to be played. The lovers cross to the forestage. The old men and servants join them. Little screens are brought out. They will all perform a pantomime together, a sketch of the content of the main play they are to present. The young lovers, with the servants' help, dupe the old men. The servants each take advantage of the opportunity, and each shows the audience their own individual act. One of them, who has acrobatic skills, leaps over the screens, disappears into the floor with the aid of hidden trapdoors, reappears, sits on a bench that suddenly grows to massive proportions, and leaps off it, twirling twice in the air. Another, who is comical and witty by nature but lacks the equilibrist's knowledge, seeks to win the audience's affection with merry jokes and lampoons on up-to-the-minute themes from city life. A maid with a tambourine dances a dance, then tells the audience's fortune with cards covered in mysterious cabalistic symbols. The young lovers, displaying gentility and good breeding, meet one another . . . and give proper bows, then dance with gestures full of exquisite taste. Dottore offers prescriptions for various ailments; Pantalone proclaims his wealth and extreme miserliness. The general sketch has been played. The actors make deferential bows and withdraw behind the screens, which disappear, along with the actors hiding behind them. The barkers climb back up to their dais and caution the audience that the troupe's riches have not yet been exhausted. In addition to the main characters, there are also secondary characters who burn with impatience, wanting to show their skill in the art of laughter. To the sound of a merry tune, the secondary characters ascend, sit cross-legged, and, dancing, occupy a small stage in front of the curtain. Like the main actors, each in turn presents their own act for the audience's attention. First is the flea tamer. On a table covered with multi-coloured patchwork, he presents extraordinary feats with his creatures. Rolling up the sleeves of his costume, he feeds the hungry microscopic actors on his own blood. After him is a conjurer in a pointed hat with stars and dragons who casts merry spells on behalf of the actors by the audience. Next follows a song-and-dance act, in which all available male and female dancers and singers in the troupe perform. Last are jugglers, who perform acts with brass balls and iron rings that are covered in the middle with paper and flaming oakum. The acts have been played. The secondary characters gather on the narrow

stage by the curtain, line up, walk towards the audience, bow low and stand back up three times, and then, with clamour and shouts, run off behind the curtain, which the actor playing the role of the Prologue then begins to open. The performance follows.

Student Memoirs

Alexei Gripich, 'The Stage Teacher'[58]

The core classes were: Vs. E. Meyerhold's class 'Movement on the Stage' and V. N. Soloviev's class 'Commedia dell'Arte Stage Acting Devices.

In Soloviev's lectures and practical classes, by acting out commedia dell'arte scenarios, we came to understand the basic laws of theatre and stage composition, and we learned to gain command of the stage space and to create *mises en scène*. In Soloviev's classes, we learned elements of directing, acting, and stage technique. We learned *podus beccaricus* – foundational movements for all Italian commedia characters – Bergamo dance, the 'crusade' walk, theatrical parades, interludes, the geometrical drawing of the *mise en scène*, the counter sign,[59] alternating even and odd, *jeux du théâtre* (theatre-specific comic business), etc. We practiced many things: walks, leaps, bows, slapstick blows, how to wield a hat, a cloak, a sword, a spear, a lantern, and other elements of theatrical performance.

Our study of commedia dell'arte technique had no restoration goals. Commedia dell'arte was the richest (in terms of theatrical traditions) intermediate means of studying the laws of the theatre and the practical craft of stage technique.

For Meyerhold, Soloviev's class was a kind of stepping-stone to his studies.

The name of Meyerhold's class was: 'Movement on the Stage'. But it was essentially an acting and directing class.

Meyerhold began with the technique of stage movement, gesture, and object manipulation onstage. Exercises grew into études, and études developed into pantomimes. Thus out of the exercise 'Shooting from a Bow' developed the étude 'The Hunt', and then the pantomime in which all 'generations' of the studio trained. Several exercises and études became 'classics' and later were included in the teaching of Biomechanics.

We used the knowledge we gained in V. N. Soloviev's class – about the laws of theatre, *mise en scène*, and acting techniques – beyond the framework of commedia dell'arte, as the foundation of modern acting training.

Then we began to create our own pantomime plays, which we composed ourselves. A single or a few individuals composed a scenario, cast the performers, and directed. Improvisation played a major role.

Valentina Verigina, *Memoirs*[60]

Vsevolod Emilievich [Meyerhold]'s declaration that everything should be done against the music provoked a great deal of controversy. Usually, the rhythm of movement follows the rhythm of music, but Meyerhold contended that movement should have its own rhythm in a complex relationship to the rhythm of music. The result is a kind of rhythmical counterpoint. Only in rare instances, at the moments of highest tension, are the confluences of these two rhythms possible, which produces a special effect.

Vsevolod Emilievich attached great importance to music. He himself was very musical and well versed in its subtleties. Naturally, he became interested in 'speaking [drama] musically', to which [Mikhail] Gnesin introduced us back in Terijoki.[61] It was one of the most valuable

disciplines in the studio. [Gnesin] found a new technique for choral recitation. . . . Gnesin wrote the musical accompaniment for the chorus from *Antigone* and *The Phoenician Women*. The chorus spoke with specific musical intonations to a melody he composed. . . . We took the poetry and wrote out notes and musical pauses under every line. This kind of recitation taught us to convey poetry absolutely rhythmically. We recited in musical rhythm, but without the obligatory melody. . . .

At first glance, the combination of the three different classes may seem strange (especially Soloviev's and Gnesin's classes), but Meyerhold did not want to limit the students or himself to pantomime or to commedia dell'arte techniques, even if they were expanded and modified in the spirit of modern needs. Speaking [Drama] Musically enriched the technical devices of theatrical art.

Year 2 (1914–15)

Meyerhold and Soloviev launched the Studio's second year with a series of discussion-lectures, followed by a joint class that focused on practical, immediate elements of theatre: the form, movement, and rhythm of the actor's body; responsiveness to the material elements of performance (space, objects, costumes, partners); and techniques for direct audience engagement. On 12 February 1915, the Studio gave its first public presentation of études and pantomimes authored by both students and faculty in the autumn joint class. By that point, some devised Studio work also began to be used as regular training material. One étude, 'The Hunt', first mentioned in Meyerhold's spring 1915 class notes, provided the foundation and performance context for the later biomechanical exercise 'Shooting from a Bow'.

This section features Meyerhold and Soloviev's individual and joint class notes for 1914–5, excerpts from Soloviev's concurrent commedia lectures on the 'counter action' and on responsiveness to partners and stage space, Valentina Verigina's recollections on creating her pantomime 'Two Smeraldinas', and memoirs by Alexander Mgebrov on the importance of hands, objects, and fantastical play in Meyerhold's class. Omitted here are the full programme advertising the 12 February performance (LTA 1914 6–7)[62] *and a post-performance article in which reviews of this performance were paired with anonymous (often ironic) commentary, most likely written by Meyerhold and Soloviev (LTA 1915 1–3).*

Studio Notes from *Love for Three Oranges: The Journal of Doctor Dapertutto* 4–5 (1914)

'Vsevolod Meyerhold and Vladimir Soloviev's Class'[63]

> 1) Stage movement technique; 2) Practical study of the material elements of performance: setting up, adorning, and lighting the stage; the actor's costume, and objects in the actor's hands.

After a series of introductory lectures in Vs. E. Meyerhold's . . . and Vl. N Soloviev's . . . classes during the month of September, the teachers of the joint class began practical exercises in October, resulting in a whole series of plays composed by both Studio teachers and students.[64] . . .

By inviting Studio participants to train with these plays, the class teachers seek, above all, to develop virtuosic actor movement that coordinates with the stage space where the acting takes place. Stage play that emerges not from a plot basis, but from an alternating pattern of an even and odd number of characters onstage and from various *jeux du théâtre*. The significance of

the 'counter action' (*otkaz*) and various devices for intensifying the actors' play. The precision and intrinsic value of gesture. The actor's self-admiration while playing.[65] The technique of using two planes (stage and forestage). The function of a shout (*vykrik*) at a moment of intense action.[66] The actor's costume as a decorative adornment and not as a utilitarian necessity. A hat as a pretext for a theatrical bow. Sticks, spears, rugs, lanterns, shawls, cloaks, weapons, flowers, masks, noses, and like instruments as material for training the hands. How objects appear onstage and go on to be used in the development of plots staged to depend on objects.

Large and small curtains (fixed and mobile; curtains in the literal sense, as well as 'sails') as the simplest devices for transformations. Screens and banners as a means of theatrical expression. Tulle in the hands of forestage servants for emphasising specific moments in the performance of the main characters' gestures and conversations. The parade as an essential and autonomous part of a theatrical performance. Various types of parades, based on the nature of the play's overall composition. Geometrisation of the stage drawing in the *mise en scène*, even when creating *ex improviso*. The relationship between word and gesture in existing theatres and in the theatre to which the Studio aspires.

'Soloviev's Class. Fundamentals of Improvised Italian Comedy Stage Technique'[67]

For the month of September this year, the class teacher focused on familiarising Studio participants with a whole variety of issues closely related to the theatrical method of learning commedia dell'arte technique: the essential sources for learning Italian improvised comedy; the fate of ancient Attic comedy; middle and new Attic comedy; the emergence of theatre in Rome; *commedia palliata*, *commedia togata*, Atellan farce; mimes; theatrical performance in the era of the fall of the [Roman] empire; the art of French medieval minstrels; conditions that led to the creation of the Italian theatre of old; learned comedy, Machiavelli's *The Mandrake*; Italian improvised comedy; the formula of the four fixed masks; Count Carlo Gozzi, Abbot Chiari and Signor Goldoni; Gozzi's *Love for Three Oranges* and his ten theatrical fairy tales; *Memorie inutili;* E. T. A. Hoffmann and his fairy tale *Princess Brambilla* as a new German Romantic understanding of the commedia dell'arte; Italian players in France; Molière and Italian comedy.[68]

Practical exercises took place alongside these lectures.[69] The class teacher paid special attention to ensuring that Studio participants master the principles of how the stage is setup for commedia performances and the geometrisation of characters in the *mises en scène*. To this end, the class teacher developed a system of sketches that graphically illustrate these principles.

Concurrent practical exercises were conducted in which the Studio participants and class teacher used special, conventionalised theatrical notation symbols to sketch out all the movement and blocking sequences of the characters of Italian comedy.[70] Among these works, especially noteworthy are those of A. I. Kuliabko-Koretskaia and M. N. Petrova, two extremely interesting new variations on the traditional commedia 'night' scene.

'Vsevolod Meyerhold's Class. Stage Movement Technique'[71]

> (Lecture-discussions in September: an introduction to the Studio's aims; about stage movement; film pantomime versus Studio pantomime; on the role of music in movement class.)

