Talk about Landscapes: What There Is to Recognize*

ENOCH BRATER

Early on in the second act of *Waiting for Godot*, Estragon, a dog-eared Beckett bum who claims to have once been a poet ("Isn’t that obvious?")\(^9\), expresses considerable dismay at the un-"inspiring prospects" of what can only be described as a minimalist’s scène à faire: "Recognize! What is there to recognize? All my lousy life I’ve crawled about in the mud! And you talk to me about scenery! (Looking wildly about him.) Look at this muckheap!... You and your landscapes!" (39). Though the intrepid Vladimir urges him to "calm" himself by staying the course, critics of the play have, by and large, come round to Gogo’s assessment of his unenviable situation in this empty performance space. "A country road. A tree. Evening," the famous stage direction that sets the outdoor scene on a spare platform never dressed quite the same way before (3), would give even a visionary director like Peter Brook more than a moment’s pause (as it did so, indeed; witness his landmark productions of *King Lear* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* for the Royal Shakespeare Company, each in its own way an energetic response to the new *Godot* scenography, the former with a menacing touch of *Endgame* in the air).\(^1\) In Beckett’s play, there’s a tree, of course, with – lest we forget – its well-placed leaves added surreptitiously by a conscientious stagehand during the interval separating the not quite equally paced two acts. There’s a bit more to it than that, too: a mound, a pair (or two) of shoes that don’t quite fit; a radish, black; a supply of turnips; and one never-to-be-forgotten carrot that turns out to taste, well, like a carrot. Yet in comparison to Ibsen, one would have to admit, there’s not a lot here to

---

*This article was presented as a contribution to the “Samuel Beckett at 100” Distinguished Lecture Series at the University of Toronto, 24 March 2006.

*Modern Drama, 49:4 (Winter 2006) 501*
write home about. "The only thing I'm sure of," the playwright said of his players, reduced as they are to such a decrepit stage reality, "is that they're wearing bowler hats" (qtd. in Brater, Why Beckett 62).

Empty though it may be – but not "empty" in the sense the playwright will explore in his late, great works of the 1970s and 1980s – the set for Waiting for Godot is, nonetheless, filled with a material allure that is constantly seeking to redefine itself. The play "must have," as the German director Walter Asmus recently observed, "a conceivable, real background." This is not a form of recognition such as Aristotle discusses in The Poetics; for, in Godot, the anagnorisis of Greek drama is replaced by something much more elementary but no less dramatically complex: the virtue of setting, then resetting, the landscape of the stage with things seen, then unseen, on the place Pozzo thinks might very well be "the Board" (55). What there is to recognize in this diminished space might be best understood by considering the dynamics of the various landscapes struggling to impose themselves, suggestively, on the audience's imagination. These might be outlined as follows:

- the stark but richly articulated exterior scene we see before us on the stage
- landscapes that serve as the setting for offstage action
- pictures of some other world that can only be imagined
- landscapes from the past, which serve to illuminate the back story the characters (more or less) remember.

Negotiations here will be very much to the point, Gogo's frustration notwithstanding.

Let us begin with "the local situation," the kinetic image of waiting Beckett creates on a single set, as the curtain slowly rises on his "twilight" drama (if, indeed, there is to be a curtain; Beckett was certainly thinking of one in 1953, when Godot opened on the intimate box-set of the Théâtre de Babylone on the boulevard Raspail in Paris [Cohn 134–80]). Positioned onstage with much precision and authority, that image will prove to be remarkably flexible, at times even unstable, as the dramatic action, such as it is, begins to unfold. Gogo and Didi repeatedly examine the haunting stage image to which this play has them tied, or rather, in their case, "tied" (14); eminent interlocutors that they are, they're suspicious, like Pozzo, even of its manufactured sky, "qua sky" (25); and, like the characters in another great Irish play, Yeats's Purgatory, they "study," among other things, "that tree" (Godot 10). And, as they do so, we do so, too; the landscape, initially taken as a given, is now placed in something like sharp relief, becoming the unexpected subject of mystery, even intrigue. Those boots, once black, turn out to be brown in the second act – though perhaps once a "kind of gray," they're now actually a "kind of
green” (43). But by that time, the tree, said to be a willow (“no more weeping” [10]) and later “not...the slightest use” to them has already been transformed. Didi scans the horizon; Gogo gazes into the distance (48). We watch in silence as all action is suddenly arrested, the better to evaluate the potential “beauty of the way,” if not “the goodness of the wayfarers,” as our act of looking is itself called into question (11). Dusk. “Will night never come?” The Irish novelist John Banville called Beckett “nothing if not an old style landscape writer” (Comments); for this playwright surely knows what such staged “twilights” can be made to do. Little wonder that great artists like Giacometti and Louis le Broquy have been so attracted to the design elements of this play.3

