

FRENCH VISUAL CULTURE AND THE MAKING OF MEDIEVAL THEATER

LAURA WEIGERT



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INTRODUCTION

From Theatricality to Theater

Theatricality does not exist as a pure form, nor does performativity. If “pure theatricality” existed, it would be a repetitive, dead form of art, where all signs would be identifiable, decodable and meaningful – a kind of “museum play” that would recreate old art forms as museum pieces, not as living art forms.¹

This revisionary account of what came to be known as medieval art and theater starts with the picture most often used to illustrate the staging of late medieval drama (Figure 1, Plate VIII). According to an inscription spanning the upper edge, it represents “the theater or stage as it was when the Passion of our Lord was performed in Valenciennes in 1547.” A local painter, Hubert Cailleau, made this drawing thirty years after the citizens of Valenciennes financed, organized, and participated in a production lasting twenty-five days. The picture portrays vibrantly what we associate with medieval theater: grandiose machinery; the juxtaposition of geographically distant places; a moralizing dichotomy between heaven and hell; and the violent, bawdy antics of colorfully costumed devils (Figure 2). Yet the drawing envisions the 1547 performance through the lens of what is for us a more familiar play-going experience. It has endorsed thereby a particular understanding of what theater is: one that assumes the existence of an enclosed structure with a stage on which actors interpret roles.

My interest is in a performance tradition that predated and then coexisted with this conception of theater. Its distinctive features come into focus in the late fourteenth century in regions within the realms of the French kings and



FIGURE 1. Hubert Cailleau, *Theater or Stage*, frontispiece to *Le Mistere par personnages de la vie, passion, mort, resurrection et assention de Nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ en 25 journées*, 1577 (Paris, BnF, MS fr. Rothschild I-7-3).

Burgundian dukes. At this time urban performances grew in scale and complexity, prompted by an invigorated sense of civic identity and the assimilation of what became increasingly elaborate court ceremonial practices.² This development accompanied the emergence of new artistic forms, including large, portable pictures in paint and tapestry; arrangements of animate and inanimate figures; and illustrated texts of plays and ceremonial entries. The frequency of such urban performance events decreased in the mid-sixteenth century, due, in part, to new regulations and restrictions. City streets remained the site of religious processions and ceremonial entries, yet the role of their inhabitants became less important in the organization, production, and actualization of these performances, which increasingly followed predetermined scripts.

Visual images that purportedly represent this tradition, like the Valenciennes drawing, obscure what was unique, strange, and exciting about the varied performances that courts and cities hosted in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It is to another type of image – one less frequently associated with this history – such as tapestries, painted cloths, and ephemeral constructions, that we might look for a vestige of their characteristics. How both types of images participated in the formation of a distinct performance tradition and, in turn, contributed to how it has been remembered is the topic of this book.

DEBATING MEDIEVAL ART AND THEATER

The conclusions I draw shift the foundations of a long-standing discussion about medieval art's relationship with theater, initiated in France with the pioneering work of Émile Mâle and Gustave Cohen.³ The art historian Émile Mâle's earliest article on the topic, published in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* in



FIGURE 2. Hubert Cailleau, detail of hell and limbo from the frontispiece of the Valenciennes Passion, 1577 (Paris, BnF, MS fr. Rothschild I-7-3).

1904, argued that art changed from the late fourteenth through the early sixteenth century as it incorporated the themes and costumes of contemporary mystery plays; he expanded this claim in a lengthy chapter of his history of late medieval art.⁴ Gustave Cohen, historian of medieval literature, claimed to have identified the historical connections between art and theater in the late Middle Ages prior to and independently of Mâle's first publication on the topic.⁵

Pierre Francastel's reflections on painting's relationship with contemporary spectacle advanced this discussion on two counts.⁶ First, he showed that the artists incorporated a much broader range of performances, including religious processions and the associated dramas.⁷ He revised the object of study to focus not on the relationship between art and theater but on the relationship between what he termed popular spectacles, on the one hand, and art and theater, on the other. Second, he formulated a circuit of transmission that moves between and through these different media, each informing the other. This argument put a wedge in the simplistic model integral to Cohen and Mâle's approach: that artists painted what they saw in plays.

Scholars have continued to stress the problems of assigning one medium precedence over another, praising instead models of reciprocity to describe art's relationship with theater.⁸ However, the discussion still focuses on relationships between what are considered separate media. Whereas studies of Burgundian ceremony and display have the potential to disrupt these categories, their emphasis on the particularity of court culture has diminished the impact this scholarship has had on the differentiation between art and theater.⁹ Even Francastel's argument reinforces a separation between painting and the machines of processional drama based on their existence not just as different media but, even more strikingly, as discrete phenomena.

An equally entrenched premise of this discussion is that fifteenth-century art and theater are characterized by their innovative "realism," through which audiences related the content of both representational forms to their own experience. Within this context we must also return to Emile Mâle for the claim's initial formulation. He argued that both art and theater were shaped by a new emphasis on Franciscan spirituality, exemplified in the writing of the author now known as the pseudo-Bonaventura.¹⁰ The empathetic response encouraged by these texts underpinned a transformation in forms of lay devotion. Viewing late medieval pictures and plays as distinct articulations of a shared body of texts, Mâle saw both phenomena as geared toward providing devotees with a direct experience of sacred scripture. In order to render Christian doctrine more accessible, artists included details in their work that audiences would identify with their lived environment.

Cohen and the art historians with whom he collaborated – Louis Réau and Henri Focillon – explicitly critiqued Mâle's text-based study of art.¹¹ In his publications, Cohen shifted attention from Christian doctrine to its

transformation and variations in artistic forms, created by and appealing to a broader spectrum of the population. However, like Mâle, he assumed that the creators of late medieval urban drama sought to make their stories more accessible, and that this goal prompted them to introduce features that an audience would recognize as similar to its own everyday experience.

Mâle's and Cohen's conceptions of the medieval church and its history differed. In his reliance on "sacred scripture" as the primary source material for medieval art, Mâle assumed doctrinal agreement and clerical authority. Cohen, after converting to Catholicism, became committed to Catholic medieval culture, which he considered to be nonhierarchical and playful. However, the characterization of late medieval art and theater common to their work, and the pride of place they accorded France in its development, endorsed a similar ideal of a Catholic past.¹² Both accounts assume a devout audience whose belief in the veracity of these events led its members to seek such truth in artworks and plays. And they assume that the function of static images and live performances was to make an audience believe that it was present at the events of sacred history.

Such nostalgia for an ideal Catholic Middle Ages has declined in prevalence, as has the form of patriotism that guided their projects. However, Mâle's and Cohen's arguments about the realism of this period of artistic production and the empathetic response it generated in audiences have deeply influenced histories of art and theater.¹³ Fifteenth-century Franco-Flemish painting has been defined within this model. Historians trained within a variety of scholarly traditions have characterized the art of this period in terms of its appeal to an audience's everyday environment, a realism that contributed to the devotional efficacy of artworks.¹⁴ Whether they condemn or applaud it, theater historians also continue to rely on a notion of realism to characterize the innovations introduced by fifteenth-century playwrights and creators of stage effects, which served the religious needs of an urban population.¹⁵ The most detailed study of processional drama also concludes that the public display of Christian themes served a devotional function in late medieval cities.¹⁶

LATE MEDIEVAL VISUAL ARTS

This book comes to several related conclusions that undercut these resilient features of the ongoing discussion about late medieval "art" and "theater." First, rather than making up two ontologically distinct media, pictures of various kinds were considered to be in many ways homologous to visual art that involved human beings. Second, the primary goal of these representational forms was not to encourage audiences to identify in them an approximation of their own lived environment; rather, their makers and viewers recognized and promoted the distance from it such forms achieved.¹⁷

The appreciation of this fictionality was vital to an aesthetic experience that engaged a community of viewers, removed from the devotional function that representations of specifically sacred subject matter might have fulfilled for a particular individual. Contemporary descriptions of the late medieval visual *arts* set me on the path to the broader investigation that led to these conclusions.

I noticed initially that authors of various types of texts assert the advantage of the visual dimension that characterizes the audience's experience of a live performance, rather than their appreciation of the spoken or written word. The *Grandes Chroniques* assert that the way Godfrey of Bouillon's conquest of Jerusalem was enacted and seen during Charles V's banquet was far superior to what could be captured in words.¹⁸ In his advice to the organizers of large-scale urban productions, Jean Bouchet explicitly distinguishes the transmission of heard information from that which is seen. Recalling the *Acts of the Apostles* performed in Bourges, he writes: "The spirit is happier to see than to hear, the thing that one sees visually is better understood than that which is heard."¹⁹ Eustache Mercadé, in the written version of another popular enactment of the events surrounding Jerusalem's destruction, equates different types of performances, which he calls *exemples* and *histoires* (stories), to pictures within churches or palaces.²⁰ Here he expands Gregory the Great's defense of wall paintings in churches to allow for a range of visual media and for a range of subject matter. His point is not that these visual representations were created to compensate for their audiences' illiteracy but that the visual impact of these diverse art forms is particularly suited to a lay audience.²¹

Mercadé's reference to the diversity of visual culture at the time makes sense in that the same individuals created artworks that engaged both human beings and inanimate figures. As historians have fleshed out the biographic details of painters, they have uncovered more evidence concerning the role of these individuals in diverse kinds of performances.²² This professional overlap has become even more apparent as the art historical canon expands beyond panel painting to include tapestry and other material artifacts.²³ So the same artist can be credited with the design of tapestries and the staging of processional drama.²⁴ The best-known fifteenth-century painters contributed prominently to the orchestration of civic productions. Pierre Desrey, one of the presumed authors of a Passion play performed in Troyes in 1482, has also been credited with the most detailed written directions for a large-scale picture – the tapestry known as the *Lives of Urban and Cecilia*, intended for the royal collegiate church of Saint-Urbain in Troyes.²⁵ Whether or not Pierre Desrey in fact composed both texts, their stylistic similarity links them to a communal artistic enterprise. Crossing media boundaries brings into relief the commonalities between visual representation that engaged animate and inanimate figures.