An attitude towards movement as a phenomenon that is subject to the laws of artistic form. Movement as the most powerful means of expression in the creation of a theatrical production. The role

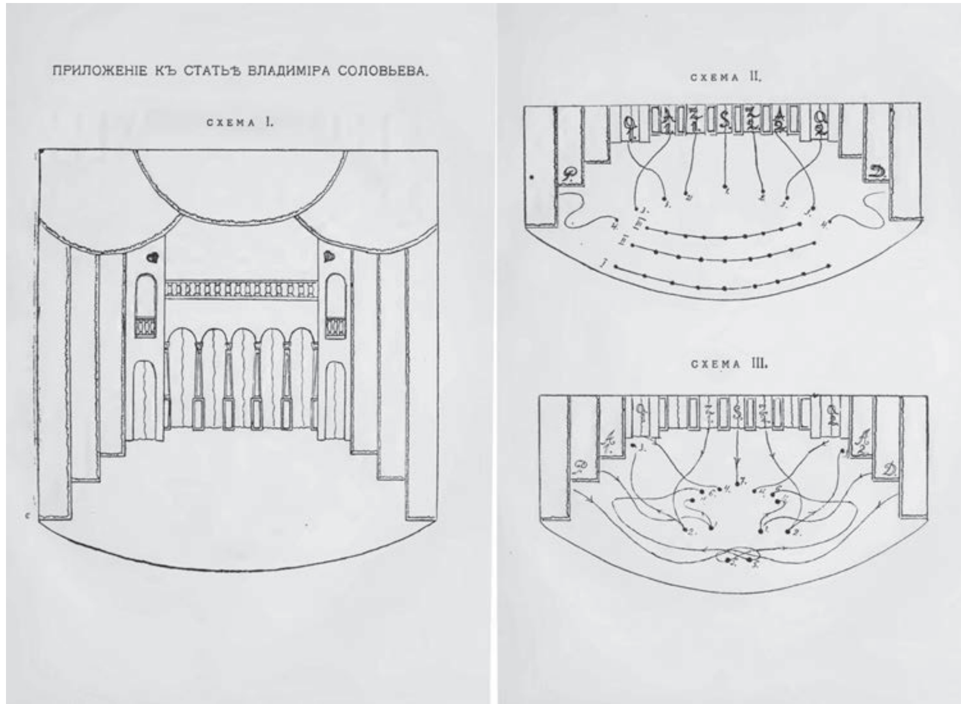

Figure 13.2 Examples of Soloviev's blocking sequences for the night scene. The first depicts the stage configuration and the second the actors entering and crossing to the forestage. In the third, pairs of characters form an even-sided geometrical figure that is disrupted by the entrance of an odd-numbered character, Smeraldina. In the third diagram, Pantalone and Dottore (P and D) enter from the downstage wings, the Zanni (Z) through upstage curtains, the lovers from the upstage wings (A and a), and, finally, Smeraldina (S) from upstage centre. LTA 1–3 (1915): 71, 73. André Savine Collection, Rare Book Collection, Wilson Special Collections Library, UNC-Chapel Hill

of stage movement as more significant than that of any other theatrical element. If the theatre is deprived of words, of the actor's costume, the footlights, the wings, and the theatre building, and only the actor and his virtuosic movements remain, then theatre still remains theatre: the audience discovers the actor's thoughts and impulses through his movements, gestures, and facial expressions, while, for the actor, a theatre building is any playing space that he himself is able to construct (without the help of builders), wherever and however he likes, and as quickly as he himself is nimble (read about Chinese traveling troupes).

On the differences between movement, gesture, and facial expression devices in [silent] film and pantomime. If in film an object appears on screen for utilitarian reasons, then in the Studio (for pantomime) an object is provided to give the actor the opportunity to apply artistry to the act of performing with the object, with the goal of either delighting or saddening the viewer – and thus the film actor and the Studio actor must part ways. About the primary purpose of film being to engage the audience by means of the plot. About pantomime, in which the audience is engaged not by the plot, but by how the actor's free impulses manifest in a sole desire to hold sway over a stage that he himself has set up, adorned and lit; to reign, marvelling at inventions that are unexpected even for himself. What it means to impersonate, to lose oneself in a character, versus what it means to always present oneself within the many characters of different

plays. Pantomime engages the spectator not because of what is hidden in its plot, but because of how it is created, the framework within which its heart is contained, and the acting craft it reveals. About movement that is determined by the actor's ever-changing costume, stage props, and stage design. The never-arbitrary theatrical costume as part of the whole (the performance). The value of its form and the meaning of its colour. Makeup convention. Masks and masks.[72]

About the form inherent to theatricality.

About the relationship between theatre and life. In theatre that reproduces life photographically (naturalistic theatre), movement is considered from the perspective of its use in helping the spectator understand the playwright's various aims (the obligatory exposition, the play's concept, the psychology and dialogue of the characters – all for the playwright's goals rather than the spectator's needs – everyday phenomena, etc.). Theatre is an art, and it follows that everything should be subject to the laws of this art. The laws of life and the laws of art differ.

An attempt to draw an analogy between the laws of theatre and the laws of the plastic arts. To discover the laws of the theatre means not only to untangle the knot, but to untangle it via the most sophisticated system (geometrisation in the positioning of characters, etc.). The foundation of theatre is play. Even when one must show elements of life onstage, theatre recreates life's fragments with the help of devices that are specific only to the craft of theatre, the motto of which is play. To show life onstage means to perform life – and the serious becomes funny and the funny tragic. Polonius's enumeration of theatrical genres shows that through the actor's performance, simple comedy becomes tragicomedy, a series of songs paired with entrances transforms into a pastoral.[73] It is essential for the actor of the new theatre to compile a whole codex of technical devices, which he can glean from studying the acting principles of truly theatrical eras. There is a whole range of axioms that are essential for all actors, regardless of what kind of theatre they create. About the process of studying olden-day theatres, it must be noted that this is a kind of *accumuler des trésors*,[74] not in order to exhibit unearthed treasures in their original form, but (having learned to hold and cherish them) to adorn oneself with them, the one thus 'gifted' strives to go onstage and begin living *theatrically*: to take a bow with a beggar's cap as if it is strewn with pearls, to don a tattered coat with a hidalgo's flair,[75] to strike a tattered tambourine with one's hand, not to make noise, but to convey the full brilliance of one's sophistication and experience with a wave of the hand, and to do so in such a way that the spectator forgets the tambourine is missing its skin.

What it means, in our understanding, to transmit traditions from the past into the present. Repetition of something that happened once upon a time is not what we seek (simple repetition is the goal of the 'Antique Theatre').[76] The difference between a reconstruction and the free development of a new theatre based on studying and selectively extracting from the traditional. The new actor's relationship to theatre as akin to a space being prepared for extraordinary theatrical events. 'Since I know', says our actor, 'that I am entering a space where the setting is not by chance; where the floor of that space (the stage) merges with the auditorium lines; where a musical background reigns, I cannot not know how to enter this space. Since my acting will reach the spectator simultaneously with the scenery and music, if the combination of all the performance elements is to have a *precise meaning*, acting must be one of the components of the combined *dramatis elements*.' Knowing why all the surroundings are this way and no other, knowing how the entire theatre piece came to be, the actor who enters the stage self-transforms, becoming a work of art. The new master of the stage – the actor – asserts his joyful soul, musical speech, and body, as supple as wax. Movement that makes it necessary to follow Guglielmo's law (*partire del terreno*)[77] in one's work requires a virtuosity that approaches that of the acrobat (the Japanese actor is both acrobat and dancer). Words require actors to be musicians. The pause reminds the actor to keep time, which is as necessary for him as it is for the poet.

On the different approaches to music in the performances of J[aques-]Dalcroze,[78] Miss Isadora Duncan, and Miss L[oie] Fuller, in the circus, in variety-theatres, and in the Chinese and Japanese theatres. The role of music as a stream that accompanies the actor's movement about the stage as well as the static moments of his performance. The music and the actor's movement may not align, but they are brought to life simultaneously, and, in their progression (music and movement, each in its own sphere), they provide a distinctive kind of polyphony.

The birth of a new kind of pantomime, in which music rules in its own sphere and the actor's movements flow in parallel in their own sphere. Actors who do not reveal the pattern of the music and movements to the spectator directly as a metric counting of time, who are guided by the will of the master director, seek to weave a rhythmical net. In the dramatic actor's sequence of movements, a pause is not a lack of or cessation of movement, but, as in music, the pause preserves an element of movement. When an actor is not part of the action at a specific moment, this does not mean the actor is removed from the musical sphere. The actor remains onstage the whole time, not only because there are no wings and therefore there is no backstage, but first and foremost so that, after having internalised the full significance of the pause, he does not halt the life of the onstage action. And in this pause, the entire meaning of the inevitable thrill caused by the light, the music, the dazzle of the props, and the splendour of costumes is most clearly established. The meaning of the two planes – stage and forestage – for an actor who never leaves the stage space, from the perspective of unabating life in the realm of even inaudible music (e.g., the expression 'to hear silence' by Rubek from Ibsen's play [*When We, Dead, Awaken*]).

Studio Notes from *Love for Three Oranges: The Journal of Doctor Dapertutto* 1–3 (1915)

' Vsevolod Meyerhold's Class. Stage Movement Technique'[79]

The period before the Studio's classes ended was devoted entirely to practical exercises. The class teacher set himself the task of training players in more complex compositions on one hand, and, on the other, in carrying out more complex technical tasks. To this end, players were offered the étude *The Hunt*.

The étude was divided into two parts. . . .[80] The Studio's entire female cohort performed in the second half.

'Vladimir Soloviev's Class. Fundamentals of Improvised Italian Comedy Stage Technique'[81]

Classes in this course in the period after the [12 February 1915] performance represented a logical conclusion to the work from the autumn months (September and October).

The class teacher's attention was focused entirely on engaging Studio participants in independent compositional work.[82] To this end, Studio players were presented with a new stage that was markedly different from the one they became accustomed to working on in the period before the performance. Instead of two planes, 1) a platform stage with two side stairways and 2) a forestage located below, they were given a single plane with both a forestage and stage (a narrow strip), with three forward-facing doors, which determined in advance only the well-known geometrical *mise en scène* combinations, and four curtains for side exits.

On this new stage, the Studio players performed a whole series of études '*ex improviso*', with the goal of mastering acting principles that rely on this configuration of the stage space.

Out of these exercises developed the 'night scene', the construction of which was at first based entirely on combinations of three doors and later resulted in a composition with a great quantity of staging plans.[83]

When transferring the work to an ordinary playing space with two stage planes, the Studio's players were, for the first time, offered the following task: using the 'night scene' outline as a foundation upon which to start embellishing its theatrical framework with traditional means of theatrical expression. The result of this was the restoration of two variations on the changing scene motif so beloved in Italian improvised comedy.

First variation. Both Zanni . . . with the help of their underlings . . .[84] dress up the young lovers . . . in fantastical costumes and the attire of Eastern princes. Moreover, a significant role in this version was played by the Zanni's underlings, who pass to one other, in a strict sequence, individual pieces of clothing from the young lovers' costumes.

Second variation. Both Zanni, wanting to trick and punish the old men, dress up in women's costumes.

On this same stage, in the tradition of the second variation on the 'night scene', a plan was worked out for the *mise en scène* of Act I of Basilio Locatelli's scenario *Il Giuoco della primiera*, whereas the concluding scene between Furbo and Zanni was treated as an independent interlude and staged on the forestage.[85]

The final classes at the Studio in this course were devoted to staging the pantomime *The Princess and the Pea*; for this the first entrance of the actress who played the lead role (Tsvetaeva) was treated as a grand procession of the brilliant entourage of the 'poor' theatre and fairy-tale princess.

Vladimir Soloviev, 'On the History of Commedia dell'Arte Technique, IV', *Love for Three Oranges: The Journal of Doctor Dapertutto* 4–5 (1914)

The Counter Action[86]

I like to call the next Italian improvised comedy stage technique device you will become acquainted with the 'counter sign' (*znak otkaza*). The essence of this device is roughly as follows.