“Enter Pozzo and Lucky” – and when they do so, they quite overwhelm the discreet visual threshold previously established at the beginning of each act. “Reinforcements at last!” (49), they bring with them such a cornucopia of material – stage props, really – that one might, indeed, wonder if they have inadvertently ventured onto the wrong set of the wrong play on the wrong night. And yet they quickly establish their credentials as bona fide dramatis personae in the same waiting game, members “of the same species” (15), fated to play their parts, over and over again, in the same rep. They do so, however, in their own individual way, this time with bags, stool, whip, rope, half-hunter, pipe, vaporizer, napkin, chicken bones, and slobber. Lucky – Beckett said perhaps he was called Lucky because “he is lucky to have no more expectations” (Ackerley and Gontarski 329) has two additional tricks up his sleeve, thinking and dancing, though you will forgive me, I hope, if I present them here in reverse order. His bravura speech, the first of this play’s several monologues, threatens to upstage everything, not to mention everyone else, on Beckett’s stage; and his pathetic choreography in a dance called “The Hard Stool” (27) is an emblem for the “net” that finally ensnares them all. Foreground invades background; how the mood has changed. The same but different, “austerity” is hardly the word one would use to describe the blocking in this reconfigured stage space.

An even greater instability affecting the play’s atmosphere greets Gogo and Didi in Act Two, the so-said “Next day. Same time. Same place” (38). The same set of roped travelling companions also reappears, but they now move across the stage more slowly and more tentatively, and from the opposite direction. Perhaps this time, they have been expected by their louche hosts, but not in such a profoundly diminished state: Pozzo is “as blind as fortune” and his “knook” has been struck dumb, no explanations on offer (55). With the characters “accursed” by time (“When! When!” [57]) and haunted as much by absence as loss, the emotional resonance of this key scene upends all patterns previously established. And as the Boy, too, returns by the end of the play, telling us
what we already know, that Godot will not come, not now and perhaps never, he serves as the unwitting harbinger of darkness: the moon suddenly rises, artificial yet real, as the light of day on the landscape is now literally – but also poignantly – transformed. Repeating the same line Didi used at the end of Act One, Gogo, the agent of closure for the play, makes us “see” it now somewhat differently:

Let’s go.
They do not move.
Curtain. (60)

I spend some time here talking about this play’s modest but highly flexible landscape not so much to refute Gogo – far be it from me to enter into an argument with a stage character (no Tom Stoppard, I)* – but rather to draw attention to Godot’s remarkable visual display. In this drama, Beckett recovers the representational and lyrical functions of the stage, assimilating and disarming any minimalist scepticism. Candid and playful, each of the work’s “little” canters calls for the mise en scène to be arranged so deftly that we hardly notice its susceptibility to instability and reinvention. “Talk... about scenery!” (39) – especially in the hands of a skillful director and a sensitive lighting designer, Beckett’s set demands a heightened responsiveness to its various textures. What the play shows us is how much dramatic energy can be derived from a simple landscape, no matter how minimal the set may initially appear to be. “All true grace,” the playwright reminded Peter Hall when he directed Peggy Ashcroft in Happy Days at the National Theatre in London, “is economical” (qtd. in Brater, Why Beckett 66, 98).
of course, takes considerable liberties with such a device, especially when Beckett’s single set can no longer keep his characters where they have been initially placed. Unlike Sam Shepard, who has a belligerent brother pee all over his sister’s chicken in *Curse of the Starving Class*, Beckett has Vladimir run offstage to relieve himself, which he does more than once. His sidekick initially observes him from afar; but, on a subsequent go, this time to “end of the corridor, on the left,” he is joined in his vigil by Pozzo, who trenchantly observes, “having put on his glasses,” “Oh I say” (Beckett is, at this point in his career, by no means above potty humour) (23–24).