Modern translations of the words most commonly associated with medieval performances (*personnage*, *vif*, and *mystère*) have caused us to overlook the

representational potential that human beings and visual images shared. The assumption that “acted role,” “alive,” and “mystery play” are equivalent to the medieval French use of the words cements the connection between the cultural practices to which they refer and a history of theater in which the privileged medium is the human body. Yet *personnage* could refer to a fictional character performed by a human being, as well as to one appearing as a pictorial or sculpted image.²⁶ *Vif* or *au vif* (or the Flemish *dlevende* or *het leven*) were used as descriptors to modify either living beings or inanimate objects.²⁷ The term *mystère* encompassed much more than what came to be considered a play. It referred to all subject matter that confirmed sacred history through a representation of events drawn from the New and Old Testaments, the lives of saints, or the realm of pagan and contemporary history.²⁸

These words, moreover, imply an interaction between a signifying agent and its fictional referent, rather than assuming a fixed or stable relationship between the two. For instance, *personnage* points to an activity whereby an animate or inanimate figure assumes the guise of a character, while retaining its distinctive qualities and identity.²⁹ Neither “actor” nor “character” is an adequate translation: an actor implies a human being, whereas “character” refers exclusively to a fictional referent. A representation that is *vif* is one that invokes lifelikeness, not one that is alive nor one whose point of reference is a living being.³⁰ Both words emphasize process: *personnage* engages an understanding of movement between the visible characteristics of the figure we see and the fictional character to which it refers; *vif* conveys a form of activation that enlivens the figure as it is perceived. *Mystère* refers to both the content of the story it tells and the representational status of this telling, which is at a remove from the occurrence of the events themselves.

Contemporary descriptions of both animate and inanimate figures echo the meaning of these words in calling attention to the distance between the fictional realm of storytelling and the lived historical environment. Accounts of performances involving human beings refer to actions not as simply taking place but as being performed before a spectator; they explicitly recognize and register the world of make-believe to which a representation belongs. Or, to take just one example of inanimate figures, the description of the woven *Lives of Urban and Cecilia* systematically specifies that a figure is adopting a role or pretending (*faire semblant*) to carry out a task, make a gesture, or complete an action. We never learn that either Cecilia or Urban appears; rather, the figure representing Cecilia or Urban appears. We never learn that Urban or Cecilia does something; rather, the figure representing Cecilia or Urban pretends to do something.

These descriptions and words suggest that the goal of diverse artistic forms at the time was not to convey and maintain a consistent similarity to the natural world, either through their physical likeness to it or their believability as

faithful surrogates. Instead, these arts moved flexibly between the fictional and lived worlds, while proclaiming their status as fiction. What emerges is a set of aesthetic assumptions that depart from models of impersonation and imitation associated with the Renaissance recovery of classical dramatic theory.³¹

These observations prompted me to return to artworks that, because they do not ostensibly relate to an actual performance, histories of medieval theater have overlooked. Other reasons have determined their marginal status for art historians: they are not attributed to known artists, many of them are grubby or quickly drawn, they are considered “minor” or “decorative,” and some did not even survive. Their subject matter draws on Christian stories, as well as the legends of Antiquity and contemporary events. Supported by expanded discussions of the terms and language just reviewed, I argue that these processional stagings (Chapter 1), manuscript illuminations (Chapter 2), and tapestries (Chapter 3) preserve a trace of the representational mode they shared with diverse forms of performances.

What’s more, unlike the contemporary texts from which I departed, these diverse pictures provide a vestige of the spatial contours of this performance tradition. They physically engage their audience in ways that parallel what historians of medieval drama have identified as some of its distinctive features, including the lack of a strictly delimited and fixed playing area and the overlap between areas reserved for players and those reserved for the audience.³² As I began to isolate and describe the aesthetic characteristics of these medieval pictures and the experience they prompted on the part of their viewers, I found that conceptual formulations of the term “theatricality” provided a framework in which to refine my observations and to identify their broader implications.

THEATRICALITY

To invoke theatricality acknowledges my debt to another feature of Gustave Cohen’s project, in which he sought to enliven medieval texts through their performance.³³ Cohen’s departure from a primarily text-based study of medieval drama gained an historical foothold with the discovery of what he termed a “director’s” notes for the staging of a Passion play in the city of Mons.³⁴ This document prompted him to publish a second revised edition of his 1906 book on the staging of medieval French religious theater.³⁵ His student Paul Zumthor affirms that the Mons handbook inspired him, in turn, to begin staging medieval dramatic texts.³⁶

As he turned his attention from the anchor of the written plays to the historical documents that provide evidence for individual performances in the past, Cohen therefore also focused on their relevance in the present. His formation in 1935 of the theatrical troupe the Théophiliens engaged his

students in medieval literature at the Sorbonne in play productions. Helen Solterer has demonstrated that these performances were formative in the intellectual and personal development of the student actors and also provided them an outlet and defense from the charged political events of prewar and wartime France.³⁷ For some, they honed the skills that were essential to assume alternate identities in their work as members of the French resistance; for others, they strengthened their commitment to Catholicism. Rather than confirming the alterity of medieval drama, the Théophilien performances reinvigorated its currency.

For Roland Barthes and Paul Zumthor, the Théophilien experience and Gustave Cohen's mentorship were instrumental in defining a new approach to literature.³⁸ The transposition of the surviving texts onto the stage inspired them to consider texts as prompts for dynamic improvisational events. This approach effectively short-circuited the entrenched assurance that textual editions accurately transmitted an original meaning. Moreover, the body that Barthes and Zumthor invoke in their textual analysis is not the body of the actor, the presence of whom is assumed in the disciplines of theater and performance studies, but one that is embedded in the narrative itself.

Barthes first employed "theatricality" as a critical concept in his 1954 article on Baudelaire.³⁹ His definition of the term as "theater-minus-text" is often quoted. Barthes proceeds, however, to clarify that what he means by "text" is, in fact, plot. What is "theatrical" in Baudelaire's writing, according to Barthes, is the alternate world it creates for the reader. Ostensibly focusing on four incomplete and little-studied plays by Baudelaire, the essay argues for the theatricality of all of the author's literary production, except, tellingly enough, the plays he wrote. In so doing, Barthes expanded the definition beyond a narrow focus on the relationship between play scripts and staged-based theater.

Zumthor historicized the concept of theatricality by refining its distinct relevance to the study of medieval texts. Building on Cohen's interest in the performance tradition of medieval plays, he turned to the performance tradition of medieval poetry. In this primarily oral society, surviving written texts of poems provide an alternate version of the words than those which an audience heard. Departing from this historically grounded observation, Zumthor used "theatricality" to describe the distinctive characteristics of twelfth-century love poetry.⁴⁰ The term captured for him the corporeal exchange between singer and audience, through which singing the poem materialized it. He went on to propose theatricality as the defining feature of texts in medieval oral culture and as an interpretive model to study the written documents that preserve this experience.⁴¹

Of course, Michael Fried's heavily influential art criticism and historical writing on eighteenth-century French painting provide another model for expanding the objects of study to which the word applies.⁴² For Fried,

theatricality is a representational mode through which an artwork or a staging of a scene by actors displays its own artifice, by both addressing the viewer and situating him or her in relation to the scene depicted. As with Barthes and Zumthor, the human body is not the exclusive agent of theatricality. Moreover, static or live artworks can either display or hide their artifice, an acknowledgment of artistic flexibility that avoids a reductive opposition between “theatrical” and “natural.”⁴³ Despite this nuance, Fried’s model has perpetuated the pejorative meaning of the term that became more pronounced in the nineteenth century.⁴⁴

Any use of “theatricality” as an interpretive model for artworks should take into account the warning from Josette Féral with which I began this introduction. To understand theatricality as a definable set of practices or features in an artwork denies the experiential process the term invokes. We risk substituting, using Féral’s terms, “museum pieces” for “living art forms.” Mindful of the potential distortion that might result in their description, I contend that some pictures allow us to glimpse, however partially, and to put in words, however incompletely, the participatory experience these performances prompted, the expansiveness of their spatial contours, and their improvisational verve. They preserve, in turn, the distinct fictionality of the late medieval performance tradition in which they participated.

THE EVIDENCE OF MANUSCRIPTS AND PRINTED BOOKS

The most tangible and evocative remnant of this performance tradition, however, exists in manuscripts and printed books. The growing production of texts coincided with the increase in number and scale of urban performances of similar subject matter. So, whereas only 2 luxury manuscripts of plays survive from the fourteenth century, Graham Runnalls’s corpus of fifteenth-century “mystery plays” includes 231.⁴⁵ And, although chronicles occasionally are devoted partly to describing entry ceremonies, the earliest surviving manuscript to take one as its subject matter, and the topic of Chapter 1, dates to the fifteenth century. By the mid-sixteenth century, however, such accounts were printed in great numbers.

It is, in fact, the survival of written versions of the subject matter of contemporary performances that differentiates the late medieval French performance tradition from that associated with other linguistic communities. In German, English, Italian, and Dutch, for instance, most textual versions of plays postdate evidence for their performance.⁴⁶ With few exceptions, they served primarily a documentary function to preserve the words of a performance for posterity or later use. In the French case, by contrast, a large body of written texts was produced during the time period when the same subject matter was performed. These manuscripts and printed books were made in numerous, often luxurious copies; many of them include pictures.

What kind of evidence they provide for a late medieval performance tradition poses an interpretive challenge. A working assumption of scholarship on individual manuscripts is that their origin lies in the event of a performance. I argue that this was not the case. Some themes that were performed live also survive in books; others only ever existed in manuscript or printed form. This is not to say that these books have no link to a contemporary performance tradition. But how they might recall or commemorate it is complex and often surprising. As Véronique Dominguez argues, it is artificial to separate the fact that plays were produced in substantial quantities in manuscripts from the fact that they were performed live.⁴⁷ It is, however, possible to untangle some of the ways the written record and the pictures it contained contributed distinctly to this performance tradition and to how it has been remembered.