Very often the laws of the theatre are in direct opposition to the laws of logic. Thus it is, for instance, that the spectator's sense of fear grows stronger when the actor does not walk away from the object that provokes the feeling of fear, but, on the contrary, walks towards it. That same spectator notices the actor crossing the stage much more, if, before starting to walk, the actor throws his body back a bit, and then walks.

The principle of the 'counter action' (*otkaz*) technique must therefore be a deliberate reversal from and emphasis on a given stage situation. Such a reversal from and emphasis on the stage movement of one or of several actors – the most effective means of theatrical expression – also serves as a necessary condition for heightening tension in the action.

Awareness of Stage Partners[87]

The most difficult technical device of Italian actors was doubtlessly the ability to remain aware of one's partners. The end result of using this device in practice was, apparently, in most cases, the 'set-up', when an actor given a task passed it on purely mechanically to his partner. The very essence of this device conveyed to the actor the necessary intensity, which when used widely, enabled him, on one hand, to remain aware of the actions of the other characters onstage while

playing his role, and on the other, to develop the ability to coordinate his own movements with the movements of other actors, to respond to their particular stage relationship with a set combination of theatrical gags (*triuki*); he ultimately learned to accurately identify the moment of intense action when he needed to pass on the theatrical initiative to others. This device was not limited only to identifying a moment of intense action, when one actor passed the theatrical initiative to another, it also prepared other actors to create stage combinations in response, upon receiving further initiatives. These combinations were strictly determined by the movements of an odd or even number of characters onstage.

This device also helped actors performing improvised comedy develop a sense of proportion and artistic tact by teaching them to clearly differentiate the details from the whole. Actors in these performances clearly envisioned the overall composition of a scenario, understood the development of its individual parts, and also possessed a renowned freedom in implementing specific scenes and details, as one of the many simultaneous independent authors of the specific comedy being performed.

Responsiveness to Stage Space[88]

All the movements of Italian commedia characters, their various positions in relation to one other, and their various geometric combinations and placements are closely related to the space where the performance takes place. It is therefore extremely important to know the specific theatre in which a given comedy was performed, for theatres pre-determined the famous *mises en scène* and even their sequences in advance.

Our theatre is a large building, the main portion of which is designated for theatrical performances. The stage is framed by a proscenium arch, with two balconies built into the sides and connected to the stage by a few steps that form a sort of staircase. Three sets of wings and borders form three stage planes that pre-determine the configuration of the actors' placement onstage. The background is either a solid decorative curtain or an architectural system of archways with an odd number of arches, embellished with a little balustrade on top.

Sometimes the stage is closed off with a front curtain, and sometimes the performance takes place without it.

There are no footlights; the light source is transferred to chandeliers hanging overhead and to candelabras installed at the side wings. The downstage portion of the stage, a forestage that extends far forward, connects to the audience via a semi-circular staircase system. The stage contains several secretly hidden trap doors.

It is very important to the creation of an improvised show that all the performers in the show overcome their fear of the audience and that, when they are on the edge of the forestage, they feel and conduct themselves as freely as they do upstage at the third set of wings. Actors who intend to perform improvised shows need to cultivate this lack of fear of the audience with a variety of very complex exercises that take place at the very edge of the forestage.

The multiple sets of parallel wings emphasise the parallelism of many scenes in traditional scenarios and greatly facilitate the many entrances and exits of the dramatis personae . . . . The upstage decorative curtain . . . serves as a backdrop that is very useful for clear, distinct groupings of actors. The system of archways with an odd number of arches determines the concluding exit pattern, in which a character, located centre stage, makes a surprise appearance that untangles the complex intricacies of the intrigue and thus ends the comedy. The balustrade atop the arches serves at times as a location for lovers' rendezvous, and at times as a reliable haven for servants who fear the wrath of the old men, Dottore and Pantalone, to cross through.

Curtains in the archways serve primarily for heightening theatrical expressiveness and also as convenient material for generating 'theatre-specific, theatre-appropriate comic business'. The proscenium arch's side balconies very often represent the houses of the old men, where their daughters pine away. The steps leading to them remind the audience of ladders set up by servants who arrange frequent rendezvous for lovers. The trap doors and system of secretly hidden machines under the stage allow the actors to perform comedies with infernal powers that feature a whole range of magical transformations. All the while, the forestage governs all the actors' movements across the stage, teaching them to surge forward at the most decisive moments of intense action.

Student Memoirs

Valentina Verigina, *Memoirs*[89]

In working with pantomime, Meyerhold at first provided the theme, but soon he began to require us to invent the plot ourselves and figure out the *mises en scène* ourselves, and he only made corrections and pointed out mistakes. Sometimes the pantomime script was invented right there in class; the participants conferred among themselves, familiarised each other with the gags they planned to introduce, and agreed on the end moment. This is how the étude 'Two Smeraldinas', which I created, came to be shown.

Two Smeraldina maids tricked their master. They teased him in every possible way and made a fool of him, and everything happened as if by accident, as if they had nothing to do with it. The Smeraldinas disguised themselves as doctors (they just made a face and changed their walk). [The actress] Time pulled out Pantalone's tooth, etc. It turned out very funny. . . . When we performed 'Two Smeraldinas', in which there was lots of running around, falling down, and costume changing, everyone said the étude was done deftly and without the slightest noise, soundless and fun. This was exactly what the director wanted from us.

Alexander Mgebrov, *A Life in the Theatre*[90]

When setting to work, we took off our usual clothing and put on light costumes specially conceived by the artist so they would enable absolute freedom and flexibility of movement; at the same time, they were not simple gymnastic costumes but gave an artistic rendering of the whole work's essential nature as having a certain admixture of fantasy. These costumes were, of course, the prototype for today's industrial costumes, a kind of Blue Blouse or the like, let's say, something in the vein of collective theatrical action.

The most wonderful quality of Meyerhold's talent was the ability to transform anything into grand, forever memorable impressions. If Meyerhold falls in love with hands, for instance, then under the influence of his love, they will eclipse everything else in the world for you; he will manage to fully capture your will and imagination in the most varied and fascinating ways, and, for the rest of your life, you will suddenly understand the significance of hands and fall in love with them.

According to Meyerhold, the actor must make the audience believe that the most insignificant object can be significant and fascinating in his hands. Meyerhold has thousands of variations for this: he is able to invent an infinite number of varying combinations of play with anything you like, with what would seem to be the most trifling object – be it a simple handkerchief, a flower, a little ring, a bit of paper, a stick – whatever. In Meyerhold's hands, the flower

transforms into something thrilling and intoxicating, the little ring attains magical significance . . . a simple piece of paper becomes precious papyrus.

Meyerhold had no patience for simple, plain gymnastic exercises – he presented them in an environment of endless fantasy. . . . Hands played an enormous role in all our work then: they drew back the bowstrings and shot the arrows; with our hands we created complex combinations of indescribable charm and fantastical play with all kinds of objects, from a simple stick to the expression of the subtlest human emotions.

If with and for Meyerhold hands played such a massive role, what role did the human body play as a whole? Flexibility, musicality, rhythmicality, melodiousness, and agility – upon this Meyerhold built the laws of theatrical expression.

This was the first time that collectivisation and collective creation, as a new slogan, were affirmed by Meyerhold. Although this slogan was not spoken aloud, it was unwittingly affirmed by our entire working system, just as it was unconsciously affirmed by silence. If Meyerhold instinctively guessed that words had lost their meaning – because even so one couldn't express anything with them (before the horror that was in the world, all the old words grew pale, and new ones had not yet come) – then, just as intuitively and instinctively, Meyerhold probably guessed that, broken by the elements, the artist's individual will to affirm and save that world must also find an alternate expression.

Year 3 (1915–16)

In the Year 3 classes, a pattern emerged in which overlapping groups of students with varying interests and skill levels worked on études and pantomimes of increasing complexity. These works fall into two categories: scenes in which many characters coordinate complex simultaneous action and previously wordless pantomimes to which spoken text is now introduced. Even though voice and speech classes ran alongside Meyerhold and Soloviev's classes for the Studio's first two years, students in Meyerhold's classes began to use words in classroom performances only in the Studio's third year. Significantly, many classroom pieces identified in the Studio notes include a list of items (sticks, swords, capes, etc.) that were not just props, but theatrical instruments, 'dramatis objects' for training the actor's dexterity, agility, and fantasy. In a few cases, such as 'The Hunt', objects (bows and arrows) were imaginary; in others, such as the interlude 'The Magic Strings', actors themselves became the objects. I have lightly abridged Soloviev's and Meyerhold's class notes for this year so that key ideas emerge more clearly. As in other Studio documents, most actor names are omitted, one exception being that of Anna Kuliabko-Koretskaia, whose performance in 'The Hunt' Meyerhold describes in detail.

Studio notes for this year are followed by Alexandra Smirnova's extended description of 'The Hunt'. Of the many accounts of this pantomime by Meyerhold's students, Smirnova's gives the most vivid sense of the environment of fantasy and generative play that surrounded all the Studio creations.

Studio Notes from *Love for Three Oranges: The Journal of Doctor Dapertutto* 4–7 (1915)

'The Studio'[91]

(For work in September, October, November, and December 1915)

Upon resuming classes this year, the leadership presented Studio participants with the following:

Studio participants: 1. in training; 2. players (*komedianty*).

A student in training becomes a Player after presenting a curriculum vitae, passing introductory and examination classes, and completing a period of study at the discretion of Studio leaders.

Length of study at the Studio is not limited to a set time. Classes are terminated for those whose work no longer coincides with Studio aims.

A player who is recognised as capable of exceptional artistic achievement may be invited to join the organisational ranks of the theatre being created.

For Studio participants, all classes, both introductory and core courses, are required.

Studio participants should be ready at all times for examination classes.

Study of the essential handbooks is required within the specified time frame. It goes without saying that the Studio's journal is an essential handbook.

Sports training is essential for all.

Mastery of fencing, dance, and music is essential. Master teachers will be identified by Studio leaders.

The following are incompatible with continuation at the Studio:

1. Participating in any public theatre performances besides those staged or authorised by the Studio
2. Taking classes at any other arts schools without notifying Studio leaders.

Disrupting or being late to class violates the cohesiveness of the material being mastered. Classes are divided into hour-long segments, separated by short breaks. Entrance to the rehearsal studio is possible only during breaks. Latecomers are obliged to fill gaps on their own. Students with frequent absences or who generally show any negligence in their work will be excluded from participation in public performances.

A letter, telegram, or telephone message is required if attendance is impossible.

A designated work costume is required. Those who do not change clothes in time, in the 10-minute interval before class, are considered absent for the corresponding hour.

It is essential that everyone treat accessories economically.[92]

There is a designated smoking room.

The telephone and buffet are for use by Studio participants only during breaks.

Aside from individuals admitted by Studio leaders, outsiders may enter only on public performance days.

The Studio's performances differ from ordinary classes only by the presence of an audience. Exacting attention to the harmony of the work, as well as the speed of changes and being at one's places, are equally essential in either case.

Those not involved in the play-in-development must be present during work in order to be ready at any moment to appear onstage

Those performing in plays are called at the first bell. Taking one's places with speed and precision before going onstage is part of the performance. Leaving the stage during work or preparation for it is not permitted.

Each play is headed by a leader who comes from among those not performing in it.

All participants in the performance and backstage take the exact places stipulated by the leader so as not to obstruct stage entrances and exits.