Yet this play’s most spectacular use of offstage action, and most puzzling, concerns nothing less than the tantalizing figure of Godot himself, about whom the characters have a great deal to say. To the questions, “Who or what is Godot?” we might very well want to add this one: just where is his offstage drama taking place? Didi asks the young messenger a lot of questions, but this is one item he never thinks of exploring. Does Mr. Godot have a beard? Is it fair or black? (It’s said to be “white”). Did you see two other men? What does he do, this Mr. Godot? (The answer: “nothing”). Perhaps it was your brother came yesterday? Who minds the sheep and who minds the goats? Where do the boys sleep? Are there are in fact two of them? (59). There’s a weighty meta-question, too: just where is this “Godin... Godet... Godot... anyhow you see who I mean” finally to be located (19)? In that same ambiguous space where we don’t see the goad in *Act without Words I*? We’re a long way now from those “great reckonings in little rooms” characteristic of Ibsen’s dramaturgy – well, maybe not such a long way after all; perhaps, this is really more of the same, only less (States).

Elsewhere in the Beckett canon, the use of offstage action can be similarly effective from a dramatic point of view but just as problematic. Clov exits the set to conduct his business in *Endgame’s* offstage kitchen, “ten feet by ten feet by ten feet” (“Nice dimensions, nice proportions” [2]), in a tight regimen that includes killing a rat before it dies (68). But when he takes another journey up a ladder to look out of one of the two windows featured in this interior scene (his “stiff, staggering walk” never makes this easy [1]), what he says he sees there cannot be certified in exactly the same way. His reported sighting of “a small boy,” a “potential procreator,” on the horizon may very well be less the occasion for “an underplot” than, as Hamm suspects, pure invention (78). For Hamm, in any case, all dramatic action remains, so to speak, offstage: he’s blind.

Krapp’s duet with a tape recorder in Beckett’s next play, *Krapp’s Last Tape*, the monologue he wrote for Patrick Magee, allows his actor to indulge in a number of unseen activities, though these are limited to the
opening moments of the play, when he retreats backstage to uncork a bottle or retrieve his dusty old dictionary. Winnie, no longer cursed with a similar mobility in *Happy Days*, is of the earth "earthy," planted as she is so majestically in a mound. Move over, Molly Bloom: here is the earth-mother figure to upstage any potential competitor, inside or outside the theatre. In the first act, Winnie's worried, justifiably, about overdoing it with "the handbag," even though this terrific prop provides her with the welcome illusion of a full day's schedule of activities. But behind that mound, and never completely seen by us, a number of peculiar activities are ongoing — and just as deliberately stagy:

(*Winnie* cranes back to look at *Willie*. Pause.) Oh really! (Pause.) Have you no handkerchief, darling? (Pause.) Have you no delicacy? (Pause.) Oh, Willie, you're not eating it! Spit it out, dear, spit it out! (Pause. Back front.) Ah well, I suppose it's only natural. (*Break in voice.*) Human. (42)

All of this in the midst of what will be *Happy Days*’s most extended use of offstage action, this one rendered, however, as some busy time remembered. The passage of Mr. Shower “or Cooker — no matter — and the woman — hand in hand” takes place somewhere beyond the “*pompierr trompe-l’oeil backcloth*” designed to represent the “unbroken plain and sky” that serves as the elegant but simple landscape for this second of Beckett’s plays to be set, symmetrically, out of doors (42, 7).

And yet it is the offstage action in *Waiting for Godot* that renders the playwright’s landscapes most deceptively dynamic. In a bold act of hybridization, Beckett shows his characters both onstage and off when he tightens the rope. And here I am by no means speaking figuratively. Pozzo’s entrance is delayed: he is, literally, at the end of his rope. At first — and this is crucial — we see only Lucky, attached to a taut noose and moving slowly, Robert Wilson-wise, as Pozzo, a ham actor waiting in the wings, prepares for his red-carpet entrance. “How did you find me?” he asks rather grandly later in the same scene. “I weakened a little towards the end, [perhaps] you didn’t notice?” (25). Their departure is just as strategic, as they move toward that place, too, where all other Beckett characters go: ON. Pozzo takes a running leap, backward now (it’s late in the game), as the unfortunate Lucky falls on his bags, exhausted — somewhere, someplace offstage.