First, these books prepared the way for the creation of a “readership” of plays. Written and illuminated manuscripts, like the Passion play I discuss in Chapter 2, created the opportunity for an elite clientele to enjoy an alternate experience of subject matter that also formed the theme of contemporary performances, one that derived from the visual experience of the page, or an aural experience derived from its reading. Only with the production of printed play scripts at the end of the fifteenth century, discussed in Chapter 4, however, was this experience available to a broader audience. The Parisian printer and bookseller Anthoine Vérard was responsible for many of these texts. They included a translation of Terence’s *Comedies*, but the most popular took as their subject matter common topics of large-scale urban performances. The market for these “play scripts” ranged from wealthy merchants and members of the bourgeoisie to the nobility, for whom Vérard produced luxury presentation copies. It is at this point that the experience of reading a play was split from – and ultimately came to replace – one that had been informed by its actual performance.

Vérard’s printing of a treatise on verse composition, *L’Instructif de la seconde rethorique*, solidified the conception of this type of text as a distinct genre. Its tenth chapter instructs authors on the effective composition of comedies, moralities, and “mysteries” (*mystères*).⁴⁸ These three categories are differentiated by their subject matter: moralities focus on distinguishing virtues from vices; comedies focus on pleasing, joyful content; *mystères* treat, like chronicles and histories, a momentous topic, “une grant chose.” All three categories, though, include *personnages*, characters whose spoken words appear in the text. This advice is directed to authors, identified as “anyone who wishes to compose,” whose writing will be transmitted to an audience, either aurally or visually, but without the mediation of an actor or the staging of events.⁴⁹

We will also untangle how these textualized and pictorialized versions of plays came to associate the performance record with France. The geographic scope of this tradition crosses linguistic divisions, incorporating speakers of

various dialects related to modern French and Dutch. The manuscripts preserve a written form of vernaculars that only later were identified as French.⁵⁰ The printed texts, however, direct their versions of plays to a specifically French audience. V  rard, in turn, legitimated the status of these texts by dedicating them to the kings of France. Whether the kings of France willingly promoted or unintentionally lent their support to V  rard's enterprise, these play scripts became associated with the French monarchy. As I argue in Chapter 4, they contributed to a process whereby the audience of this performance tradition was retrospectively identified as French.

The final line to untangle is how these texts and pictures transformed the defining features of contemporary live performances. They condensed the range of individuals involved in organizing and orchestrating these events into those responsible for making the manuscript or printed book, which in many cases became identified with an individual. They directed their focus at an audience, rather than relying on and appealing to the active participation of spectators. They codified the words of devils and fools, thereby limiting the degree of improvisation and nonlinguistic speech permitted in urban performances.⁵¹ Finally, they made permanent what were site-specific and temporally limited events, severing what had been an intimate connection between a play and a specific community. The Valenciennes manuscript restores some of these features of actual performances. Yet in so doing it situates this tradition in the past.

That process of historicizing leads to another contribution these manuscripts and printed books made: they have to a large extent determined how this performance tradition has been conceptualized and remembered.⁵² All too often the experience these books prompted is mistaken for that prompted by actual performances.⁵³ In some cases this distortion has led to factual errors: a performance at a particular place and time enters the historical record based simply on the date on which a text was printed. Yet, as I also show, confusing texts with performance events has solidified a connection between the entire tradition and the kingdom of France. And it has resulted in a characterization of what is considered one of the distinctive features of this performance tradition: its violence. Once we critically examine the complex relationship between actual performances and the texts and images associated with them, we can begin to chart the process whereby a particular history of the medieval theater came into being.

THE CLASSICAL THEATER THROUGH PICTURES

At the same time that some images formed part of these coexisting strands of a late medieval performance tradition, others preserved, expanded on, and naturalized the legacy of a tradition associated with the classical past. The

reception of this “theater” in medieval and early modern European thought has been the project of studies by Donnalee Dox and William West.⁵⁴ Acknowledging the antiquarian usage of the word “theater” and the moralizing purposes to which it was put provides an initial framework for understanding the cultural work these images did.

The earliest vernacular use of the word “theater” in the fourteenth century drew on and perpetuated the dual meaning of the medieval Latin word – what Mary Marshall has called the contemporary everyday usage, on the one hand, and the learned antiquarian, on the other. Importantly, the colloquial use of the word refers not to an enclosed structure but to an open or public place, like a city square or marketplace (*locus communis*).⁵⁵ The word could also refer to open-air sites designated and designed for communal viewing, or in some cases to structures created for viewing, the equivalent of scaffolding or platforms.⁵⁶ In its antiquarian usage, however, the word characterized and described the buildings in which audiences viewed diverse forms of spectacle in ancient Rome.

The antiquarian use of the word served to perpetuate two early Christian critiques of the classical performance tradition: its association with sexuality and with the devil.⁵⁷ Tertullian’s description of the theater as the “domain of Venus” in his moralizing text *De Spectaculis* (197–202) led to an association between this site and a place of prostitution.⁵⁸ We can also credit Tertullian for the association between the theater and the devil. Drawing on him, Isidore of Seville, whose description in the *Etymologies* (begun ca. 621) was the account of the Roman theater best known to medieval authors, articulates the connection in this manner:

Surely these spectacles of cruelty and attendance at vain shows were established not only by the vices of humans, but also at the behest of demons. . . . Indeed, a person who takes up such things denies God, having become an apostate from the Christian faith, and seeks anew what he renounced in baptism long before – namely, the devil, his poms, and his works.⁵⁹

The devil was alternately he who made the theater his favorite dwelling place and the creator of the form of entertainment that took place within it, *ludi teatrales* (theatrical games).

The devil’s association with this site and the activity that it housed provided the basis for the most vivid image of the theater in a medieval text. According to the textual rendition of this tale – by Roger of Wendover in his *Flores Historiarum* and by Ralph of Coggeshall in his *Visio Thurkilli relatore, ut videtur* – a *rusticus* by the name of Thurkill describes a vision he had in October 1206.⁶⁰ Led by Saint Julian, this modest and devout farmer witnesses examples of the fates that befall sinners. Peering from atop a nearby wall, Thurkill perceives

some of these punishments. What are described as *ludi theatrales* take place in a walled structure, the periphery of which is lined by iron benches, from which burning-hot nails protrude. The sinners are called from these rows of seats to the playing area at the center. There they must reenact their sins before the audience of other sinners and demons. The distribution of space, the furnishings, and the placement of the audience and “actors” resemble the Roman theater as known through the accounts of Tertullian and Isidore of Seville.⁶¹

Gauthier de Coinci (1177–1236), in one of the *Miracles of the Virgin*, further characterizes the nature of the activity that takes place in a theater. In his version of the popular legend, a Jew tempts the jealous cleric Theophilus by leading him to a clearing in the forest outside of the city.⁶² In this “theater,” Theophilus signs a pact with Lucifer, which is later forgiven through the Virgin’s intervention. Lucifer’s falsity, as exemplified in his duplicitous pact with Theophilus, resembles the fraudulence of the activity he sponsors and in which he participates. The nature of the site and the spectacle that takes place there is characterized negatively on three counts: it is the abode of the devil, the domain of the Jew, and a place of immoral sexual behavior. Jean Pucelle’s miniature accompanying a fourteenth-century manuscript of the *Miracles of the Virgin* in turn visualizes the nature of the performance that took place in this site (Figure 3).⁶³ Enframed by a rocky landscape, the demons, encircling Lucifer, the Jew, and Theophilus, gesture with exaggerated and frenetic movements, accompanied by music. Such images strengthened the perception of practices in theaters as the devil’s entertainment and, by association, characterized them as frivolous and fraudulent.

The wild gestures of the participants in this spectacle, on the one hand, and their association with either sexual promiscuity or the devil, on the other, were incorporated into pictures of the theater of ancient Rome. For instance, the frontispiece of the fifteenth-century Parisian manuscript of the *Comedies*, given to John of Berry as a New Year’s present in 1407, draws on this pictorial vocabulary to express the figural performance of the masked actors (Figure 4). Their exaggerated gestures and dynamic motions recall the antics of the demons and their distribution in a semicircle around Calliopius echoes the arch of demons around Lucifer in Jean Pucelle’s miniature. These masked performers also reveal what is either their genitals or a mask covering and resembling them, a detail that can be read as a literal interpretation of Tertullian’s association of the theater space with sexual promiscuity, as a visualization of accounts of the phallic masks of Roman comedy, or as a comment on the sexual content of Terence’s *Comedies*. The characterization of these performers thereby alluded to the morally suspect nature of the *Comedies* and their performance tradition in Antiquity.⁶⁴

The woodcut included in the earliest printed *Terence*, produced in Lyon in 1493, calls attention more directly to the sexual promiscuity associated with



FIGURE 3. Jean Pucelle, *Miracle of Theophilus*, miniature from *Les Miracles de Nostre Dame*, Paris, ca. 1330–1340 (Paris, BnF, MS N.A.F. 24541, fol. 8 verso).

this performance tradition (Figure 5). As in Jean de Berry's manuscript, a picture of a theater precedes the first play. The exterior wall of this building identifies it as a *theatrum*, below which appears the word *fornices*. *Fornices* can mean "arches" and would in this sense refer to the architectural foundation of the theater's physical structure. However, another meaning of *fornices*, invoked by both Tertullian and Isidore, was "brothel."⁶⁵ The embracing couples that move around the lower level of the building illustrate the function of *fornices* in this sense. Consequently, the Lyon print underscores the association between the theater and commercial sex that is assumed in one of the medieval meanings of theater as brothel.