For public performances, all players must be ready for the prompt start of the show a half hour before the announced curtain time.

The leader's instructions are to be executed with mechanical precision. Objections may be stated only after the work period has ended and in the presence of the *metteur en scene*.

The distribution of roles as announced by the *metteur en scene* or, with his consent, by the play's author, is required.

The make-up and make-up supplies, costume, and accessories stipulated by the artist are required. No arbitrary substitutions are permitted.

Violations of the proper flow of Studio life result in: removal from roles and public performances; exclusion from work at the Studio (temporarily or permanently).

Studio funds (dues from participants and proceeds from the journal) are used for Studio maintenance and for publication costs.

Studio participants pay: 1) upon admission: 15 rubles (entrance fee, including the journal subscription for the current year); 2) monthly: an amount due from each based on an accounting of Studio expenses; 3) in November and February: 10 rubles (staging fee).

'Nikolai Soloviev's Class.'[93]

The class teacher led discussions with Studio participants on the theory of stage composition[94] and discussed issues related to the study of Italian comedy stage technique.[95]

Practical lessons for that class were divided into:

1) the creation of large compositions, the purpose of which was to work out the basic geometrical drawing of the most complex *mises en scène* and to develop in Studio participants an understanding of theatrical ensemble, and
2) the composition of individual études that pursued solutions to specific, entirely technical tasks.

The first group's compositions were:

1) *The Fortune of King Mohammed's Planet*. Characters: Harlequin, Columbine, Pierrot, Servants in red caps with yellow tassels, Flower girl. Forestage servants. . . . Theatrical instruments: curtains, three stools, a ball, a bottle, two crystal goblets, flowers, a letter.
   After scene two of this composition, a traditional interlude followed:

   'The Magic Strings,
   or the Endless Sufferings of the White Pierrot'
   A description.

   At night, Harlequin falls through the window into Pierrot's attic room. Harlequin tells the audience he wants to play a trick on the occupant of this room. With extraordinary seriousness he begins to implement his plan.

   A knock at the door. Harlequin hides. Pierrot enters. He is very jolly. He takes off his top hat and coat and carefully places them on the coat rack. He sits in front of the mirror and admires himself and the cotillion awards he received that evening at the masquerade. Sleep overcomes him. Having put out the candle, he lies down on the hard bed.

   Harlequin begins to pull the strings of the parrot, coat rack, mirror, and bed, which escape from their places and frighten Pierrot.[96] Pierrot suffers, running about the stage like a young lover who has just been spurned for the first time.

   He notices Harlequin, the author of these nighttime pranks, and beats him with his long white sleeves.

   Harlequin vanishes. The mirror, the bed, the parrot, and the coat rack wrap Pierrot up in the theatre curtain and force him offstage with whistles and blows of the slapstick that Harlequin accidentally left behind.

   Theatrical instruments: curtains, chair with candle, stool for Harlequin.

2) *Excerpts from the fairy tale 'Three Infantas'*. Characters: Three Infantas, Clown, Entourage of Princes, Bodyguards, Forest.
3) *'The Story of One Jealous Husband and a Merry Dinner in a Country Dacha, which Ended All Too Sadly'*. Characters: Cavalier, Lady, Lady's Husband, Country Dacha Servants. [. . .]

Theatrical instruments: curtain, table, and stools; two swords, hats, capes, candles on the table, dagger.

The second group was responsible for the following études:

1) *A Game of Cards*
2) *Harlequin the Marriage Broker*
3) *Nothing Comes of Nothing*.[97]

'Vs. E. Meyerhold's Class. Stage Movement Technique'[98]

I. An attempt to transition from stage movement technique exercises to working with excerpts from dramas with words:

   a) *Ophelia's Mad Scene* (*The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*).

Ophelia, King, Queen, Horatio, and Forestage Servant....

Last year's scenario, from which words were temporarily removed, is presented in a new form and reworked for a new situation: the introduction of words.

The actress who performs Ophelia struggles with pretentious *mises en scène* and saccharine gestures (so beloved by the theatre critics of last year's performances) in the name of the naïve simplicity of the true fairground.

The songs have not yet been set to music. Accompaniment in the form of a bamboo stick tapping on a board is provisionally permitted (remember, you are speaking verse, and there is and will not be the freedom the actor typically seeks in 'experiencing' without yielding to form; you will see what freedom is possible and what joy awakens in yielding).[99] What seems easily accessible to the actor-musician becomes inaccessible to the actor whose musicality has not yet been awakened. We used this excerpt twice as working material: in September and in December. Taking breaks in theatre work should be adopted as a system. Many of the failings of the early sessions were ironed out by the break taken in this work; the imagination does not sleep during a break, because it has already been given food. The strain of so-called 'experiencing' was replaced with a certain glint of imagination that frees up stage acting technique, which tolerates no inhibitions. Success in our work on this scene can be expected only when the Duncanesque balletic is finally vanquished, only when the freedom of the juggler appears onstage, when words are wielded like balls that, as they slice the air in ascending waves above the actor's head, provide their own melodies and rhymical patterns (rhythm and verse). Remember the theatrical term 'to project words' and ask yourself: are you able to command your breathing; does your so-called 'experiencing' disrupt the regularity of your breathing; perhaps ask any Hindu with knowledge in this matter what he knows about the art of breathing.[100]

On the question of 'experiencing' onstage, it is time to agree on something once and for all. For admirers of Oscar Wilde, this question was resolved long ago by actress Sibylla Ven, who declares in [Wilde's] *The Portrait of Dorian Gray*, 'I might mimic a passion that I do not feel, but I cannot mimic one that burns me like fire'.

The studio has set itself a task: to develop a stage version of *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* without leaving out any scenes or cutting words in any scenes. Such a production is feasible only if by working on two or three scenes from the play we manage to find the key to performing Shakespeare's tragedies. Of course, only by studying the form and recreating it onstage can the play be considered fully staged.

Shall we not forget, once and for all, all those arguments by scholars about whether Hamlet's will is weak or strong and all of the author's 'intentions' that are arbitrarily projected upon him? . . . The tragedy of Hamlet is notable for its alternation between elevated pathos and the crudely comic, not only as a whole, but in the individual roles (especially in the title role). To reproduce this quality as a distinctive theatrical effect means to build a unique structure in which it is easy and enjoyable for the actor to perform.

b) Scene 2 of *The Stone Guest*, by Alexander Pushkin.

Two stages of work: 1) Without words, staging the scene as a pantomime (preparation for introducing words), 2) harmonising movement and words.

Work on the play is still at an early stage.

II. *Two Fragments in the Category of Complex Compositions.*

a) *The Hunt*
b) *Untitled* (*Persian*)

In 'The Hunt', Kuliabko-Koretskaia[101] demonstrated mastery of stage technique in the manner of the school of Japanese acting, as presented in Russia by the remarkable actress Hanako.[102] Theatrical realism is not an expression of real-life situations that take place before the spectator and are transferred to the stage. Kuliabko-Koretskaia's performance is at the very border between the theatrical and the natural, but the actress, in approaching this border, never steps on the border itself and does not compromise by trying to balance between the two realms. The actress constructs her whole performance entirely within the realm of theatrical truth, and when she wants to capture the hearts of her audience fully, she turns to effects that deceptively show naturalistic situations (just for a second) in order to return the spectator immediately to the realm of phenomena that are inherent only to the stage.

Mrs. A. I. Kuliabko-Koretskaia was awarded the title of Studio Player, the first in the Studio's existence (she joined the Studio in 1913–4).

[*In section III, omitted here, Meyerhold lists three practical études that double as 'training exercises in stage movement technique', two of which pair object manipulation (bamboo sticks, brooms, canes, cloaks, tambourines, letters, books, and flowers) with 'genuine acrobatics*'.]

Student Memoirs

Alexandra Smirnova, 'At the Borodinskaia Studio'[103]

Of the large group pantomimes, the most interesting was 'The Hunt', which told the story of hunters armed with bows and arrows who lie in wait for and shoot a bird. The pantomime had Eastern overtones. It was performed both on the carpet in front of the raised stage and on the stage itself. Out of the audience, running along both aisles with the supple gait of Eastern riders,[104] came hunters, with bows in their hands, who positioned themselves on both sides of the carpet in front of the stage, while on the stage a bird appeared from the stage centre door and immediately hid again.

Then the hunters, first crouching low to the ground, climbed the stairs to the stage, and there they lined up along its sides, nestling close together, tensely awaiting the appearance of the bird. Scouts crept forward, still stalking the bird, then, signalling to the others, they crept down

Figure 13.3 Boris Grigoriev (1886–1939). Portrait of Vsevolod Meyerhold alongside one of the archers from the Borodinskaia Street Studio pantomime 'The Hunt', 1916. State Russian Museum, St Petersburg, Russia. Photo Credit: HIP/Art Resource, NY

the stairs to the carpeted playing area, where they ensconced themselves near the stage itself and lay down, having just spied the bird up above.

She flew out from the stage centre door once again and circled the stage, fluttered, and flew from one end of the stage to the other (a distinctive dance of birds). The hunters below watched the bird all the while, stepping back to both sides; they nocked their arrows, having drawn them from the quivers, and shot at her. Some missed and only frightened her, but, when one arrow did strike, the bird pulled back, attempting to fly away, and began to circle again, fighting death, at which point the other arrows overtook and overwhelmed her. She tried to take flight (her dance of death) and, finally, losing strength, broken, slain, she fell into the hands of the victorious hunters, who, lifting the bird high above their heads, triumphantly, exulting, carried her off through the audience.

All this was performed to music – most often to Liszt's 'Mephisto Waltz'[105] or to an improvisation by one of our pianists.

[Meyerhold] himself liked to perform among the hunters. Seeing how he moved and what he did, we understood how to creep along and watch the bird expressively, how to pull the bowstring and shoot the arrow (both bow and arrow were often imaginary).

In working on pantomimes, Meyerhold was able to stage various situations and conflicts between characters with remarkable skill, to give them clearly defined physical actions. The multifaceted, wide-ranging exercises awakened in us resourcefulness, ingenuity, ebullient energy, and the ability to get out of any difficulty and adapt to the unexpected.

YEAR 4 (1916–17)

Meyerhold was the sole head of the Studio in its final year, as Soloviev had left due to a creative disagreement that later was resolved. Aside from a lengthy document listing curriculum, themes, rules, and requirements, no individual class notes were published this year.[106] *Nevertheless, it is clear from the below document that the theatrical philosophy of the Studio's first three years – including the commedia dell'arte-inspired curriculum and many of Soloviev's innovations – continued into actor training under Meyerhold's solo leadership. I have omitted short sections in this document (mostly rules) that also appear in LTA 1915 (4–7).*

'The Studio of Vs. Meyerhold (1916–7)'[107]

Main Subjects of Study

I. *Study of stage movement technique.*

NB Mastery of dance, music, track-and-field, and fencing (masters skilled at teaching the technique of these arts will be identified by the Studio leader) is essential for all Studio participants. Recommended sports: lawn tennis, discus throw, and sailing.

II. *Practical study of the material elements of theatrical production: stage set-up, adorning and lighting the stage, the actor's costume, and objects in his hands.*

III. *Fundamentals of improvised Italian comedy stage technique (commedia dell'arte).*

IV. *Applying traditional devices from seventeenth and eighteenth-century theatrical performance to the new theatre.*

NB (to III and IV) Establishing a formal canon is based not on pedantic-dogmatic criteria but on the genetic study of traditional forms, and all inclinations toward lifeless-academic epigones are considered harmful.