It may come as somewhat of a surprise to discover that a dramatist so often celebrated for doing more and more with less and less should be credited with extracting so much dramatic potential from an age-old
Talk about Landscapes: What There Is to Recognize

convention like offstage action. Arthur Miller correctly observed that “a playwright like Beckett was always after a minimalist conceit,” though Beckett’s way of achieving it generally relied on a careful analysis of just how such an image might be structured to account for the stage’s specific requirements. Foremost among the specific techniques Beckett employs to evoke additional landscapes is his firm command of the richly descriptive vocabulary built into a play’s dialogue. And in Waiting for Godot, this vocabulary is profoundly literary. There is a complex allusive texture from the very opening lines, when Vladimir ponders the biblical hermeneutics of only “one of the four” reporting that “only one of the two” was saved (9). Estragon is more visually inclined. What he remembers from his catechism is the vaguely sentimentalized picture of a landscape, painted in something less than bold primary colours, though impressionistic all the same: “I remember the maps of the Holy Land. Coloured they were. Very pretty. The Dead Sea was pale blue. The very look of it made me thirsty. That’s where we’ll go, I used to say, that’s where we’ll go for our honeymoon. We’ll swim. We’ll be happy” (8). Biblical landscapes mapped out like this, of course, can only be imagined, however may be filtered through centuries of depiction in European painting. Beckett’s characters draw upon such pictorial imagery liberally, though unselfconsciously; and, as they do so, they expand the visual range of his drama as a whole. On Golgotha “they crucified quick” (34); and, when Gogo compares himself to Christ, he envisions him walking barefoot, just as he, himself, plans to do. Needless to say, in this rendering, neither figure will be wearing sandle – “‘No laces, no laces” (44).

Pictures drawn from the characters’ own past will be featured in even more prominent detail. The Macon country, which Didi wants to remember but Gogo can’t or won’t, was the geographic centre for the couple’s grape-harvesting (39). In the English version of the play, Didi can no longer summon up the exact name of the place nor even recall the name of the man they worked for. In En attendant Godot, however, the memoir is set more circumstantially in the Vaucluse/“Merdecluse,” where the proprietor is said to have been the actual farmer, Bonnelly, whom Beckett worked for in Rousillon, in exchange for red wine and potatoes (see Knowlson 294–96). But how well these bums – at least one of them – know France. In the 1890s, they were among the first to climb the Eiffel Tower, “hand in hand,” though now “they” (whoever “they” are) wouldn’t even “let [them] up” (7). Pozzo, too, comes equipped with a back story; his takes place in the big house referred to only as “the manor.”6 Fragments from other stories, past, passing, or to come, are somewhat more circumscribed. Pozzo, who in his past needed one and so “took a knook,” informs Gogo and Didi that he is bound for “the fair,” where he intends to
sell Lucky for a good price (*Godot* 21–22). But if this scene does indeed take place between the acts, the sale has apparently not gone well.

In *Endgame*, *Happy Days*, and *Krapp’s Last Tape*, such back stories become increasingly elaborate, providing Beckett’s audience with pictures from the past that both energize and destabilize the material presence of the *mise en scène*, no matter how limited that initially appears to be. While Hamm’s evocations are somewhat suspect—he’s a chronicler *and* a fictionalizer (two strikes against him), a storyteller who uses the past as raw material for “prolonged creative effort,” which renders him untrustworthy—Nell and Nagg are likely to turn out to be much more reliable historians (*Endgame* 61). They mythologize the perilous road to Sedan, where they crashed on their “tandem” and lost their “shanks,” at the same time that they memorialize it (16). And they prove to be equally nostalgic about jokes and sawdust and sugarplums. Clov, by contrast, lives in the agony of the play’s perpetual present; for him, the earth remains “extinguished,” even though, unlike Nell and Nagg, he “never saw it lit” (81). Winnie tries as hard as she can to keep such despair at bay. Lusty lady that she still is (and “that is what I find so wonderful” [*Happy Days* 18]), one of her principal means for doing so is to rhapsodize about other landscapes, “to speak in the old style,” where even a romantic tryst or two can take place:

My first ball! (*Long pause.*) My second ball! (*Long pause. Closes eyes.*) My first kiss! (*Pause. WILLIE turns page. WINNIE opens eyes.*) A Mr Johnson, or Johnston, or perhaps I should say Johnstone. Very bushy moustache, very tawny. (*Reverently.*) Almost ginger! (*Pause.*) Within a toolshed, though whose I cannot conceive. We had no toolshed and he most certainly had no toolshed. (*Closes eyes.*) I see the piles of pots. (*Pause.*) The tangles of bast. (*Pause.*) The shadows deepening among the rafters. (16)

“Oh the happy memories!” she waxes, then wanes. *Oh, les beaux jours* indeed… (16).