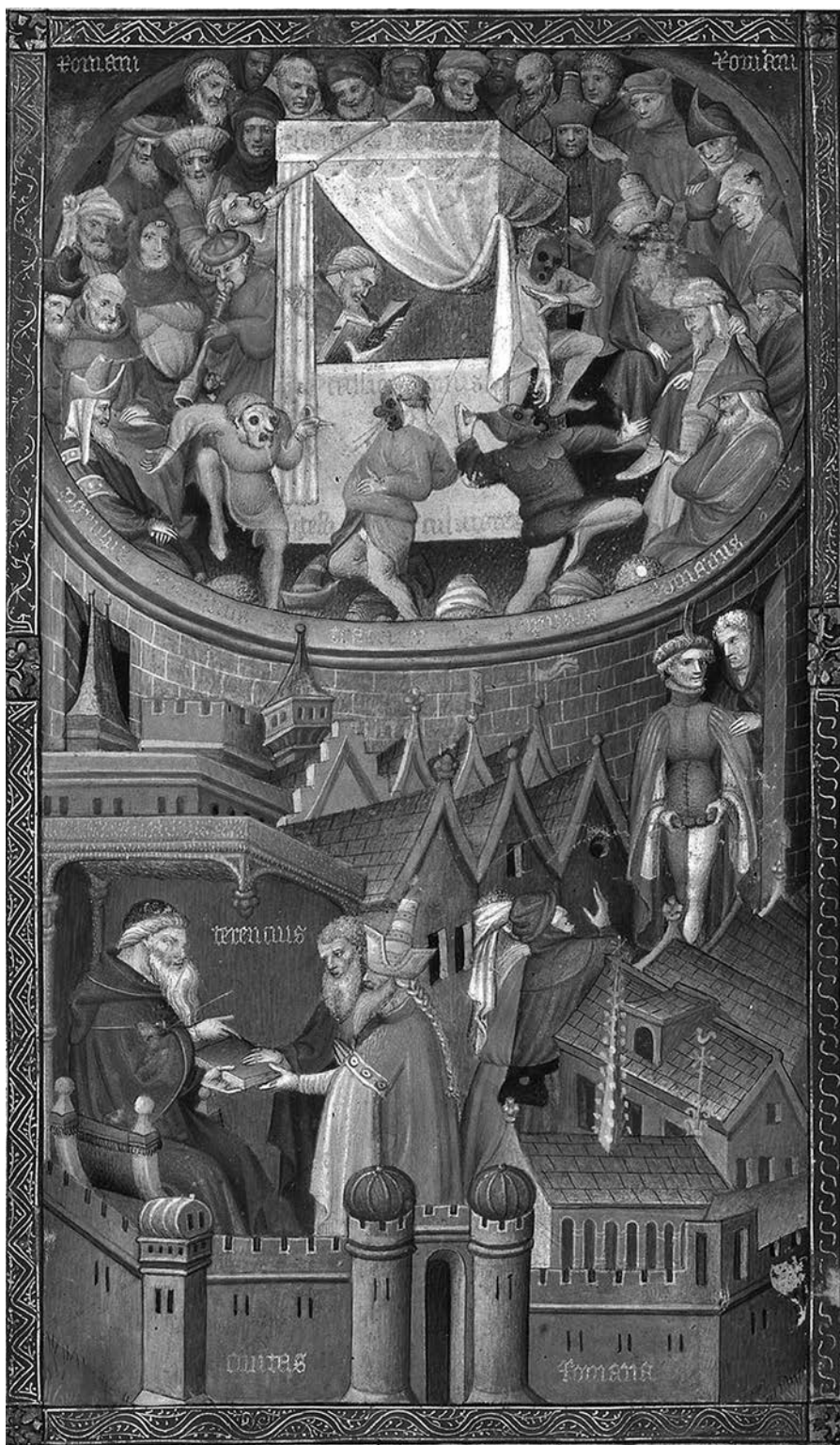


FIGURE 4. The Roman theater and Terence giving his book to Calliopius, full-page miniature in the manuscript of Terence's *Comedies* made for John, Duke of Berry, 1407 (Paris, BnF, MS lat. 7907A, fol. 2 verso).



FIGURE 5. *Theatrum*, introductory woodcut for Terence (Publius Terentius Afer), *Comoediae* (Lyon: Johann Trechsel, August 29, 1493), a4 verso.

The frontispiece in the illuminated *Terence* also emphasizes the proximity between the Roman theater and houses of prostitution (Figure 4). A fashionably dressed man is propositioned as he leaves the theater building. In the roughly contemporary illuminated *Terence* known as the *Térence des Ducs*, a woman peeks her head out of a window, suggesting the commercial function of the houses around this *theatrum*.⁶⁶ In each case the images incorporate references to the sexual promiscuity associated with the building and the cultural practice that took place within and around it, thereby reinforcing a negative association in the guise of documentary veracity.

The fifteenth-century painted and printed representations of the theater included in the texts of Terence's *Comedies*, in turn, maintained the legacy of a particular conception of the spatial configuration of the theater of Antiquity. The frontispiece of John of Berry's *Terence* draws on Isidore of Seville's description of the elements of the Roman theater and the vocabulary that defines it (Figure 4).⁶⁷ *Theatrum* is inscribed at the center of the upper edge of the wall that forms the circular enclosure housing the event. This building sits among rows of houses; men enter it through openings pierced through its walls. A boxlike structure at the center of the enclosure, labeled *scena*, is curtained on at least three sides. The front curtain is raised to reveal Calliopi^{us}, who reads from a codex; emerging from the side of the *scena* is a masked performer. Grouped around this structure is the audience, identified as the *populus Romanus*, which intermingles with the other masked performers, identified as *gesticulatores*. The woodcuts accompanying the printed versions of Terence separate the area devoted to the performance from that reserved for the audience (Figures 5–7).⁶⁸ In the Lyon print the audience sits in rows facing the stage, framed by the proscenium. The prints included in the *Terence* published in Strasbourg in 1496, and in the French translation published in Paris in 1496 and 1499, provide us with a privileged view into the *theatrum* (Figures 6–7). There, the audience, placed on an elaborate structure, peers down at the playing area. These images establish three features of the *theatrum*: that it is a building designed for performances; that it contains a discrete structure or area designated for performers, which is separated from the ones reserved for the audience; and that it is an object that can be represented.

The painted miniature, moreover, imposes a set of distinctions between a text and a performance. Calliopi^{us} sits on the *scena* at a remove from the *gesticulatores*. The words of the *Comedies* spoken by Calliopi^{us} are differentiated from the gestures of the masked performers, whose exaggerated dance accompanies his reading of the text. This spatial arrangement visualizes the medieval understanding of Roman comedy as produced in “dumb show” and establishes a distinction between text-based and improvisational forms of performance. The text, moreover, is associated with a space at a remove from the *theatrum*. Differentiated from this building is the enclosed structure where Terence



FIGURE 6. *Theatrum*, introductory woodcut for Terence (Publius Terentius Afer), *Comoediae* (Strasbourg: Johann Grüninger, November 1, 1496).

presents his volume to two men. Although the woodcuts included in the printed versions omit the figures of both Terence and Calliopius, an author portrait of the editor of the *Comedies*, Guido Juvenalis, precedes the Lyon *theatrum* (Figure 8). Through this visual splitting of the site of performance from the compilation of the written text, the printed *Terence* confirms the distinction made visually in the *Terence* manuscript, in which Terence



FIGURE 7. *Le Theatre*, introductory woodcut for *Térence en François* (Paris: Anthoine Vêrard, 1496).



FIGURE 8. Guido Juvenalis in his study, title page for Terence (Publius Terentius Afer), *Comoediae* (Lyon: Johann Trechsel, August 29, 1493).

composes his text in a building separate from the *theatrum*. Thus these images sketch the trajectory of a tradition in which a written text is composed and circulated independently from its site of performance.

REVISING THE HISTORY OF THE MEDIEVAL THEATER

All too often images like these have been taken at face value as culturally determined but nevertheless genuine attempts to document the classical past. The theater to which they refer has been uprooted from its links to contemporary performance practices, on the one hand, and to their reception by later generations, on the other. Their moralizing agenda has been overlooked, misunderstood, or trivialized; it seems natural to locate performance events within the fixed sites they describe. Thus another goal of this book is to elucidate the role played by pictures that frame and characterize performances within the antiquarian conception in the making of what came to be known as the medieval theater.

The medieval theater did not emerge solely within an intellectual project to reconstruct the past or between the bindings of books. Its acceptance as a

historically and descriptively accurate characterization of a tradition of urban and court performance was firmly rooted in, and resulted from, a broader set of historical circumstances. As Jody Enders has forcefully argued, the history of the medieval theater came into being, flourished, and diminished in conjunction with the history of Catholic France.⁶⁹

In the first place, the adoption of a word marked by its association with an enclosed building to describe expansive urban performances was made possible by the progressive limitations imposed on such performances from the start of their popularity. In 1383, Charles VI prohibited all public guild meetings, occasions during which their members staged live scenarios.⁷⁰ This first edict was followed twenty years later by one in which the same king officially recognized the Confraternity of the Passion and granted them permission to stage plays, albeit within a series of buildings.⁷¹ The French kings continued to regulate such performances into the sixteenth century, although it was the Parliament of Paris that passed the final prohibition on large-scale plays of religious subject matter in 1548.⁷² The ever-tightening restrictions on these performances aligned them more closely with the architectural site associated with the theater of Antiquity, thereby creating the conditions in which the word did not seem anachronistic.

Such regulations paralleled, in turn, what was a larger conversation about the societal and religious implications of these performances that incorporated a moralizing critique of the classical theater. Royal representatives and religious reformers reiterated purposefully or inadvertently the terms and language of this critique to denigrate contemporary performances. They invoked the devilish characters that populate them. They argued that the fraudulence of these performances contrasted with the truthfulness of those that took place in churches. They asserted that the audience mistook these fictions for reality. And they condemned the violent, bawdy, and unruly nature of these performances, or, alternately, of their audiences. Their characterization of this performance tradition laid the foundation for what had been a moralizing critique of another tradition being grafted onto the “medieval theater.”