V. *Reciting Drama Musically.*

NB Due to class leader M. F. Gnesin's departure from Petrograd, this subject is temporarily dropped from the Studio program.

Discussion Topics[108]

- Mimesis, its lowest level (imitation without any creative idealisation), its highest manifestation (the mask), and its most profound ruptures (the grotesque: comic, tragic, tragicomic).
- Analysing acting devices in relation to the characteristics of outstanding actors and examining the particulars of theatrical periods when these actors took the stage.

NB Having assumed that we accept the aesthetically essential demands of any art (so that the material of an artistic work expresses its agreement, as it were, to receive the forms given it by the artist) and having recognised it as a necessary condition of theatre that the actor show his art through technique alone (as he refracts elements of the given material through his acting, via specific devices that conform to the particulars of the human body and spirit) – we suggest that, along with cultivating material (with the aim of enhancing physical agility), the actor must become acquainted with his unique self as an artist-histrion as soon as possible.

So that the Studio head can correctly interpret the subtlest impulses of the actor who is creating work onstage and is in the process of determining his *emploi*, all Studio participants must, by the end of the very first month (no later), write a kind of *curriculum vitae* in which the author recalls all instances of having performed in the amateur days of their childhood and youth and in their consciously professional days (for those who have had them) and in which the author defines his theatrical views, what they were before, and what they are now.

- Analysis of dramatic works from the Russian theatre of the [18]30s and 40s (Pushkin, Gogol, Lermontov).
- The Fairground's role in the fate of theatrical innovation (Molière, Shakespeare, Hoffmann, L[udwig] Tieck, Pushkin, Gogol, A. Remizov, A. Blok . . .).
- The circus and the theatre.
- Count Carlo Gozzi and his theatre.
- Spanish theatre.
- Conventionalised devices in Hindu drama (Kālidāsa).
- The particulars of stage space and acting devices in Japanese and Chinese theatre.
- Examining the newest theatrical theories (E[dward] G[ordon] Craig, Vs[evolod] Meyerhold, N. N. Evreinov, F. F. Komissarzhevsky, M. F. Gnesin, J[acques-]Dalcroze).
- The role of the director and the artist in the theatre.
- On the programs of theatre schools (the projects of A. N. Ostrovsky, S. Iuriev, Voronov, Ozarovsky, etc.).
- The theatre and the ship (regarding discipline).

NB The Studio leader and course instructors will announce the essential handbooks, study of which is required within the specified time frame. It goes without saying that the Studio's journal (*Love for Three Oranges: The Journal of Doctor Dapertutto*) is an essential handbook. All classes are required for Studio participants. Those working in the Studio must be ready at any time for examination classes that take place periodically.

Those wishing to join the Studio for the 1916–7 academic year will be grouped as follows:

1) Studio participants from past academic years who did not receive certificates of completion of the course;[109]
2) those joining the Studio for the first time.

Everyone in these two groups will be offered an entrance audition.

Individuals from the first group who: a) did not complete the period of study deemed necessary by the Studio leader, b) did not submit the curriculum vitae in a timely manner, or c) whose work is marked by multiple deviations from the basic goals of the Studio will not be permitted to audition.

Those in the first group are invited to meet individually with the Vs. E. Meyerhold Studio leader, after agreeing in advance by phone (532–88) on a meeting date and time.

Those in the second group should send a letter (to the address: Izmailovsky Regiment, 6th company, building 8, Petrograd, Vs. E. Meyerhold)[110] indicating their desire to attend the entrance audition, noting in the letter their first name, patronymic, and surname and enclosing the address to which prompt notification of the date, time, and location of the entrance audition will be sent.

Those awarded the title of Studio Player enter the new course of study without an audition.

Those approved for audition must show:

a) degree of musicianship (those who play an instrument should play, those who sing should sing);
b) degree of physical flexibility (a gymnastic or acrobatic exercise; an excerpt from a pantomime with acrobatic stunts *ex improviso*);
c) mimetic ability (playing a scene without words on a theme assigned on the spot; *mise en scene* will be provided, basic devices to be shown by the Studio leader);
r) clarity of diction (cold reading);
e) knowledge of the principles of versification;
g) knowledge (if any) of other art forms (painting, sculpture, poetry, dance), and one's own compositions, if any;
h) acquaintance with drama history at the level of a high-school course (answering questions).

Those whose painful shyness prevents them from proving themselves at the entrance audition will be invited to join the Studio conditionally, for one month, during which the entering student may show their theatrical material in so-called trial classes.

Studio participants are considered to be: 1) on probation (first month), 2) in training (first month and all subsequent months).

A student-in-training becomes a Player after presenting a curriculum vitae, passing introductory and examination classes, and completing a period of study at the discretion of the Studio leader.

A Player who is recognised as being capable of exceptional artistic achievement may be invited to join the organisational ranks of the theatre being created.[111]

Studio funds (dues from Studio participants and journal proceeds) are used to pay for: 1) the space, lights, and servant, 2) the accompanist, 3) adorning the stage space and purchasing stage objects, 4) the costs of publishing the main handbook (the journal *Love for Three Oranges*).

Members of the Studio pay: 10 rubles monthly, except for the first month, when 20 rubles are due (this includes an entrance fee of 10 rubles and a subscription to the journal for the current year); and except for January, when 20 rubles are also due (for a 10-ruble "staging" fee for organizing a public performance by Studio participants). Those accepted for a one-month trial pay only the admission fee.

Classes run from 1 September to 1 May (on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays), from 4–7 pm.

Studio leader Vsevolod Emilievich Meyerhold's address: Izmailovsky Regiment, 6th company, building 8, apt. 5 (telephone: 532–88).

All questions should be addressed exclusively to the Studio leader's address and telephone.

⋆ ⋆ ⋆

After the Studio closed in 1917, Meyerhold continued his actor-creator training experiments with a series of lectures in 1918–9, where the word 'biomechanics' made its first theatrical appearance. In 1921, when Meyerhold formalised Biomechanics training, the exercise-étude-pantomime structure, the spirit of play and

collective creation, and many of the individual terms and principles from the Borodinskaia Street Studio provided a foundation for the philosophy, logic, and structure that gave Meyerhold's training exercises, Biomechanics included, their greater meaning within Meyerhold's comprehensive, creative theatrical world view.

Notes

1 All translations from Russian are my own unless cited from an English-language source. I use common spellings of Russian words and names in the text and a simplified version of the Library of Congress transliteration system in references and notes. The word actor, which recurs frequently in these documents, is gendered male in Russian. I sometimes therefore use 'he' pronouns, but I use plural, when possible. Warm thanks to this book's editors and to Kevin Bartig, Shawn Douglas, Javor Gardev, Linda Gates, Jessica Hinds-Bond, Su and David Funkhouser, Brian Posner, Tommy Rapley, Todd Rosenthal, Gail Shapiro, and Eric Southern for being valued sounding boards for translation choices in these documents. Special thanks to Kimberly Jannarone, my first reader, and to Natasha Bregel for her native Russian ear and eye. Any errors are my own.

2 Law and Gordon mistakenly call the Studio's public performance of collaboratively created exercises, études, and pantomimes 'the sixteen etudes' that 'laid the foundation' for Biomechanics. Perhaps because they assume incorrectly that Meyerhold used these organically generated pieces 'to create a limited and precise system that would encompass all the fundamental expressive situations an actor would encounter on the stage', they also attribute the creation of all sixteen to Meyerhold and Soloviev, when many were devised by students (1996: 25–6).

3 As Vadim Shcherbakov relates, the Studio opened in September 1913 'in the N. E. Dobychina Gallery of Contemporary Painting (63 Moika). After a month, however, because of the damage that the studio participants' improvisations inflicted on the paintings hanging on the walls, the studio was obliged to move to Pavlova Hall (13 Troitskaia). In September 1914, it settled at the Society of Railway Transport Engineers at 6 Borodinskaia Street' (Shcherbakov 2021: 208).

4 After Gnesin left the Studio in late 1914, Konstantin Vogak taught a verse and prose speech class and E. M. Golubeva, the studio's only female teacher, taught a voice and diction class.

5 See Gripich's memoirs in the 1913–14 documents, p. 224 in this book.

6 See Verigina's memoirs in the 1913–14 documents, p. 225 in this book.

7 See Gripich's memoirs in the 1913–14 documents, p. 224 in this book.

8 Other early names include *commedia degli zanni* (zanni plays)*, commedia a soggeto* (scenario-based plays), and *commedia mercenaria* (plays for hire). (Richards and Richards 2006: 102).

9 Isabella Andreini, who originated the famous *innamorata* Isabella, was especially known for her comic mad scenes.

10 I owe my description of commedia's flexible form as 'modular' and 'elastic' to Andrews (2005: 450). For more on *lazzi*, see notes 11 and 44.

11 See Gripich's memoirs in the 1913–14 documents. Meyerhold and his colleagues used the Studio term 'theatre-specific comic business' (*shutki svoistvennye teatru*) interchangeably with *lazzi* and *jeux du théâtre*. Law and Gordon translate this phrase literally, as 'tricks peculiar to the theatre' (1996: 127), and Hoover (1974: 313) and Leach (1989: 48) as 'antics appropriate to the theatre'; none seems to have made the connection to *lazzi*.

12 For a fuller definition of étude, see note 38.

13 For more on Gozzi and Hoffmann's influence on Meyerhold, see Posner et al (2021: 147–59) and Posner (2016: 32–91), as well as Shcherbakov (2021: 207–34) and Raskina (2021: 187–206).

14 Meyerhold and Soloviev's understanding of acting as fundamentally joyful is especially valuable for theatre artists today who seek an alternative to 'affective' or 'emotion' memory, which persisted (and still persists), via Method acting, for over a century following Stanislavsky's own rejection of the technique as psychologically unhealthy.

15 For a brief analysis of Soloviev's lectures on commedia's supposed inheritance from Atellan farce and medieval minstrelsy, see Senelick (2021: 242–3).

16 Translated by Alma Law and Mel Gordon as 'recoil' or 'sign of recoil' (1996: 127), by Jonathan Pitches as 'refusal' (2003: 55), and by Marjorie J. Hoover as 'sign of refusal' (1974: 313).

17 Meyerhold began experimenting with collective creation as early as 1905 at the MAT Povarskaia Street Studio. For an excellent account of these experiments, see Syssoyeva (2016).

18 The growing body of research on Meyerhold's journal also includes Raskina (2010)'s *Mejerchol'd e il Dottor Dappertutto: Lo studio e la rivista 'L'amore delle tre melarance'*, my own *Director's Prism* (Posner

2016), and *Three Loves* (Posner et al 2021), and a generously annotated reprint of the entire run of *LTA* in two volumes, edited by Oves et al (2014).

19 Meyerhold may have also contributed short editorial pieces for which no author is listed.

20 In 1921, Eisenstein asked his mother to help him track down copies of rare *LTA* issues for his classes with Meyerhold (Eizenshtein 2005: 85). Eisenstein refers many times to a range of *LTA* articles; among other influences, some of his ideas on spatial composition were informed by Soloviev's lectures on the geometrisation of onstage character placement.

21 With minor exceptions, in Studio documents I have omitted all author and performer names in lists of études and pantomimes, and I have moved long lists of titles of student-generated pieces to the notes.