*Krapp’s* “case nought” is, perhaps, even more particular (…*but the clouds*… 261). With his aide-mémoire, “box three, spool five,” he can hold the favourite part of the past, his little piece of eternity, in the palm of his hand, as though his tape were the only true mnemonic of experience (*Krapp’s Last Tape* 13). The past is a retreat; Krapp goes there eagerly to shake off the cold present and the even colder future: “Be again in the dingle on a Christmas Eve, gathering holly, the red berried. (*Pause.*) Be again on Croghan on a Sunday morning, in the haze, with the bitch, stop and listen to the bells. (*Pause.*) And so on. (*Pause.*) Be again, be again” (26). What “remains of all that misery” is captured, habitually and forever, on electronic recording tape: “A girl in a shabby green coat,
Talk about Landscapes: What There Is to Recognize

on a railway-station platform” (17). But what existence, really, does this past have? It is only what the present once was, the past that once was – if only as Krapp, the writer who once was, has chosen to remember it by giving it a shape in words. His version relies on images that soon beget other images: the place on the canal where Krapp’s mother “lay a-dying” (18); the “black ball” that he will feel in his hand “until [his] dying day” (13, 20); Fanny, “the bony old ghost of a whore” (25); his one attendance at Vespers, when he fell asleep and “fell off the pew” (26); and, finally, the most enduring landscape of all, the one he switches back to again and again, spools grinding away:

I said again I thought it was hopeless and no good going on, and she agreed, without opening her eyes. (Pause.) I asked her to look at me and after a few moments – (pause) – after a few moments she did, but the eyes just slits, because of the glare. I bent over her to get them in the shadow and they opened. (Pause. Low.) Let me in. (Pause.) We drifted in among the flags and stuck. The way they went down, sighing before the stem! (Pause.) I lay down across her with my face in her breasts and my hand on her. We lay there without moving. But under us all moved, and moved us, gently, up and down, and from side to side. (22–23)

When this play ends a few moments later, charged as it is with such a rich and evocative romantic landscape (“The face she had! The eyes! Like... (hesitates)... chrysolite!” (19)), the old man alone onstage, a haunting picture, is suddenly left with what we’re all left with in the end, only memories, as his “case nought” is fatally and fatalistically transformed. Just as stage silence amplifies all that we have just heard, so it magnifies all that we now see; the slow fade-out on the seated figure provides us with both the final image and a fixed after-image. Dramatic closure like this has rarely been achieved in the theatre; nor has it ever been quite so devastating and complete. Krapp remains “motionless staring before him” as the “tape runs on in silence” (28). Mallarmé, who liked to think that it was only in silence that sound achieved its ideal fulfilment, would be very pleased (see Brater, Beyond Minimalism 93).

CURTAIN

IV

What is all the more impressive about the three major plays Beckett wrote in the decade following Godot is the maturity of vision he displays in developing the multiple landscapes competing for our attention onstage. Such unseen presences become, if anything, even more powerful in
his late style in the theatre, where Beckett clarifies and intensifies their dramatic implications. This is, as the playwright told the designer Jocelyn Herbert, “work in regress with usual vanishing point in view.” In the series of short plays beginning with Not I in 1972, the space of the stage, as I have argued elsewhere, becomes the space of human consciousness (see Brater, Beyond Minimalism). What looks abstract, after Magritte, turns out to be far less so, despite and perhaps because of the wholesale assault on our visual horizon. This is, to paraphrase Porter Abbott, a landscape “for being elsewhere.” Not I, which divides its stage unevenly, has been cleverly arranged to thwart any easy sense of recognition, featuring immediacy instead. The play relegates the minimal image of Mouth to one side, the maximal image of Auditor to the other, setting perspective askew. But before long even Mouth’s fantastic tirade, which from a structural point of view continues where Lucky’s speech leaves off, depends on a series of realistic vignettes (“live scene[s],” the author called them [Personal communication]), including an innocent visit to a “supermart,” an appearance in court before a judge, and an ominous sexual assault, “face in the grass.” (Beckett said he was not thinking of a rape scene, though his text seems to think otherwise.) The atlas here may have been fractured, but realistic landscapes, no matter how fragmentary, continue to assert themselves, as though the pendulum were swinging back toward narrative expression. In Beckett, this doesn’t mean a full-scale restoration of mimetic or gestural conventions, but it does mean a return to narrative, more implicit than explicit, and, within the storyline, the interactions of theatrically articulated characters. Not I does not so much tell stories as allude to them, as though to hint at mysteries. The play doesn’t show us so much as suggest narrative fragments, inviting us to join in the act of creation through the process of our own perception. Beckett conveys his theatricality through the less rationally explicit but more emotionally complicit means of Auditor’s movement and Mouth’s image. And a similar technique can be observed in the piece its author called “the brother to Not I,” That Time—a bold work that is at once both introverted and expressive (Brater, Why Beckett 110). A stark, disembodied head is suspended onstage and positioned slightly off centre, as voices A, B, and C recycle the plenitude of events, summing up a life now spent, though perhaps not well. However unspecified—in Footfalls, that dreadful un-will become even more startling and significant—there’s always a story here, and a back story, too, accompanied, as in Othello, by a momentous “world of sighs” (1.3.159). The church door in Footfalls, the “other only windows” in Rockaby, the Isle of Swans in Ohio Impromptu, and giving someone “the works” offstage in What Where, that same place where the Director is hidden in Catastrophe, enlarge each play’s scenic dimension and exoticize
Talk about Landscapes: What There Is to Recognize