The conditions that established “medieval theater” as a term that could encompass a range of performance practices also derived from the religious conflict that reached a new level of intolerance and cruelty in the mid-sixteenth century. To show how some of these factors came together, Chapter 5 turns to a print that claims to represent the successful exorcism of a young woman in the cathedral of Laon in 1566. Because the accompanying text self-consciously situates the event within an anti-Huguenot polemic, this chapter anchors my discussion of the connections between the history of performance and the circumstances of the Wars of Religion. The devil’s appearance brings together in complex and contradictory ways the two performance traditions – contemporary and antiquarian – whose trajectory this book traces. But in the

claim that this performance represents a divinely sanctioned truth and not the man-made artifice of a play, the print distances itself from both traditions.

As exorcism became associated with medieval superstition, such a claim of the truth of an event and an audience's belief in it was displaced onto assumptions about medieval audiences.⁷³ The framing of the Laon exorcism naturalized a series of spatial divisions and architectural limits that fixed the temporal and spatial expansiveness of performances within a picture. Like many other images, this exorcism picture solidified an association between the devilish and bawdy figures associated negatively with Antiquity and a medieval performance tradition. In a final stage of its history, the picture was used as an illustration of the staging of medieval drama. The print thereby allows us to chart the process through which an anachronistic play-going experience was imposed on a medieval performance tradition and its audience.

How effectively pictures imposed the moralizing critique of the classical theater on medieval performance practices is striking if we turn to Jean Fouquet's famous *Martyrdom of Saint Apollonia* (Figure 9).⁷⁴ In the midst of the crowd of performers distributed in the central playing area are costumed devils and fools, whose exaggerated gestures and exposed genitalia combine the two components of a critique of the performers of the ancient past. The association between the sites of such performances and sexual promiscuity is, in turn, confirmed through the kissing couple situated just to the left of the hell mouth. The tortured body of the saint at the center of the miniature was the appropriate topic for a culture that delighted in spectacles of violence, like those Tertullian describes. And it is this tradition that the miniature of the saint's torture draws on, as Gordon Kipling argues, rather than Fouquet's knowledge and experience of contemporary dramatic performances.⁷⁵ For generations of scholars, however, Fouquet's miniature has been considered to represent the staging of a late medieval mystery play.

It is through the lens of Fouquet's miniature and the Valenciennes frontispiece that medieval theater became a discrete artistic practice, one that took place within a confined performance site. Both pictures featured prominently in the first two exhibitions devoted to the topic: sections of the Universal Exhibition of 1878 and the International Exhibition of 1937, both held in Paris. The miniature and drawing also were the basis for three-dimensional models, which rendered tangible for its audience the physical contours and organization of the staging of medieval drama (Figures 10–11). The Valenciennes frontispiece even became life-size for some audiences in the 1930s, when it served as the blueprint for the stage set of a Théophilien performance, directed by Gustave Cohen.⁷⁶ A third exhibition in 1960 returned to these two pictures and incorporated them into a larger interdisciplinary project on the social significance of the space of the medieval theater.⁷⁷ Within this framework, the pictures represent two options available to contemporary organizers:

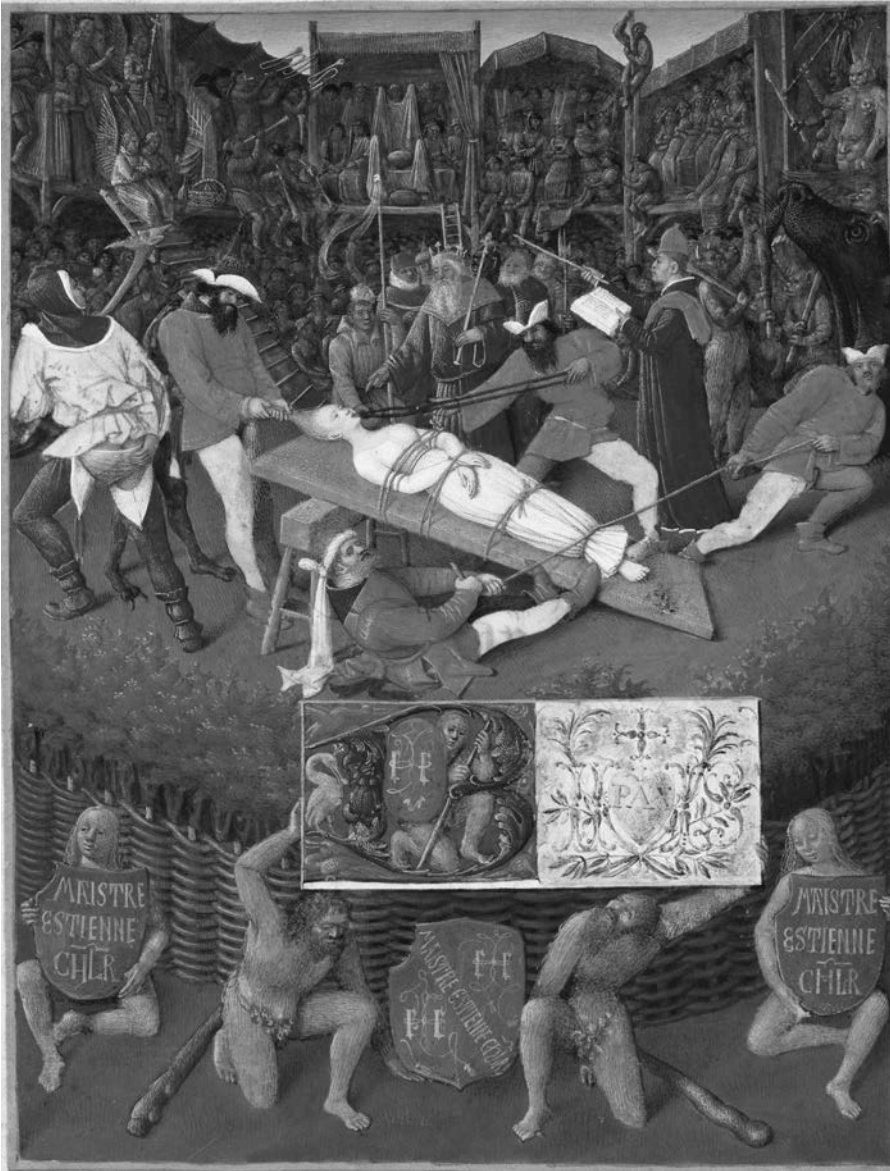


FIGURE 9. Jean Fouquet, *The Martyrdom of Saint Apollonia*, *Livre d'Heures d'Étienne Chevalier*, ca. 1445 (Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS fr. 71, fol. 39).

Fouquet presents what was identified as the medieval “theater in the round”; the Valenciennes frontispiece depicts its linear platform stage. They also confirm flamboyantly the character of this theater: it is violent, bawdy, and filled with unruly devils. Given the continued reliance on these pictures to illustrate what is still referred to as the medieval theater, their legacy has been significant.

The consequences of distancing ourselves from this theater are also great. We can expose how a model of “realism” and “affective devotion” has limited our understanding of late medieval representational practices and spectatorship,



FIGURE 10. Model presented at the Universal Exposition in Paris, 1878. Paris, Opera de Paris (Palais Garnier).



FIGURE 11. Illustration from the visitors' guide to the International Exposition in Paris, 1937 (*Le théâtre en France au moyen-âge: catalogue guide illustré* [Paris: Éditions Denoël, 1937], fig. 28, p. 10).

and we can show how this model derives largely from retrospective characterizations of an earlier tradition that substantiated a history of Catholic France. We can revise how we discuss art and theater by questioning the media distinctions that are always already incorporated into the discussion and that have become reified in our contemporary disciplinary boundaries. Finally, we can begin to unravel the interconnected strands that a late medieval performance tradition comprised and to describe some aspects of its distinct fictionality. The first chapter starts here, as we turn to one of the most innovative and elusive visual art forms of this tradition, what its makers called *personnages*.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

- 1 Josette Féral, "Forward," in "Theatricality," special issue, *SubStance* 31.2/3 (2002): 5.
- 2 Katel Lavéant, *Un théâtre des frontières: la culture dramatique dans les provinces du Nord aux XVe et XVIe siècles* (Orléans: Paradigme, 2011), 9–13; Elodie Lecuppre-Desjardin, *La ville des cérémonies: Essai sur la communication politique dans les anciens Pays-Bas bourguignons* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 4–10; Peter Arnade, *Realms of Ritual: Burgundian Ceremony and Civic Life in Late Medieval Ghent* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996); Bart A. M. Ramakers, *Spelen en figuren: Toneelkunst en processiecultuur in Oudenaarde tussen Middeleeuwen en Moderne Tijd* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996).
- 3 Willibald Sauerländer, "Mâle, Émile," in *Dictionnaire critique des historiens de l'art actifs en France de la Révolution à la Première Guerre mondiale*, eds. Philippe Sénéchal and Claire Barbillon (Paris: Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, 2009), www.inha.fr/fr/ressources/publications/dictionnaire-critique-des-historiens-de-l-art/male-emile.html. "Mâle, Émile," in Institut national d'histoire de l'art, *Dictionnaire critique des historiens de l'art actifs en France de la Révolution à la Première Guerre mondiale*, www.inha.fr/spip.php?article2433. Émile Mâle (1862–1954), *La construction de l'œuvre: Rome et l'Italie. Actes de la table ronde qui s'est tenue à l'École française de Rome les 17 et 18 juin 2002* (Rome: École française de Rome, 2005) (*Collection de l'École française de Rome*, 345). On Cohen, please see Helen Solterer, "Jouer le Moyen Âge: Gustave Cohen et la Troupe Théophilienne," in *Les Pères du théâtre médiéval: Examen critique de la constitution d'un savoir académique*, eds. Marie Bouhaïk-Gironès, Véronique Dominguez, and Jelle Koopmans (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2010), 255–281; Helen Solterer, *Medieval Roles for Modern Times* (College Park: Penn State University Press, 2010).
- 4 Émile Mâle, "Le renouvellement de l'art par les 'mystères,'" *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 3rd series, 31 (1904): 89–106, 215–230, 283–301, 379–394; Émile Mâle, *L'Art religieux de la fin du moyen âge en France: Étude sur l'iconographie du moyen âge et sur ses sources d'inspiration* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1908), 3–74 (*Religious Art in France. The Late Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Iconography and Its Sources*, trans. Marthiel Mathews [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986], 35–80).
- 5 Gustave Cohen, *Histoire de la Mise en Scène dans le Théâtre Religieux Français du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Champion, 1906), 104–134; Gustave Cohen, "The Influence of the Mysteries on Art in the Middle Ages," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 24 (July–Dec. 1943): 328.
- 6 Pierre Francastel, "Un mystère parisien illustré par Uccello: le miracle de l'Hostie d'Urbino," *Revue Archéologique* 39 (Apr.–June 1952): 180–191; "Imagination plastique, vision théâtrale et signification humaine," *Journal de Psychologie Normale et Pathologique* 46.2 (1953): 157–187; "Mise en Scène et Conscience: le diable dans la rue à la fin du Moyen Âge," in *Cristianesimo e Ragion di Stato. L'Umanesimo e il Demoniaci Nell'Arte*, ed. E. Castelli (Atti del II Congresso Internazionale di Studi Umanistici) (Rome: Fratelli Bocca, 1953), 195–204; and *La Figure et le Lieu: L'Ordre Visuel du Quattrocento* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967), 56–77.
- 7 Francastel, "Un mystère," 186.
- 8 Martin Stevens, "The Intertextuality of Medieval Art and Drama," *New Literary History* 22 (1991): 317–337; Pamela Sheingorn, "Drama and the Visual Arts: An Introductory Methodology," *Research Opportunities in Renaissance*