22 V. N. Solov'ev (1914a) 'Klass V. N. Solov'eva', *LTA* 1, 60–1. Vladimir Soloviev (1888–1941): director, teacher, and theatre historian. Meyerhold's closest collaborator at Borodinskaia. After the Revolution, Soloviev directed at a variety of Leningrad theatres and taught at the Russian Institute of Art Studies. As Senelick observes, in his creative work in the 1920s, Soloviev 'tried to preserve an improvisational aspect of acting that was rapidly becoming condemned' (Senelick 2007: 366).

23 *Podus beccaricus*: 'the walk of the snipe', a movement sequence at least partly invented by Soloviev. According to Verigina, it 'began with a plié, three steps forward, and one step back with a counter action (*otkaz*). The forward steps were like dance movements resembling a polonaise. Soloviev's classes always began with this movement' (Fel'dman 2000: 366). The *otkaz,* later an element in Biomechanics, was pioneered in the context of the *podus beccaricus*.

24 Soloviev and Meherhold use 'commedia dell'arte' and 'Italian comedy' interchangeably. Bergamo dance: the *bergamasca*, a 'lusty sixteenth-century dance', danced in pairs or groups of four, that features 'various combinations of leaps and jumps'. See Oves et al (2014 1:96) and 'Bergamasca' in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1998). This dance is featured in the third interlude in Vogak, Meierkhol'd and Solov'ev's *Three Oranges* (2021: 180). It is also danced by the rustics in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

25 Volmar Luscinius: Soloviev's pseudonym and alter ego. Soloviev used his harlequinade *Harlequin the Marriage Broker* as class scene material, since it includes many devices he also taught (a parade, direct audience address, interludes, etc.).

26 Soloviev and Meyerhold often referred to geometry as a structuring device for onstage actor movement patterns. Meyerhold later said, 'You should know that the principle of *mise en scène* is really no more than a principle of geometry' (Meierkhol'd 2001: 131).

27 *Mise en scène*: not simply blocking, in the language of the Studio, but artistically structured sequences of movement in time and space, developed by the director or actor-creator. Here Soloviev uses it to mean traditional sequences in commedia *scenarii*.

28 Soloviev played with many variations on the night scene, filled with lovers' rendezvous and nighttime confusion, as teaching material in his class.

29 Parade: the overt self-introduction of a character or characters to the audience, at first entrance or before a performance begins, often in the form of short individual acts. See Soloviev's 1914 lectures.

30 Forestage servants: Meyerhold's term for performers who visibly tend to onstage characters, typically without being part of the story. Meyerhold took inspiration for these figures from the *kurogo* of Japanese *Noh*. In his work, he used them to 'weave the fabric of theatrical action, creating a theatrical illusion before the spectator's very eyes' (Oves et al 2014, 1: 97). Many Studio pieces and several of Meyerhold productions from this period feature forestage servants.

31 Vogak, Meyerhold, and Soloviev added three interludes to their adaptation of Gozzi's *Three Oranges*. The second, a 'dispute over theatrical repertoire' uses exaggerated parody – Gozzi's term for parody heightened to ridiculous extremes – to spoof formulaic comedies and tragedies, before then proposing commedia as an ideal alternative in a hilarious scene in which Harlequin battles himself as if he is two people. See Vogak, Meierkhol'd and Solov'ev (2021: 171–2).

32 V.E. Meierkhol'd (1914a) 'Klass Vs. E. Meierkhol'da. Stsenicheskie dvizhenie'," *LTA* 1, 61–2.

33 Movement *ex improviso*: improvised movement. As Oves et al explain, 'By improvisation, Meyerhold meant using free combinations of acting devices to develop a performance within the framework of a scenario that is decided on in advance' (2014, 1: 97).

34 Guglielmo Ebreo da Pesaro (William the Jew, c. 1420–84): dance master and author of the 1463 treatise *De pratica seu arte tripudii* (On the Practice or Art of Dancing). A term from this work, *partire del terreno*, or 'to proceed from the ground' suggests that dancers 'need . . . to be aware of the correct positions of dancers in relation to each other'. Oves et al add that '*Partire del terreno* is a key term in Meyerhold's vocabulary of the Borodinskaia Studio period; for him it meant the actors' ability to coordinate their play with the stage space in which they are working' (2014 1: 97).

35 Isadora Duncan (1877–1927) and Loie Fuller (1862–1928), both brilliant dance pioneers, were stylistically very different. Duncan was known for 'natural' movement, and Fuller for manipulating voluminous fabric into abstract shapes lit by vivid color. Meyerhold uses these women as examples of a tendency in dance to have music align with or amplify psychology and emotion. His interest instead lay in the possibilities of counterpoint and 'polyphony' between music and movement.
36 Meyerhold had a lifelong interest in Japanese *noh* and *kabuki* and Chinese *xiqu*. In his Workshops years, he also performed informally for students with an Indonesian *wayang golek* puppet. Although most of his knowledge came from print and visual sources, in his Borodinskaia period he invited a traveling Chinese juggling troupe to perform during the intermission of his 1914 production of Blok's *Little Fairground* Booth and *Unknown Woman*, and he admired the Japanese actress Hanako (see note 102 below). As Min Tian rightly argues, Meyerhold's use of Asian theatre forms was not 'authentic'; however, none of Meyerhold's borrowings were. His interest in Asian theatre is best understood as a 'refraction', a creative response to a source of inspiration, not an 'interpretation and construction' of one, as Tian mistakenly suggests in his unattributed use of my term (Tian 2016: 310, 312). See also (Tian 1999: 234–69).
37 As Oves et al note, 'Meyerhold's continued developments in actor training in the realm of biomechanics were largely based on the commedia dell'arte axiom "The actor must have a joyful soul"' (2014 1: 98). The idea of the joyful soul (*anima allegra*) comes from Gozzi's *Three Oranges*. See Gozzi (2021: 64).
38 Étude: for Meyerhold, an étude (a 'study') was a rough sketch of a piece, between an exercise that teaches an underlying device and a more polished performance, in which technique and structure were worked out. He describes using études as early as 1907, in rehearsals for Maeterlinck's *Death of the Tintagiles*: 'Poems and short passages are read aloud by each actor in turn. For them, this work is the same as an étude is for a visual artist or an exercise is for a musician. Technique is polished in the étude, and only after refining technique does the artist move on to the painting. . . . While the image of joint work on études between actor and director is still fresh in my memory, I'd like to note two methods of creative directorial work that establish very different relationships between the actor and director: one method deprives not only the actor but also the spectator of creative freedom; the other frees both actor and spectator, making the latter not only observe, but create (at first only in the realm of the spectator's imagination)'. Quoted (my translation) from Meyerhold, *On Theatre,* in Fevral'skii (1968 2: 128–9). For Braun's variant translation, see Meyerhold (1998: 50). At this time, Meyerhold's classes focused entirely on wordless pantomime.
39 Drawing: the Russian, *risunok*, means rendering, drawing, or pattern, though for Meyerhold it was more than a performance's visual structure. As Hoover explains, 'by the time of the Studio, *risunok* had come to mean the clarity of gesture and movement [he] required in both time and space' (1969: 29).
40 In his notes from class lectures, G. Feigin records Meyerhold as having said, 'The primitives are important because their drawings are more visually distinct' (in Fel'dman 2000: 393).
41 V.N. Solov'ev (1914c) 'Klass V. N. Solov'eva', *Commedia dell'Arte*', *LTA* 2, 61.
42 In Soloviev's interpretation of the *mise en scène* for commedia night scenes, the action unfolds in a sequence of parallel entrances by pairs of characters from two houses. Two male lovers, two servants, two old men, and two daughters sequentially form even-sided geometrical stage patterns that are converted into 'an odd-sided polygon' by the sudden appearance of a single character, often Smeraldina, who 'unravels . . . the intrigue', gradually shifts the group's polygon into a straight line at the front lip of the forestage, and concludes the performance by leading a *plasum date*, a closing appeal for audience applause in Roman comedy that became a Studio term for a final address or performance delivered to the audience. See Solov'ev (1914b: 37–8). Meyerhold found alternating even and odd patterns to be useful for heightening theatrical tension, and Eisenstein later used this principle in his theory of montage (Oves et al 2014, 1: 341).
43 Although Soloviev does not explain the three types, his parade description later in this section contains three parts: one in which barkers verbally draw in the audience, a second in which the lead characters introduce themselves and perform a synopsis of the main show, and a third in which secondary characters perform fairground-style acts unrelated to the main plot.
44 *Jeux du théâtre* (French): in Studio terminology, a synonym for lazzi and for 'theatre-specific comic business', that is, improvised, physical, self-contained bits that rely wholly on the creative language of the theatre. See Oves et al (2014, 1: 173).
45 Saint Germain: 'The fair of St-Germain, held annually in February and March was one of the oldest and most popular fairs in [eighteenth-century] Paris. . . . It developed into a centre for the theatre

and was crucial in the development of the Commedia dell'arte'. See: https://wallacelive.wallacecollection.org:443/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=64244&viewType=detailView. Accessed 15 September 2021.

46 Soloviev uses *farceur* and barker interchangeably to mean a performer outside a fairground theatre who entices audiences to come inside and watch the show.

47 V.E. Meierkhol'd (1914b) 'Klass Meierkhol'da. Dvizheniia na stsene', *LTA* 2, 62–3. For Braun's variant translation, see Meyerhold (1998: 146).

48 Likely a reference to the paintings on the walls of the Studio's first location.

49 Vaudeville: a comic musical genre popular in nineteenth-century Russia, not to be confused with US vaudeville.

50 A list of Symbolist playwrights follows: 'A[lexander] Blok, V[alery] Bryusov, F[edor] Sologub, V[iacheslav] Ivanov, I[nnokenty] Annensky, A[lexei] Remizov, L[ydia] Zinovieva-Annibal, V[ladimir] Soloviev, E[veny] Znosko-Borovsky, M[aurice] Maeterlinck (early period), Paul Claudel, [Jean de] Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, etc'.

51 A list of sixteen pantomimes and études follows: 'The Old Women', 'The Trio', 'The Ball', 'Jephthah's Daughter', 'Revenge', 'The Ballerina', 'Horror', 'The Little Fool', 'The Letter Scene', and 'The Mousetrap', 'The King Who Grew', 'Hindu Comedy without Words', 'The Panopticon', Pantomime based on commedia dell'arte scenario, 'Cleopatra', 'Othello', 'Sadko'. Twelve of these short pieces were authored by students, one ('Othello') by Marinetti, and three with Meyerhold and/or Soloviev's collaboration. Some roles were double or triple cast.

52 Filippo Tommaso Emilio Marinetti (1876–1974): founder of Italian futurism who visited several experimental theatre venues when he traveled to Russia in the 1910s.

53 V. N. Solov'ev, (1914d) 'K istorii stsenicheskoi tekhniki commedia dell'arte, III', *LTA* 3, 77–9.

54 From Craig (1911: xiii). Soloviev mistakenly attributes this quotation to Craig himself. Its author was Dr Alexander Hevesi, who wrote the introduction to Craig's book.

