

characters usually project. Perhaps a product of an overtly naturalistic approach to character motivation and backstory, Briggs's shift from self-confident threat in act 1 to a more contained and servile presence in act 2 is particularly notable.

The NT Live showing offered audiences "added value" in the form of an after-show discussion with cast and director, chaired by Samira Ahmed. Interestingly, in this discussion it transpired that this production manifested something of a genetic connection to the original 1975 debut, when Hirst and Spooner were created by Sir Ralph Richardson and Sir John Gielgud. A nineteen-year-old Mathias had been present at the first night, and a devoted Stewart had gone to see the play three times in one week. The latter admitted to making use of two instances from that production, including Richardson's deliberately firm clink of bottle against glass with each refill. Nonetheless, the vision of Pinter's play in this production was original, distinct, witty, tense, and, in the final moments when Teale and Molony deliberately retreat from the fading pool of light around Stewart and McKellen, appropriately sour.

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## *Sensory Landscapes in Harold Pinter: A Study in Ecocriticism and Symbolist Aesthetics*

by Graça P. Corrêa. (N.p.: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2011).

ISBN: 978-3846545140. 372 pp. Paper. \$101.

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The apparatus is vigorous. The scope broad. The argument provocative. Readers will find here a solid review of Pinter criticism blended with an insistent nudge to look at Pinter in new ways. That insistent nudge leads to an "in-depth study that relates Pinter's dramatic images and sensory landscapes to Symbolist

theatre and theory" (11). Interdisciplinary in approach, Corrêa's work blends such concepts as micropolitics, synthesia, and sensory scapes.

In addition to a very helpful introduction and conclusion, the book divides into five substantial chapters: "Landscape Theory," "Pinter's Dramatic Landscapes," "Space Becomes Air," "Apocalyptic Landscapes," and "Unsustainable Homescapes." In each chapter, the author closely analyzes several Pinter dramas. Further, she relies on a wide body of scholarship as she joins the conversation. Ample and discursive footnotes carry her arguments beyond her already dense prose. She includes a list of Pinter's dramas to include the year of first performance, a handy reference. The wide-ranging, thorough bibliography is subdivided into useful categories.

Dispensing with Martin Esslin's frequently misapplied categorizations, the author moves Pinter's plays from Absurdist to Symbolist. She argues that our decades-old insistence on viewing plays as scripts rather than texts has led us astray. By focusing on performance rather than drama, Corrêa asserts, scholars have missed Pinter's rich imagery and evocative space. For example, when Corrêa applies landscape theory to Pinter's written works, rather than to a given production, she's attempting to activate "new areas for the critical imagination" (329). She views nature as text, not context. Characters are environmental and therefore able to be read ecologically. Current criticism that stresses performance, almost to the exclusion of all else, ignores the function of environment within a playtext. In a perhaps unintentional echo of Chaplin's *Modern Times*, Corrêa highlights deadening external environments that thwart and harm internal ones. Pinter's plays, in this view, warn of the lethal effects of losing our connection with the natural world.

When she turns to the Symbolist legacy, Corrêa's approach is far from monolithic. With *The Room*, *A Slight Ache*, *The Caretaker*, *The Basement*, *No Man's Land*, and *A Kind of Alaska* as a backdrop, she explores, among other topics, the monodramatic space of the stage; stasis; the double; ghostscapes and deathscapes. She builds layer upon layer of analysis into her examination of the texts. Since the "Symbolist aesthetic view is also a theoretical perspective," Corrêa argues for an interactive process of image production between the beholder and the object" (326).

Of particular interest is the idea that space, expressive and prominent, lives in and around us. We co-create our environments. Our energies emanate in our space and that same space produces a material effect on our bodies and spirits.

Throughout, the author insists that we've missed key features of Pinter's plays. More than once she suggests our focus on performance, on script, can mislead. She argues, as a case in point, that Pinter's plays have always been political. He did not turn to the body politic only in the last third of his career, as others suggest. She "reveals the presence of political concerns throughout

his oeuvre, thereby indicating a previously undetected consistency of his approach." (15)

This book offers some starting points for a new look at Pinter's drama. An idea here, a concept there, when parsed and held up to the light, offer an intriguing opening into the plays.

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## *Headaches Among the Overtones: Music in Beckett/Beckett in Music*

by Catherine Laws. (New York: Rodopi, 2013). ISBN: 978-9042037786.

508 pp. Cloth. €140.00.

**Michael Palmese** Louisiana State University

Catherine Laws's *Headaches among the Overtones* offers a twofold investigation into music's influence on Samuel Beckett's work and his impact upon various composers. The scope of Laws's investigation is by no means comprehensive, but rather it is a tightly focused examination of works in Beckett's oeuvre that involved substantial uses of music and that have yet to receive critical attention. Knowing this, Laws provides a new and engaging text that carries on well the scholarly discourse ushered in by Mary Bryden in 1998 with the edited collection *Beckett and Music*. Laws reconciles the use of terminology from both music and literary criticism so as to facilitate genuine cross-disciplinary correspondences throughout her book. Thus, scholars from both the literary and musicological disciplines can grasp and build upon the ideas.

The benefit from Laws dividing the book into two halves is that the split reflects well the changing dynamic she observes in the relatively new field of word and music studies. As comparative literary studies have grown increasingly