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What are we to make of a book that welcomes us with the words “For example”? These are the opening words of Joe Kelleher’s new book—surprisingly, his first full-length monograph, given his many contributions to the field. The reader joins Kelleher mid-sentence and is immediately folded into the description of an event (in this case, Rosemary Lee’s *Melt Down* [2011]) without yet knowing of what this event is being held as an example. It’s a captivating opening, at once energized with the heady sensorium of this (or any) event’s liveness, and simultaneously provisional and tentative, qualified by Kelleher’s acknowledgement of his own subjectivity. And it’s also an opening that encapsulates the approach of the book as a whole: each chapter begins with a particular detail, joining the action as it is already under way, and somehow feeling a little bit late for it. Such a formal structure mirrors the temporal lag that Kelleher describes as characterizing his central subject, the theatrical image and its apprehension, which for Kelleher “may require the spectator [...] to work things out retrospectively, to replay the performance after the event” (4). This book, then, is a series of such replays: “I remember, and, as I do so, I try to think through,” Kelleher writes (83).

These opening two words might also be read as a mini manifesto, for another way of describing this book would be to say that it is resolutely *for* example. That is to say, it takes meticulous care with the particular, the specific, in a way that refuses generalization: examples are taken not as exemplary nor as representative, but as distinctive specimens, their effect and efficacy totally bound up within the time and place of encounter as they meet the history and predilection of the spectator. From a small detail—the reference to a barking dog in a story Ernst Bloch tells Walter Benjamin (18–19), say, or the allusion to emperor and theatre maker Nero in the title of a production by Italian performance collective Kinkaleri (56–59)—Kelleher will draw an expanding spiral of connections, such that other theatrical encounters, ideas drawn from a wide range of fields of inquiry, and Kelleher’s own quirks of memory become equivalent interlocutors in a multilayered dramaturgy of thought. In his introduction, he describes this method in theatrical terms, in which each theoretical text will be introduced “like a character in a drama” (12); subsequent chapters are headed by what might be likened to a “cast list” that includes three or four performance works and literary or philosophical texts that will “appear” (so to speak) alongside each other.

At first impression, Kelleher’s performance examples are drawn from theatre’s margins—or places where theatre appears on the periphery of other fields of vision. By definition, UK artists Bock & Vincenzi’s *Invisible Dances* (2004–2006) withdrew itself from sight; and while Latvian director Alvis Hermanis has had several high-profile commissions for the Salzburg opera, his other projects with the New Riga Theatre require a more dedicated traveler to find them. In other chapters, Kelleher explores Søren Kierkegaard’s sorry pseudonymous creation who, in *Repetition* (1843), tries and fails to recreate a previous experience of the theatre; and elsewhere, he takes inspiration from the

fleeing witness in Nicolas Poussin's painting *Landscape with a Man Killed by a Snake* (1648). Similarly, the critical and philosophical references are often taken from unlikely or unfashionable corners of thought. To be sure, there are familiar touchpoints for the field, but there are also deliberate acts of recovery that suggest we are not quite done with modernity (nor it with us): for example, there are recurring appearances by Gillian Rose and Paul Ricoeur, two great thinkers of late modernity. And considerations of the workings of the image are informed by ideas beyond theatre studies, such as the media theory of Vilém Flusser (81–82), the speculative anthropology of Marie-José Mondzain (23–27), the art writings of T.J. Clark (160–63), and the phenomenological image theory of Lambert Wiesing (20–21).

In relation to this interest in marginality, one of the tasks that Kelleher sets for himself is that of reportage, aware that many of the performances he discusses “will be unknown and [...] unavailable for the reader” (12). And indeed, it is a delight to see so much careful attention given to the work of “drag fabulist” Dickie Beau, for example, as Beau is not yet widely known outside of London. On the other hand, such an undertaking feels less urgent in the case of Romeo Castellucci and Società Raffaello Sanzio, upon whom the final chapter is focused, as a substantial amount of scholarship (not least by Kelleher himself) has already addressed their work; but given the obvious relevance to Kelleher's theme of their piece *On the Concept of the Face, Regarding the Son of God* (2010), it seems unavoidable that it would be discussed here. And although Forced Entertainment might be equally low on a list of companies needing rescue from obscurity, their work is put to unusually moving service in a chapter that assembles them alongside Split Britches, Wendy Houstoun, and others, for a reflection on recognition, friendship, and loss.

Despite this explicit focus on the margins, however, what emerges as Kelleher's subject is nothing less than theatre itself, still with us, as both metaphor and practice, despite its anachronisms and contradictions—indeed, perhaps it persists precisely because of them. As Kelleher describes it, theatre might be likened to “a self-remembering apparatus” that “has been suffering (or should that be enjoying?) its own post-history for some while now” (82). Thus Plato's cave is rediscovered in Simon Vincenzi's *Operation Infinity* (90), and Castellucci gives us a vision of life as “perpetual rehearsal” (150). Theatre functions as the conceptual and literal place for the act of remembering images—but this is also the very act in which Kelleher is himself engaged. And so, his view of the theatre emerges as theatre itself does, as a series of scenes, rather than offering arguments or readings that can be extracted and applied elsewhere. Instead of a single source of illumination, we have a kind of kaleidoscope of shifting fragments that offer different perspectives on the machinery of the theatre, such that the writing itself adopts the theatre's kaleidoscopic capacities. Some readers might be frustrated by the absence of a consistent or connecting argument; even the title word “suffering” remains deliberately ambiguous and curiously passive, describing both the content of images and the spectator's relation to them. But those seeking a form of writing that can hold together the scholarly with the affective, and the performative with the philosophical, might well turn to this book, for example.