55 *Perezhivanie* and *perevoploshchenie*: Stanislavsky's terms for 'experiencing' and 're-embodiment, respectively, both of which assume a psychological approach to acting in which one attempts to make a character's emotions and experiences one's own. Meyerhold's rejection of theatre derived from everyday life and daily psychology has sometimes been misunderstood as emotionless. But, as Verigina clarifies, 'Meyerhold fought against so-called "experiencing". Some Studio participants were very disconcerted by his statement, "You don't need to feel anything, just play, only play." This was understood as a call to play a role coldly, mechanically. But Meyerhold did not preach coldness at all. He spoke constantly about the joy the actor should experience while playing' (Verigina 1974: 197). For an excellent analysis of *perezhivanie* in Stanislavsky's system, see Carnicke (2009: 129–47).

56 V. N. Solov'ev (1914d) 'K istorii stsenicheskoi tekhniki commedia dell'arte, III', *LTA* 3, 79–82.

57 A long list of comically inflated praise follows.

58 Gripich (1967: 122–3, 125). Alexei Gripich (1891–1983): actor and director. Borodinskaia student beginning in 1913. After the Revolution, director of the Theatre of the Revolution from 1924–26; from 1948–51, Artistic Director of the Saratov Dramatic Theatre.

59 The term *otkaz* (counter action) or *znak otkaza* (counter sign), later a foundational term in biomechanics, first appears here in the context of Soloviev's commedia training. Because Soloviev's explanation follows later in these translations, I'll define it here just briefly as a gesture that runs counter to what is expected, often as an energy-accumulating and attention-drawing preparatory gesture in the opposite direction of a larger movement that follows. *Znak otkaza* is also sometimes used as a term for the natural sign in music, that is, the sign that cancels or counters a sharp or a flat. Meyerhold scholars sometimes translate *otkaz* as 'recoil' or 'refusal', neither of which fully captures its simple practicality or additional musical meaning. As Meyerhold loved to say, "To shoot from a bow, you must pull back the string' (Varpakhovskii 1978: 7).

60 Verigina (1974: 198–9). Valentina Verigina (1882–1974): actress and director whose training began at the Moscow Art Theatre in 1902; she then worked regularly with Meyerhold at the 1905 Moscow Art Theatre Povarskaia Street Studio, at the theatre of Vera Kommisarzhevskaia, at Terijoki (see note 61), and for all four years of the Borodinskaia Street Studio.

61 Terijoki, Finland: present-day Zelenogorsk, Russia, the summer resort location of the 1912 Fellowship of Actors, Writers, Musicians, and Artists of which Meyerhold was Artistic Director and in which Gnesin, Soloviev, Verigina, and many other regular collaborators participated. The foundations for the Studio's commedia experiments were laid here; Meyerhold also wrote his famous essay 'The Fairground Booth' at Terijoki. See Braun (1995: 122–5).

62 Most of the pieces performed were developed in Soloviev and Meyerhold's fall 1914 joint class, with the exceptions of 'The Cave of Salamanca' and 'The Mousetrap'. The remainder of the programme was as follows: 'Street Conjurers', 'Story of a Page Faithful to his Master, and of Other Events Worthy of Presentation', 'Two Smeraldinas, étude', 'Ophelia, étude', 'Harlequin, Dealer of Slapstick Blows', 'Three Oranges, An Astrological Telescope, or, The Lengths to which Love for the *Metteur en scène* Can Go', 'Colin-Maillard, étude', 'Two Baskets, or, Who Knows Who Fooled Whom, étude', 'Fragments from a Chinese Play: The Cat-Woman, the Bird, and the Snake'. The entire performance began with a parade.

63 'This year, in addition to the classes that Vl. N. Soloviev and Vs. E. Meyerhold each run separately, a joint class with both has been started' (Meierkhol'd and Solov'ev 1914: 90–2). The section on their joint class that follows is preceded by a short announcement that Gnesin's course will not be taught in the 1914–15 year, as Gnesin was in Rostov-on-Don. The faculty for the year were K.A. Vogak and E.M. Golubeva, in addition to Meyerhold and Soloviev.

64 A list of 16 pieces, over half by student creators, follows: 'Two Baskets, or, Who Knows Who Fooled Whom, étude', 'Two Jugglers, an Old Lady with a Snake, and a Bloody Denouement under the Baldachin', 'Ophelia, étude', 'Story of a Page Faithful to his Master, and of Other Events Worthy of Presentation', 'Harlequin, Dealer of Slapstick Blows', 'Fragments from the Chinese Play: The Cat-Woman, the Bird, and the Snake', 'Two Smeraldinas, étude', 'Colin-Maillard, étude', 'Street Conjurers', 'From Five Chairs to a Quadrille (in the [18]40s), étude', 'The Baker and Chimney Sweep, étude', 'The Trio, étude', 'The Rope, étude', 'The Disappearing Bags, étude', 'Three Oranges, An Astrological Telescope, or, The Lengths to which Love for the *Metteur en scène* Can Go', 'How They Got What They Wanted'.

65 In a direct actor-audience relationship, actors 'see' themselves reflected in the mirror of the audience's attention. As Meyerhold said in the context of his 1910 production of *Dom Juan,* for which 'the audience was fully lit', '[w]hen the actor sees a smile on the audience's lips, he begins to admire himself, as before a mirror' (Oves 2014, 1: 341).

66 Meyerhold used several techniques for drawing audience attention to heightened moments, one of which was the shout (*vykrik*). Both Brighella (playing the role of Harlequin) and a devil shout 'Holá' to draw attention to their sudden appearances in Vogak, Meyerhold, and Soloviev's *Three Oranges* divertissement. See Vogak, Meierkhol'd and Solov'ev (2021: 171–2).

67 V.N. Solov'ev (1914f) 'Klass Solov'eva. Osnavye printsipy stsenicheskoi tekhniki improvizovannoi italianskoi komedii, IV', *LTA* 4–5, 93–94.

68 Soloviev viewed the topics on this list as part of a continuous theatre-centric performance tradition with commedia at its core.

69 *Soloviev's note:* 'See *LTA* 1 [(1914): 60–1.]'

70 For examples of this visual notation, see Figure 13.2 in this chapter and Solov'ev (1915a: 57–76).

71 [V.E. Meierkhol'd], (1914c) 'Klass Vs. E. Meierkhol'da. Tekhnika stsenicheskikh dvizhenii', *LTA* 4–5, 94–8. For Braun's variant translation, see Meyerhold (1998: 147–9).

72 *Meyerhold's note:* 'See K.A. Vogak, 'On Theatrical Masks', *LTA* 3 (1914), 11–16'.

73 Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act 2, scene 2.

74 French: 'storing up treasures'.

75 Possibly a reference to the *commedia* Capitano, who was sometimes depicted as 'a kind of airy or blustering Spanish hidalgo' or Spanish nobleman. See Richards and Richards (2006: 107).

76 The Antique Theatre (*Starinnyi teatr*), also sometimes translated 'Ancient Theatre' or 'Theatre of Yore', was 'founded by Nikolai Evreinov and Nikolai Drizen to resuscitate theatre of the distant past'. The theatre successfully staged a medieval season (1906–7) and a Spanish Golden Age season (1911–12), but a planned commedia dell'arte season never came to fruition (Senelick 2007: 22).

77 *Meyerhold's note*: 'See LTA 1 (1914)'. Most likely, Meyerhold is referring to his own Studio notes (Meierkhol'd 1914a: 61–2) from that issue.

78 Émile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865–1916): Swiss composer and teacher who created Dalcroze eurythmics (sometimes known as rhythmic gymnastics), a training system for physicalising music.

79 V.E. Meierkhol'd (1915a) 'Klass Vs. E. Meierkhol'da. Tekhnika stsenicheskikh dvizhenii', *LTA* 1–3, 153.

80 Omitted here is a list of the performers in the first part.

81 V.N. Solov'ev (1915b) 'Klass V. N. Solov'eva. Osnavye printsipy stsenicheskoi tekhniki improvizovannoi italianskoi komedii', *LTA* 1–3, 153–6.

82 *Soloviev's note:* 'Along with practical exercises, theoretical lectures continued (topics examined primarily included the stage law of alternating even and odd numbers of characters in a given stage situation). On one of the last days of Studio classes, the class teacher lectured on the topic: Carlo Gozzi and [the Venetian *prima donna*] Teodora Ricci-[Bàrtoli]'.
83 *Soloviev's note:* 'See p. 60 [of *LTA* 1–3 (1915)]'. See Figure 13.2 in this chapter.
84 Most likely forestage servants.
85 *Soloviev's note:* 'Three stools are set on the forestage. Furbo runs out from the middle of the audience and, holding aloft a deck of theatrical cards, invites Zanni to play a card game. At this, he pulls from his pocket two more decks of prop cards (significantly larger in size), drags them before the audience's eyes, and strews them along the front lip of the forestage. Furbo and Zanni sit on the two outermost stools, and the deck of theatrical cards lies on the center one. A "card playing scene" follows'.
86 V.N. Solov'ev (1914e) 'K istorii stsenicheskoi tekhniki commedia dell'arte, IV', *LTA* 4–5, 63.
87 Ibid., 62.
88 Ibid., 63–6.
89 Verigina (1974: 199, 211–12).
90 Mgebrov (1932, 2: 286–91). Alexander Mgebrov (1884–1966): actor who began at the Moscow Art Theatre and performed at various theatres before becoming a Borodinskaia student. After the Revolution, he organised Proletkult productions and briefly returned to work with Meyerhold in 1920 at the latter's short-lived Theatre RSFSR 1 before having an extended acting career at Leningrad's Pushkin Dramatic Theatre.
91 'Studiia' (1915) *LTA* 4–7, 203–12.
92 The 1916 Studio document replaces the word 'accessories' with the more specific 'costumes and stage objects'. Being frugal with limited resources became even more essential during WWI. In fact, *LTA* was forced to cease publication after the 1916 (2–3) issue due to a wartime paper shortage.
93 [V.N. Solov'ev], (1915c) 'Klass Vl. N. Solov'eva', *LTA* 4–7, 206–8.
94 *Soloviev's note:* 'See the article published in this issue, "Toward a Theory of Stage Composition." [*LTA* 4–7 (1915), 171–8]'.
95 *Soloviev's note:* 'See Vl. N. Soloviev's class notes in the Studio sections of the 1914 issues of *LTA*'.
96 The coat rack, parrot, mirror, and bed were all played by actors, as is clear from a cast list that follows the interlude description.
97 Possibly a *King Lear* reference.
98 V.E. Meierkhol'd (1915b) 'Klass Vs. E. Meierkhol'da. Tekhnika stsenicheskikh dvizhenii', *LTA* 4–7, 208–12. Braun's partial translation in *Meyerhold on Theatre* (Meyerhold 1998: 151–2) reproduces only the Ophelia portion of these class notes.
99 In Meyerhold's understanding of theatre, form and freedom are equally essential and not at all contradictory.
100 Mostly likely a reference to *pranayama*, the art of regulating the breath in yoga.
101 Anna Kuliabko-Koretskaia (1890–1972): Borodinskaia student from 1913–17. Performer in Meyerhold's 1918 production of Mayakovsky's *Mystery-Bouffe*. Actress at the State Meyerhold Theatre from 1931 until the theatre was liquidated in 1938.
102 Hanako (Õta Hisa, 1868–1945): Japanese actress known for her 'physical plasticity' who toured to Russia in 1909–10 and 1912–13, where Meyerhold saw her perform. See Tian (2016: 318).
103 Smirnova (1967: 99–100). Alexandra Smirnova (1896–2000, pseudonym 'Iksandr'): actress, director, theatre professor; Borodinskaia student from 1914–17. With creative partner and husband Alexei Smirnov, she directed a wide variety of silent films and theatre productions in Ukraine until the late 1930s, when the pair became the artistic directors of the Sovremennyi (Modern) Theatre in Leningrad. She continued directing solo work after his death (by starvation) during the Blockade.
104 Meyerhold may have been inspired by the Polovtsian archers in Borodin's opera *Prince Igor*.
105 Franz Liszt's 'Mephisto Waltz No. 1', with its sharp variations in tempo and mood, was well suited for the pantomime's alternating hunter and bird action. A recording can be found here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJbg9V2KnD8. Accessed 1 October 2021.
106 For Braun's partial translation, which includes audition topics and themes of study but omits Studio rules, see Meyerhold (1998: 153–6).
107 "Studiia Vs. Meierkhol'da (1916–1917)" (1916) *LTA* 2–3, 144–50.
108 *Meyerhold's note*: 'All discussion themes are connected to a single task: to discover the autonomous value of theatrical elements in the art of the theatre'.