- Drama* 22 (1980): 101–109; Pamela Sheingorn, “Medieval Drama Studies and the New Art History,” *Mediaevalia* 18 (1995): 143–162; Véronique Plesch, “Words and Images in Late Medieval Drama and Art,” *Mediaevalia* 28 (2007): 25–55; Elina Gertsman, “The Loci of Performance: Art, Theater, Memory,” *Mediaevalia* 28 (2007): 119–135.
- 9 This alternate tradition draws on Johan Huijzinga’s integrated study of Burgundian culture: *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*, trans. Rodney J. Payton and Ulrich Mammitzsch (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).
 - 10 Mâle, *L’Art religieux*, 37.
 - 11 Cohen collaborated with Louis Réau for a book that in its title brought literature and visual art together; they were considered to be two facets of the “art” of the Middle Ages. Gustave Cohen and Louis Réau, *L’Art du Moyen Âge (Arts Plastiques. Art Littéraire) et La Civilisation Française* (Paris: La Renaissance du Livre, 1935). He worked with Henri Focillon and Henri Pirenne on a volume focusing on the eleventh through the fifteenth centuries for one of the multiple volumes devoted to the Middle Ages in a larger series: *L’Histoire du Moyen Âge*, vol. 6, *La Civilisation occidentale au Moyen Âge du XIe au milieu du XVe siècle*, in *L’Histoire Générale*, ed. Gustave Glotz (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1933). Réau explicitly critiqued Mâle’s focus on texts as a source of medieval pictures and as the key to their interpretation: “L’influence de la forme sur l’iconographie dans l’art médiéval,” *Journal de Psychologie Normale et Pathologique* 44 (Jan.–June 1951): 103.
 - 12 Léo van Puyvelde made a similar argument about the influence of late medieval theater on fifteenth-century painting but challenged the privileging of French mystery plays as impetus for artistic change: *Schilderkunst en toneelvertooning op het einde van de Middeleeuwen: een bijdrage tot de kunstgeschiedenis van de Nederlanden* (Ghent: A. Siffer, 1912), 12–19, 263–267. His book, which was never translated, did not dislodge Mâle’s reputation as founder of scholarship on medieval art and theater, nor did it alter the privileging of French mystery plays as source material for medieval artists within this scholarship.
 - 13 For a clear statement of this argument in art history, please see Lloyd Benjamin, “Disguised Symbolism Exposed and the History of Early Netherlandish Painting,” *Studies in Iconography* 2 (1976): 12, 11–24, and in theater history, see Gail Gibson, *The Theatre of Devotion: East Anglian Drama and Society in the Late Middle Ages* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989), particularly 67–106.
 - 14 For a summary of the various scholarly traditions that converge in their characterization of the realism of fifteenth-century Northern painting, please see Wessel Krul, “Realism, Renaissance and Nationalism,” in *Early Netherlandish Paintings: Rediscovery, Reception and Research*, eds. Bernhard Ridderbos, Anne van Buren, and Henk van Veen (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), 252–291. Otto Pächt, as well as more recent authors, stresses the terminological imprecision of the word “realism.” It is indeed, as Christopher Wood points out, a “congested debate” (Review of Craig Harbison, *Art Bulletin* 75.1 (1993): 174–180. Susie Nash comments on how “unreal” fifteenth-century Franco-Flemish artworks in fact are: *Northern Renaissance Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). Other scholars have refined a conceptual formulation of the terms “realism” and “naturalism” or have provided historical accounts of their emergence: for instance, Jean Givens, *Observation and Image-Making in Gothic Art* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Stephen Perkinson, *The Likeness of the King: A Prehistory of Portraiture in Late Medieval France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).
 - 15 Graham Runnalls, “Le Mystère Français: un Drame Romantique?,” in *Esperienze dello Spettacolo Religioso Nell’Europa Del Quattrocento* (Centro Studi sul Teatro Medioevale e Rinascimentale, Convegno di studi 16), eds. Maria Chiabò and Federico Doglio (Rome: Centro Studi sul Teatro Medioevale e Rinascimentale, 1992), 235–237, 240–241. For the devotional function of French Passion plays, please see Véronique Dominguez, *La Scène et la croix: Le jeu de l’acteur dans les Passions dramatiques françaises (XIVe–XVIe siècles)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 15–16, and on processional drama, please see Ramakers, *Spelen en figuren*, 224–237. As in art history, the use of the term “realism” has been productively analyzed and critiqued. To name a few examples: Martin Stevens, “Illusion and Reality in Medieval Drama,” *College English* 32.4 (Jan. 1971): 448–464; Rainer Warning, “On the Alterity of

- Medieval Drama,” *New Literary History* 10.2 (Winter 1979): 265–292; Jody Enders, “Performing Miracles: The Mysterious Mimesis of Valenciennes (1547),” in *Theatricality*, eds. Tracy C. Davis and Thomas Postlewait (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 40–64.
- 16 Ramakers, *Spelen en figuren*, 28–31.
- 17 This argument extends the conclusions of Susie Nash (see previously) and Lorne Campbell’s observation of Jan van Eyck’s “marvelous artifice” *National Gallery, The Fifteenth-Century Netherlandish Schools* (London and New Haven, CT: National Gallery Publications and Yale University Press, 1998), 204.
- 18 “Et mieulx et plus proprement fu fait et veu que en escript ne se puet mectre.” Roland Delachenal, ed., *Grandes Chroniques de France: Chronique des Règnes de Jean II et de Charles V* (Paris: Renouard, 1916), vol. 2, 242.
- 19 “Plus content est l’esprit/De veoir qu’ouyr; la chose qu’on veoit vifve, / Icele oyant, est plus apprehensive.” Jean Bouchet, *Epistle* 90, cited in Louis Petit de Julleville, *Histoire du Théâtre en France: Les Mystères* (Paris: Hachette, 1880), vol. 2, 125 (hereafter cited as *Les Mystères*); Jody Enders, *Death by Drama and Other Medieval Urban Legends* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 236.
- 20 “A pluseurs gens ont moult valu / Qui point n’entendent l’escriptures, / Exemples, histoires, pointures / faictes es moutiers, es palaix. / Ce sont les livres des gens laix. / En especial l’exemplaire / Des personnages leur doit plaire / Qui sont des fais de Jhesuscris, / Selonc que mectent les escrips / Et les livres de sainte Eglise / Ou nostre matere est comprinse, / Autmains pour la plus grant partie.” Arras, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 697, fol. 359 verso; Eustache Marcadé, “Édition de la *Vengeance Jesucrist* d’Eustache Marcadé: Ière, IIIème journée,” ed. Andrée Marcelle Fourcade Kail (PhD dissertation, Tulane University, 1957), 183.
- 21 On Gregory’s letters, please see Celia Chazelle, “Pictures, Books, and the Illiterate: Pope Gregory I’s Letters to Serenus of Marsailles,” *Word & Image* 6 (1990): 138–153. For the history of this argument and its application to medieval religious drama, see Rosemary Woolf, *The English Mystery Plays* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 86–101.
- 22 See, for instance, Maximilaan P. J. Martens, “Petrus Christus: A Cultural Biography,” in *Petrus Christus: Renaissance Master of Bruges*, ed. Maryan Ainsworth (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1994), 16–18. Lorne Campbell, “The Art Market in the Southern Netherlands in the Fifteenth Century,” *Burlington Magazine* 118.877 (Apr. 1976): 190; Fabienne Joubert, “Le mariage de Charles le Téméraire et Marguerite d’York et ses implications artistiques,” in *Kunst und Kulturtransfer zur Zeit Karls des Kühnen*, eds. Norberto Gramaccini and Marc Carl Schurr (Neue Berner Schriften zur Kunst 13) (Bern: Peter Lang, 2012), 117–125; Graham Runnalls, “Les Mystères à Paris et en Ile-de-France à la fin du Moyen Âge: L’Apport de six actes notariés,” *Romania* 119.1–2 (2001): 131–135.
- 23 For a history of the art of this period that shifts the focus from painting, please see Marina Belozerskaya, *Rethinking the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*. Individual studies include Lorne Campbell, “Rogier as a Designer of Works of Art in Media Other than Oil on Panel,” in *Rogier van der Weyden in Context*, eds. Lorne Campbell, Jan Van der Stock, Catherine Reynolds, and Lieve Watteeuw (Paris, Leuven, Walpole: Peeters, 2012), 22–43.
- 24 Jean Lestocquoy, “L’Atelier de Bauduin de Bailleul et la Tapisserie de Gédéon,” *Revue Belge d’Archéologie et d’Histoire de l’Art* 8.2 (Apr.–June, 1938), 119–124, 126, 130; Eva Tahon, *Lanceloot Blondeel in Bruges* (Bruges: Stichting Kunstboek, 1998), 11.
- 25 Philippe Guignard, “Mémoire fournis aux peintres chargés d’exécuter les cartons d’une tapisserie destinée à la collégiale Saint-Urbain de Troyes, représentant les légendes de St. Urbain et Sainte Cécile,” *Mémoires de la Société d’Agriculture, Sciences et Arts du département de l’Aube* 15 (1849–1850): 421–534, here 439; now reprinted with translation and introduction by Tina Kane: *The Troyes Mémoire: The Making of a Medieval Tapestry* (Rochester: The Boydell Press, 2010). On Desrey’s authorship of the directions to weavers, see Kane, *The Troyes Mémoire*, 2–7; Théophile Boutiot, *Histoire de la ville de Troyes et de la Champagne Méridionale* (Troyes: Dufey-Robert, 1874), vol. 4, 271; Henri Monceaux, “Les Le Rouge de Chablis,” *Bulletin de la Société des Sciences Historiques et*