it, so to speak, rendering all stylistic limitations lame. What Beckett actually allows us to see in the minimal images arranged so precisely on "the Board" may be merely a small sample of what might be lurking in this stage darkness, sight unseen.

Other works, especially those written for television, advance dream landscapes where, as in Strindberg, characters sometimes "evaporate, crystallize, scatter and converge. But a single consciousness holds sway over them all – that of the dreamer" (Strindberg 193). In plays like... *but the clouds...*, *Ghost Trio*, and *Nacht und Träume*, which brings screen life to a dream within a dream, technology wears a distinctly human face, even though the characters such technology displays seem to have a quiet fear of disappearing without a trace – not gone perhaps, "but definitely on Death Row" (Banville, *The Sea* 129). Exploiting the enormous potential of camera angles and especially film editing, one visionary landscape can even superimpose itself on another: a scrim-like woman's face suddenly appears, lingers, then disappears on the already illusory screen image in... *but the clouds...*; and in *Nacht und Träume*, a "helping hand" and a handkerchief, always just beyond focus, materialize from some upper realm beyond, loaded with symbolism, as though the whole enterprise were some sort of modernist take on *The Annunciation* by Fra Filippo Lippi or a delicate fresco by Fra Angelico.

Disembodied heads that fade in and out, as in the TV version of *What Where*, a drama well-named for the purposes of this discussion, seem to take us a long way from what there is to recognize in *Waiting for Godot*. And yet the landscape of that early play, empty as it is, is everywhere filled with mysterious suggestion as Beckett builds upon any number of stage conventions to assert his own authority over a genre always begging to be reinvented. One of the principal ways he does so, as his work progresses, is to make us see even in things unseen the vastness of a universe seeking representation on a lonely stage. Gogo, like the rest of us, might be encouraged to look a bit more thoroughly into the void. There may be – well, in fact, there is, as this "talk about landscapes" seeks to demonstrate – a lot more "going on" there than meets the naked eye.

But that is perhaps enough, for the time being at least, of what Malone calls – as well we might – "all this fucking scenery" (*Malone Dies* 108).

NOTES

1 For Peter Brook's work with the RSC, see Beauman; see also Brook. On the question of stage landscape, see the essays collected in Fuchs and Chaudhuri.
2 Alan Schneider often used this phrase in conversation when discussing the logistics of directing Beckett; see Schneider; Harmon; Oppenheim 315–18.

3 For illustrations of designs by Giacometti and le Broquy for Waiting for Godot, see Brater, Why Beckett 70, 72.

4 See, for example, The Real Inspector Hound.

5 Beckett’s uneasiness with the realistic techniques of Balzac is reflected in early works like Dream of Fair to Middling Women and More Pricks than Kicks; his fascination with Proust is everywhere apparent in his monograph on the author; see Knowlson 118–22.

6 Beckett has a bit more to say about this in “Text 5”: “Why did Pozzo leave home, he had a castle and retainers” (96).

7 Jessica Tandy, who created the role of Mouth in the world premiere of Not I at Lincoln Center in New York in 1972, told this author that Beckett was surprised by her question about whether or not the monologue alludes to a scene of rape in the field.

8 The dance critic John Rockwell has considered several of the same aesthetic questions.

WORKS CITED


Banville, John. Comments to the round table discussion. Beckett and the Visual Arts, the National Gallery of Ireland. 9 April 2006.


Beckett, Samuel. ... but the clouds ... Beckett, Collected Shorter Plays 255–62.


Talk about Landscapes: What There Is to Recognize