109 *Meyerhold's note*: 'Only those who hold a certificate of completion of the Vs. Meyerhold Studio curriculum, with the signature of the Director and the legally authorised seal of the Vs. E. Meyerhold Music and Drama School (Vs. E. Meyerhold Studio) are considered to have completed their theatrical training at the Vs. E. Meyerhold Studio'.

110 Meyerhold's apartment was in a part of Saint Petersburg that in the eighteenth century had been military barracks – hence the military-sounding name.

111 The section omitted here appears nearly verbatim, though in a different order, in "Studiia" (1915: 203–12).

References

Andrews, R. (2005) 'Molière, *Commedia dell'Arte* and the Question of Influence in Early Modern European Theatre', *The Modern Language Review*, 100 (2), 444–63.

Baldyga, N. (2021) 'A Cultural Pastiche of Fantasy, Satire, and Citrus: Gozzi's *The Love of Three Oranges* in Its German Afterlife', in *Three Loves for Three Oranges: Gozzi, Meyerhold, Prokofiev*, Posner, D.N., Bartig, K. and De Simone, M. (eds.), Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 124–43.

Braun, E. (1995) *Meyerhold: A Revolution in Theatre*, 2nd ed., London: Methuen.

Carnicke, S. (2009) *Stanislavski in Focus: An Acting Master for the Twenty-First Century*, 2nd ed., London: Routledge.

Clayton, J.D. (1993) *Pierrot in Petrograd: The Commedia dell'arte/Balagan in Twentieth-Century Russian Theatre and Drama*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Craig, E.G. (1911) *On the Art of the Theatre*, London: William Heinemann.

Eizenshtein, S.M. (2005) *Eizenshtein o Meierkhol'de: 1919–1948*, Zabrodin, V.V. (ed.), Moscow: Novoe izdatel'stvo.

Encyclopaedia Britannica (1998) Entry 'Bergamasca', 20 July, www.britannica.com/art/bergamasca (accessed 1 August 2019).

Fel'dman, O.M. (ed.) (2000) *Meierkhol'd i drugie: Dokumenty i materialy,* vol. 2 of *Meierkhol'dovskii sbornik*, Moscow: OGI.

Fevral'skii, A.V. (ed.) (1968) *Stat'i, pis'ma, rechi, besedy*, vol. 2, Moscow: Iskusstvo.

Gozzi, C. (2021) 'The Love of Three Oranges', De Simone, M. (trans.), in *Three Loves for Three Oranges: Gozzi, Meyerhold, Prokofiev*, Posner, D.N., Bartig, K. and De Simone, M. (eds.), Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 37–72.

Gripich, A.L. (1967) 'Uchitel' stseny', in *Vstrechi s Meierkhol'dom: Sbornik vospominanii*, Vendrovskaia, L.D. (ed.), Moscow: VTO, pp. 114–45.

Hoover, M.L. (1969) 'A Mejerxol'd Method? – *Love for Three Oranges* (1914–1916)', *Slavic and East European Journal*, 13 (1), 23–41.

Hoover, M.L. (1974) *Meyerhold: The Art of Conscious Theater*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.

Iutkevich, S.I. (1990) *Sobranie sochinenie, vol. 1: Molodost'*, Moscow: Iskusstvo.

Law, A. and Gordon, M. (1996) *Meyerhold, Eisenstein, and Biomechanics*, Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc.

Leach, R. (1989) *Vsevolod Meyerhold*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Meierkhol'd, V.E. (1914a) 'Klass Vs. E. Meierkhol'da. Stsenicheskie dvizhenie', *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 1, 61–2.

Meierkhol'd, V.E. (1914b) 'Klass Meierkhol'da. Dvizheniia na stsene', *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 2, 62–3.

Meierkhol'd, V.E. (1914c) 'Klass Vs. E. Meierkhol'da. Tekhnika stsenicheskikh dvizhenii', *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 4–5, 94–8.

Meierkhol'd, V.E. (1915a) 'Klass Vs. E. Meierkhol'da. Tekhnika stsenicheskikh dvizhenii', *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 1–3, 153.

Meierkhol'd, V.E. (1915b) 'Klass Vs. E. Meierkhol'da. Tekhnika stsenicheskikh dvizhenii', *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto apelsinam*, 4–7, 208–12.

Meierkhol'd, V.E. (2001) *Lektsii: 1918–1919*, Fel'dman, O.M. (ed.), Moscow: OGI.

Meierkhol'd, V.E. and Solov'ev, V.N. (1914) 'Klass Vs. E. Meierkhol'da i Vl. N. Solov'eva', *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 4–5, 90–2.

Meyerhold, V. (1998) *Meyerhold on Theatre*, Braun, E. (ed. and trans.), London: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama.

Mgebrov, A.A. (1932) *Zhizn' v teatre*, Kuznetsova, E.M. (ed.), vol. 2, Moscow: Academia.

Oves, L.S. (ed.) (2014) *Nauchno-issledovatel'skii proekt po tvorcheskomu naslediiu V. E. Meierkhol'da "Liubov' k trem apel'sinam," 1914–1916*, with author collective Galanina, Iu.E., Dmitriev, P.V., Kantor, V.D., Kulish, A.P., Molodtsova, M.M., Nekrasova, I.A., Oves, L.S., Pesochinskii, N.V., Sergeyev, A.V., Filonova, L.I., Shepelova, A.A., vol. 2, Saint Petersburg: RIII.

Pietropaolo, D. (2021a) 'Gozzi's *The Love of Three Oranges*: A New Horizon of Expectations', in *Three Loves for Three Oranges: Gozzi, Meyerhold, Prokofiev*, Posner, D.N., Bartig, K. and De Simone, M. (eds.), Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 92–107.

Pietropaolo, D. (2021b) Presentation for roundtable discussion of *Three Loves for Three Oranges: Gozzi, Meyerhold, Prokofiev*, Northwestern University, Evanston, 1 December.

Pitches, J. (2003) *Vsevolod Meyerhold*, London: Routledge.

Posner, D.N. (2016) *The Director's Prism: E. T. A. Hoffmann and the Russian Theatrical Avant-Garde*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Posner, D.N., Bartig, K. and De Simone, M. (eds.) (2021) *Three Loves for Three Oranges: Gozzi, Meyerhold, Prokofiev*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Raskina, R. (2010) *Mejerchol'd e il Dottor Dappertutto: Lo studio e la rivista "L'amore delle tre melarance*, Roma: Bulzoni.

Raskina, R. (2021) 'Carlo Gozzi in *The Journal of Doctor Dappertutto*', in *Three Loves for Three Oranges: Gozzi, Meyerhold, Prokofiev*, Posner, D.N., Bartig, K. and De Simone, M. (eds.), Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 187–206.

Richards, K. and Richards, L. (2006) '*Commedia dell'arte*', in *A History of Italian Theatre*, Farrell, J. and Puppa, P. (eds.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 102–24.

Senelick, L. (2007) *Historical Dictionary of Russian Theater*, Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc.

Senelick, L. (2021) 'The Miklashevsky Connection', in *Three Loves for Three Oranges: Gozzi, Meyerhold, Prokofiev*, Posner, D.N., Bartig, K. and De Simone, M. (eds.), Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 235–52.

Shcherbakov, V. (2021) 'Meyerhold and the Russian Commedia dell'Arte Myth', in *Three Loves for Three Oranges: Gozzi, Meyerhold, Prokofiev*, Posner, D.N., Bartig, K. and De Simone, M. (eds.), Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 207–34.

Smirnova, A.V. (1967) 'V studii na Borodinskoi', *Vstrechi s Meierkhol'dom: Sbornik vospominanii*, Vendrovskaia, L.D. (ed.), Moscow: VTO, pp. 84–113.

Solov'ev, V.N. (1914a) 'Klass V. N. Solov'eva', *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 1, 60–1.

Solov'ev, V.N. (1914b) 'K istorii stsenicheskoi tekhniki commedia dell'arte. II', *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 2, 34–40.

Solov'ev, V.N. (1914c) 'Klass V. N. Solov'eva. *Commedia dell'Arte*', *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 2, 61.

Solov'ev, V.N. (1914d) 'K istorii stsenicheskoi tekhniki commedia dell'arte, III', *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 3, 77–82.

Solov'ev, V.N. (1914e) 'K istorii stsenicheskoi tekhniki commedia dell'arte, IV', *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 4–5, 62–6.

Solov'ev, V.N. (1914f) 'Klass Solov'eva. Osnavye printsipy stsenicheskoi tekhniki improvizovannoi italianskoi komedii, IV', *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 4–5, 93–4.

Solov'ev, V.N. (1915a) 'Opyt razverstki "Stseny nochi"', *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 1–3, 57–76.

Solov'ev, V.N. (1915b) 'Klass V. N. Solov'eva. Osnavye printsipy stsenicheskoi tekhniki improvizovannoi italianskoi komedii', *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 1–3, 153–6.

Solov'ev, V.N. (1915c) 'Klass Vl. N. Solov'eva', *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 4–7, 206–8.

'Studiia' (1915) *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 4–7, 203–12.

'Studiia Vs. Meierkhol'da (1916–1917)' (1916) *Liubov' k trem apelsinam: Zhurnal Doktora Dapertutto*, 2–3, 144–50.

Syssoyeva, K.M. (2016) 'Revolution in the Theatre I: Meyerhold, Stanislavsky, and Collective Creation, Russia, 1905', in *A History of Collective Creation*, Syssoyeva, K.M. and Proudfit, S. (eds.), New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 37–58.

Tian, M. (1999) 'Meyerhold Meets Mei Lanfang: Staging the Grotesque and the Beautiful', *Comparative Drama*, 33 (2), 234–69.

Tian, M. (2016) 'Authenticity and Usability, or "Welding the Unweldable": Meyerhold's Refraction of Japanese Theatre', *Asian Theatre Journal*, 33 (2), 310–46.

Varpakhovskii, L.V. (1978) *Nabliudenie. Analiz. Opyt*, Vendrovskaia, L.D. (ed.), Moscow, VTO.
Verigina, V.P. (1974) *Vospominaniia*, Leningrad: Iskusstvo.
Vogak, K.A., Meierkhol'd, V.E. and Solov'ev, V.N. (2021) 'Love for Three Oranges: A Divertissement in Twelve Scenes, a Prologue, an Epilogue, and Three Interludes', Posner, D.N. (trans.), in *Three Loves for Three Oranges: Gozzi, Meyerhold, Prokofiev*, Posner, D.N., Bartig, K. and De Simone, M. (eds.), Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 147–86.