- Naturelles de l'Yonne* 49 (1895): 241. On Desrey's contribution to the Troyes Passion, see Jean-Claude Bibolet, ed., *Le Mystère de la Passion de Troyes: Mystère de la Passion Notre Seigneur, Troyes XVe siècle*, vol. 1 (Geneva: Droz, 1987), xiv–xv; Théophile Boutiot, "Recherches sur le théâtre à Troyes au XVe siècle," *Mémoires de la société académique du département de l'Aube* 18 (1854): 446, 452.
- 26 Robert Martin, "Personnage," in *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français (1330–1500)* (DMF, 2012), www.atilf.fr/dmf, A.1; "Personnage" and "Étymologie et Historique," in *Trésor de la Langue Française* (Paris: Gallimard, 1988), vol. 13, 139, A.1.b, and vol. 3, 140, column 1.
 - 27 Robert Martin, "Vif," in *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français (1330–1500)* (DMF, 2012), www.atilf.fr/dmf, Article 2, I. A.4; I.B.1; II A.2; II.B; "Étymologie et Historique," in *Trésor de la Langue Française* (Paris: Gallimard, 1988), vol. 16, 1140, I.B, and B, 1141, column 1.
 - 28 Graham Runnalls, "Mystère 'représentation théâtrale': histoire d'un mot," *Revue de Linguistique Romane* 64 (2000): 321–345. He does not, however, mention that the word could also refer to pictures. For other contemporary uses of the term, see Robert Martin, "Mystère," in *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français (1330–1500)* (DMF, 2012), www.atilf.fr/dmf, C.2.
 - 29 Dominguez, *La scène et la croix*, 292.
 - 30 Noa Turel, "Living Pictures: Rereading 'au vif,' 1350–1550," *Gesta* 50.2 (2011): 163–182. Claudia Swan provides an account of the shift whereby the Dutch *het leven* came to mean "from life": "Ad vivum – naer het leven: From the Life," *Word and Image* 11 (1995): 353–372.
 - 31 Caroline van Eck and Stijn Bussels, "The Visual Arts and the Theatre in Early Modern Europe," in "Theatricality in Early Modern Art and Architecture," special issue, *Art History* 33.2 (April 2010): 208–223; Emmanuelle Hénin, *Ut pictura theatrum: théâtre et peinture de la renaissance italienne au classicisme français* (Villeneuve-d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires de Septentrion, 2003), 29–45.
 - 32 Meg Twycross, "The Theatricality of Medieval English Plays," in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre*, eds. Richard Beadle and Alan J. Fletcher, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 26–75; Martin Stevens, "Illusion and Reality in the Medieval Drama," *College English* 32 (1971): 448–464; Warning, "On the Alterity," 278–285; and Jean-Pierre Bordier, *Le jeu de la Passion: le message chrétien et le théâtre français (XIIIe–XVIe s.)* (Paris: Champion, 1998), 16–20.
 - 33 Although the word is often used merely to denote the characteristics of a given theater tradition, "theatricality" evolved as a conceptual and analytic tool of interpretation in the twentieth century. Georg Fuchs first used the term in 1909 to differentiate "stage-based" theater from other art forms: Georg Fuchs, *Die Revolution des Theaters: Ergebnisse aus dem Münchener Künstler-Theater* (Munich and Leipzig: G. Müller, 1909) (*Revolution in the Theatre: Conclusions Concerning the Munich Artists' Theater*, condensed and adapted by Constance Connor Kuhn [Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1972]). His project was pursued in the field of theater semiotics. With ever-increasing sophistication and nuance, scholars formulated the diverse components of stage-based theatricality, in which the human body occupies a privileged and complex position as a carrier of meaning. A few examples include: Patrice Pavis, *Dictionary of the Theatre*, trans. Christine Shantz (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998); Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Semiotics of Theater*, trans. Jeremy Gaines and Doris L. Jones (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1992); Josette Féral, "Theatricality," 94–108; and Jean Alter, *A Sociosemiotic Theory of Theater* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990).
 - 34 Gustave Cohen, *Le livre de conduite du Régisseur et le compte des dépenses pour le mystère de la Passion joué à Mons en 1501, publiés pour la première fois et précédés d'une introduction* (Publications de la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Strasbourg 23) (Strasbourg: Istra, 1925) and *Bibliothèque du XVe siècle* 30 (Paris: Champion, 1925).
 - 35 Cohen, *Histoire de la mise en scène* (1906); and *Histoire de la mise en scène dans le théâtre religieux français du Moyen Âge: Nouvelle édition, revue et augmentée* (Paris: Champion, 1926).
 - 36 Helen Solterer, "Performing Pasts: A Dialogue with Paul Zumthor," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 27.3 (Fall 1997): 599.
 - 37 Solterer, *Medieval Roles*, 93–155.
 - 38 Helen Solterer, "The Waking of Medieval Theatricality Paris 1935–1995," *New Literary History* 27.3 (1996): 357–390.

- 39 Roland Barthes, “Le théâtre de Baudelaire,” in *Essais Critiques* (Paris: Seuil, 1964), 41–47. The essay was first published in *Théâtre Populaire* 8 (Jul.–Aug. 1954): 45–52.
- 40 Paul Zumthor, *Essai de Poétique Médiévale* (Paris: Seuil, 1973): 37–39, 505, 507–509.
- 41 Paul Zumthor, *La Lettre et la Voix: de la “littérature médiévale”* (Paris: Seuil, 1987): 289.
- 42 For his use of the term in art criticism, see Michael Fried, “Art and Objecthood (1967),” in *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 148–172, and for his use of it in art historical interpretation, see *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).
- 43 Interestingly enough, when Fried confirms the historicity of his engagement with the term and turns to a period in which “theatricality” was a desired quality of paintings, he replaces the term with “address”: Michael Fried, *The Moment of Caravaggio* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 122.
- 44 It is also in the nineteenth century that the property “theatricality” first makes its appearance in French (1849) and in English (1820). “Théâtralité,” in Centre National de Ressources Textuelles et Lexicales, *Outils et Ressources pour un Traitement Optimisé de la Langue*, www.cnrtl.fr/definition/theatre; “Theatricality,” in *OED* XVII.1.
- 45 For the corpus of 231 French manuscript and printed mystery plays, please see Graham Runnalls, “Le Corpus du Théâtre religieux français du Moyen Âge,” <http://toisondor.byu.edu/finddp/corpus.html>.
- 46 On the German tradition, please see Rolf Bergmann, “Aufführungstext und Lesetext: Zur Funktion der Überlieferung des mittelalterlichen deutschen Dramas,” in *The Theatre in the Middle Ages*, eds. Herman Braet et al. (Louvain: Louvain University Press, 1985), 314–351; Hansjürgen Linke, “Versuch über deutsche Handschriften mittelalterlicher Spiele,” in *Deutsche Handschriften 1100–1400: Oxforder Kolloquium 1985*, eds. Volker Honemann and Nigel F. Palmer (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1988), 527–589. On the Dutch tradition, see Elsa Strietman, “The Low Countries,” in *The Theatre of Medieval Europe: New Research in Early Drama*, ed. Eckehard Simon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 225–252; and on the English tradition, see Alexandra F. Johnston, “An Introduction to Medieval English Theatre,” in Beadle and Fletcher, *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre*, 7–10. I thank Theresa Coletti for a discussion of the last manuscript tradition.
- 47 Dominguez, *La Scène et la croix*, 20–22.
- 48 *L’Instructif de la Seconde Rethorique* served as the introduction to the anthology of poems *Le Jardin de Plaisance et Fleur de Rethorique* (Paris: Anthoine Vérard, 1501), fol. c.i verso–c.ii verso; facsimile: Eugénie Droz and Arthur Piaget, eds., *Le Jardin de Plaisance et Fleur de Rhétorique* (Paris: Champion, 1924), vol. 1, fol. c.i verso–c.ii verso. Graham Runnalls, “Le Mystère Français,” 229–237, with the passage on *mystères* from *L’Instructif*, 242–244.
- 49 “Chascun qui en veult compiler.” *L’Instructif*, c.ii. Emmanuel Buron, “Faire en personnages: De la théorie de l’Instructif à la pratique du Jardin de plaisance,” *Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes* 21 (2011): 215–216.
- 50 Carol Symes, “The Appearance of Early Vernacular Plays: Forms, Functions, and the Future of Medieval Theater,” *Speculum* 77.3 (2002): 784, 787; and *A Common Stage: Theater and Public Life in Medieval Arras* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 4–5, 68.
- 51 Michel Rousse, *La scène et les tréteaux: Le théâtre de la farce au Moyen Âge* (Orléans: Paradigme, 2004), 197–206.
- 52 Carol Symes’s work has prompted me to consider how the history of a medieval French performance tradition was founded through the codification, streamlining, and exclusions the written record produced: “The Appearance,” 778–794, 813; *A Common Stage*, 13–20; “The Medieval Archive and the History of Theatre: Assessing the Written and Unwritten Evidence for Premodern Performance,” *Theatre Survey* 52.1 (2011): 29–58.
- 53 Carol Symes, “The Medieval Archive,” 32–34, 36–37. The careful and nuanced studies of performance communities by recent scholars make us less reliant on and more critical of these sources. See, for instance, Lavéant, *Un Théâtre des frontières*; Marie Bouhaik-Gironès, *Les clercs de la Basoche et le théâtre comique* (Paris, 1420–1550) (Paris: Champion, 2007); Susannah Crowder, “Performance Culture in Medieval Metz 200–1200” (PhD dissertation, City University of New York, Proquest, UMI Dissertation Publishing, 2008).

- 54 Donnalee Dox, *The Idea of the Theater in Latin Christian Thought: Augustine to the Fourteenth Century* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004); William N. West, *Theatres and Encyclopedias in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- 55 Marshall concludes:
- It seems to me clear on the basis of the mediaeval dictionary definitions and such mediaeval commentaries and glosses as I have been able to consult that throughout the middle ages, any place, usually but not necessarily out of doors, where public and secular entertainments were given – often public square or marketplace – might be called a theater. . . . The mediaeval dictionaries suggest the theatrum was a very inclusive word, most familiar in its most general meaning, place for sights.
- Mary H. Marshall, “Theatre in the Middle Ages: Evidence from Dictionaries and Glosses,” *Symposium* 4.1 and 4.1 (1950): 1–39 and 366–389, here 382.
- 56 “Theatre, theater,” in *OED* XVII. 1.a. (Chaucer, ca. 1374, and Wyclif in 1382); “Théâtre,” in Émile Littré, *Dictionnaire de la Langue Française* (Paris: Hachette, 1877), vol. 4, 2214, column 1 (Oresmus, *Thèse de Meunier* [1372–1374]); and in the *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français* (1330–1500) (Raoul de Presles, *Cité de Dieu* [1371–1375]), www.atilf.fr/dmf.
- 57 Dino Bigongiari demonstrates that the antiquarian use of the term appeared most commonly in quotations of ancient texts and that they were used metaphorically and/or for moralizing purposes: “Were There Theaters in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries?,” *Romanic Review* 37.3 (1946): 201–224.
- 58 Tertullian, “De Spectaculis,” in *Tertullian: Apology, de Spectaculis, with an English Translation by T.R. Glover* (London and New York: William Heinemann, and G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1931 [1977]), 256–259. For the use of the word *theatrum* to mean “brothel” in medieval texts, see Marshall, “Theatre,” 377, 381.
- 59 Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi, *Etymologiarum sive originum, libri XX*, ed. W. M. Lindsay (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911 [1971]), vol. II, XVIII, lix; Stephen A. Barney, W. J. Lewis, J. A. Beach, and Oliver Berghof, with the collaboration of Muriel Hall, trans., *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), xviii, lix, 370–371.
- 60 Roger of Wendover, *Chronica, sive Flores historiarum*, ed. Henry O. Coxe (London: English Historical Society, 1841), vol. 3, 190–209; H. L. D. Ward, ed., “The Vision of Thurkill, Probably by Ralph of Coggeshall, Printed from a MS in the British Museum,” *The Journal of the British Archeological Association* 31 (1875): 420–459; “Thurkill’s Vision” in Eileen Gardiner, ed., *Visions of Heaven and Hell before Dante* (New York: Italica Press, 1989), 219–236.
- 61 As Bigongiari states, “The ingenious and original trait of Roger of Wendover’s vision is that the imagined diabolical tortures are set in a place which has always been regarded as a favorite abode of the Devil – the Theater.” Bigongiari, “Were There Theaters?,” 215.
- 62 V. Frédéric Koenig, ed., *Les miracles de nostre dame par Gauthier de Coincy* (Geneva: Droz, 1955), vol. 1, 68.
- 63 Henri Focillon, *Le Peintre des Miracles de Notre-Dame* (Paris: Paul Hartmann, 1950), 32–33.
- 64 This detail supports Meiss’s reading of the illumination: Millard Meiss, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry: The Limbourgs and Their Contemporaries*, text volume (New York: Braziller, 1974), 41–54.
- 65 Isidore, *Etymologiae*, X, iii, in Barney et al., *The Etymologies*, 219. Mary Marshall mentions this association in a note (“Theatre,” 388n144); thanks to Mary Beard for discussion of this Latin terminology.
- 66 Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, MS 664.
- 67 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), MS lat. 7907A; Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, MS 664. Meiss, *French Painting*, 41–54; Anne D. Hedeman, “Laurent de Premierfait and the Visualization of Antiquity,” in *Medieval Manuscripts, Their Makers and Users: A Special Issue of Viator in Honor of Richard and Mary Rouse* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 27–50.
- 68 “Guidonis Juvenalis natione Cenomani in Terentium familiarissima interpretatio cum figuris unicuique scaenae praepositis” (Lyon: Jean Trechsel, 1493).
- 69 Enders, *Death by Drama*, 2.
- 70 Graham Runnalls, “The Manuscript of the Miracles de Nostre Dame par personnages,” *Romance Philology* 22.1 (1968): 17.
- 71 Graham Runnalls, “La Confrérie de la Passion et les Mystères: Recueil de Documents

- Relatifs à l'Histoire de la Confrérie de la Passion depuis la fin du XIVe jusqu'au milieu du XVIe siècle," *Romania* 122 (2004): 142–144.
- 72 Runnalls, "La Confrérie," 135–201.
 - 73 Marianne Closson, *L'Imaginaire démonique en France (1550–1650): genèse de la littérature fantastique* (Geneva: Droz, 2000), 15, 25; Jean Delumeau, *La Peur en Occident* (Paris: Fayard, 1978), 232–253.
 - 74 Henri Rey-Flaud, *Le Cercle Magique: Essai sur le théâtre en rond à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), 113–136; Philip Butterworth, "Jean Fouquet's 'The Martyrdom of St Apollonia' and 'The Rape of the Sabine Women' as Iconographical Evidence of Medieval Theatre Practice," *Leeds Studies in English New Series*, 29 (1998): 54–67; Graham Runnalls, "Jean Fouquet's 'Martyrdom of St. Apollonia' and the Medieval French Stage," *Medieval English Theater* 19 (1999): 81–100; Véronique Dominguez, "La Scène et l'enluminure: L'Apolline de Jean Fouquet dans le livre d'heures d'Étienne Chevalier," *Romania* 122 (2003): 468–505.
 - 75 Kipling concludes that in this miniature, Fouquet is "interested in the theatre as homiletic subject matter rather than as contemporary object." Gordon Kipling, "Theatre as Subject and Object in Fouquet's 'Martyrdom of St. Apollonia,'" *Medieval English Theater* 19 (1997): 66.
 - 76 Gustave Cohen, "Notes sur la mise en scène," in Rutebeuf, *Le Miracle de Théophile*, transposed by Gustave Cohen (Paris: Librairie Delagrave, 1934), 53.
 - 77 The focus of their discussion became the tangible organization of performances as a mirror of the organizing structures of medieval society. Henri Rey-Flaud and Élie Konigson considered the medieval theater to be a definable entity whose structure offered the interpreter access to the spatial conception that structured the society in which it was performed. For Henri Rey-Flaud, the circular format of the stage, exemplified in Fouquet's miniature, recreated a cosmic order; for Élie Konigson, the variety of staging formats operated to unify different groups within medieval society and, in turn, confirmed an ideal sacred unity. Rey-Flaud, *Le Cercle Magique*; Élie Konigson, *L'Espace théâtral médiéval* (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1975).
- "VOCAMUS PERSONAGIAS"
- 1 Alexandre Tuetey, ed., *Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris 1405–1449, publié d'après des manuscrits de Rome et de Paris* (Paris: Champion, 1881), 291.
 - 2 "À la fontaine des Frères Jacobins, se trouvaient divers personnages, contrefaits à la manière des statues, représentant tous ensembles la sainte naissance de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ." Eлоdie Lecuppre-Desjardin, *La Ville des Cérémonies: Essai sur la communication politique dans les anciens Pays-Bas Bourguignons* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 391.
 - 3 Léo van Puyvelde, "Het Ontstaan van het Modern Tooneel in de Oude Nederlanden: De Ouste Vermeldingen in de Rekeningen," *Verslagen en Mededeelingen der Koninklijke Vlaamsche Academie voor Taal-en Letterkunde* (1922): 918, 928.
 - 4 "Que quien quisiera ver un tapiz de figuras bivas." Juan Cristobal Calvete de Estrellas, *El felicísimo viaje del muy alto y muy poderoso Príncipe don Felipe* (Antwerp: Martin Nucio 1552), fol. 82 recto
 - 5 Bernard Guenée and Françoise Lehoux, *Les Entrées royales françaises de 1328 à 1515* (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1968), 26. Lecuppre-Desjardin, *La Ville*, 120, 183–193, 197, 259–291.
 - 6 See Dagmar Eichberger, "The Tableau Vivant – An Ephemeral Art Form in Burgundian Civic Festivities," *Parergon* 6 (1988): 37–64; and Philine Helas, *Lebende Bilder in der italienischen Festkultur des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Akademie, 1999), among others.
 - 7 *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., *The Compact OE Dictionary: Complete Text Reproduced Micrographically* (Oxford and New York: Clarendon Press and Oxford University Press, 1991), 1997; "Disposition des acteurs de façon à reproduire, à suggérer des tableaux célèbres ou des événements historiques," in *Trésor de la Langue Française* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), vol. 15, 1295, left column, 2b; Littré: "Groupes de personnages vivants représentant, par leur attitude et leur costume, des tableaux plus ou moins célèbres, des sujets historiques, etc." Émile Littré, *Dictionnaire de la langue française* (Paris: Hachette, 1877), vol. 4, 2513, second column, definition 6. The earliest use of the term *tableau vivant* is clouded with confusion. I have found no reference to the first appearance of the term in French dictionaries. The OED