

THE UNIVERSITY OF GDAŃSK SAMUEL BECKETT SEMINAR

OHIO@40

Organized by The University of Gdańsk
in partnership with Florida State University (USA), Federal University of Goiás
(Brazil) and the Trinity Centre for Beckett Studies (Ireland).

Wednesday, 12 May 2021, 21.00 CET

Chair: Tomasz Wiśniewski (Beckett Research Group in Gdańsk)

Speakers: S.E.Gontarski (Florida State University, USA), Jon McKenna (actor,
London), Robson Corrêa de Camargo (Federal University of Goiás, Brazil), Paul S.
Shields (Assumption College, Worcester, USA), Octavian Saiu (University of Sibiu,
Romania), and Nicholas Johnson (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland)

(Registration required: tomasz.wisniewski@ug.edu.pl)



Photo: S.E. Gontarski's laboratory work at the Between.Pomiędzy Festival 2018

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12. Międzynarodowy Festiwal Literatury i Teatru
between.pomiędzy
Trójmiasto 10–16 maja 2021

“You turn on without moving from your place the light above you. Your eyes light on the watch lying beneath it. But instead of reading the hour of night they follow round and round the second hand now followed and now preceded by its shadow.”
(*Company*)

Dedicated to the memory of
Ryszard Ronczewski and Professor Jerzy Limon

Agenda:

21.00 Seminar opening: Tomasz Wiśniewski (BRGiG) and Jarosław Fret (Director of the Grotowski Institute)

21.10 Keynote address discussion: Professor S.E. Gontarski (Florida State University), *Beckett's Dystopian Trilogy: The Irrelevance of Godot*

Prior to the event read the attached lecture and/or watch the recording at

<https://vimeo.com/545591120/7e7b4a51de> (password: **Beckett2021**)

21.40 Ohio@40: S.E. Gontarski (USA), Jon McKenna (UK), Robson Corrêa de Camargo (Brazil), Paul S. Shields (USA), Octavian Saiu (Romania), and Nicholas Johnson (Ireland)

Prior to the event watch the following recordings. For research purposes only.

Password: Beckett2021		
Paul S. Shields	May nein	https://vimeo.com/545568270/0f82f63c78
SE Gontarski	Ohio Laboratory (Between.Pomiędzy 2016)	https://vimeo.com/545578937/b08ef8f010
SE Gontarski	Ohio Impromptu (1987)	https://vimeo.com/545585198/0ce2d40057
Máskara Theatre	Ohio Impromptu (Portuguese with English subtitles)	https://vimeo.com/545861930/5811168b37
A&F Guimarães	Improviso de Ohio (Portuguese)-	https://vimeo.com/545581103/330e40db4c

22.50 Closing remarks by S.E. Gontarski

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The University of Gdańsk Samuel Beckett Seminar is held on 12th and 13th May 2021 as part of the Between.Pomiędzy Festival of Literature and Theatre. Our intention is to respond to the unprecedented relevance of contemporary topics like incessant waiting, overwhelming frustration, uncertain futures, and enforced isolation, to the lives of people around the world. We are well aware that artistic representations of typically Beckettian themes are no longer matters for highbrow speculation conducted just among scholars but have become part of the common experience of everyone. Concentrating on the ways in which the artistic achievements of Beckett have triggered enormous creativity in the virtual world (in Wuhan, Moscow, Warsaw, Dublin, Tallahassee, Worcester, Boston, and elsewhere), we also intend to take this opportunity to review several activities of the research group, including a laboratory film, *Beckett on the Baltic* (by S.E. Gontarski), and various forms of approaching *Ohio Impromptu*, a miniature that Beckett sent to Gontarski forty years ago this year.

SPEAKERS:

S. E. Gontarski is a Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professor of English, Ph.D., Ohio State. A writer, director and filmmaker who specializes in 20th century Irish Studies, in British, U.S., and European Modernism, performance theory, History of Text Technologies, and Modern(ist) book history. He has been a resident Fellow at the Djerassi Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation at Bellagio, the Bogliasco Foundation, and a Visiting Scholar at the American Academy in Rome. He has been awarded four National Endowment for the Humanities research grants, has twice been awarded Fulbright Professorships, and has been Guest Editor of the following: *American Book Review*, *The Review of Contemporary Fiction*, *Modern Fiction Studies*, and most recently *Drammaturgia*.

He is also General Editor of four book series:

- 1) *Crosscurrents: Comparative Studies in European Literature and Philosophy* with the University Press of Florida;
- 2) *Anthem Studies in Theatre and Performance* with Anthem Press, London;
- 3) (with Paul Ardoin and Laci Mattison) *Understanding Philosophy / Understanding Modernism* with Bloomsbury
- 4) *Other Becketts* with Edinburgh University Press.

He edited the *Journal of Beckett Studies* from 1989-2008, and currently serves as Co-Editor with its publication by Edinburgh University Press.

[from: <https://www.english.fsu.edu/faculty/s-e-gontarski>]

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Jon McKenna has been an actor/deviser for over forty years with in-depth performance experience in mainstream theatre, street theatre, fringe theatre, television, and feature films. He has worked with Stan Gontarski at previous Between Festivals and first met with Tomasz Wisniewski and David Malcolm at the Calder Bookshop/Theatre in London, when he and Stan were experimenting with the Beckett compilation *Breath Text Breath*.

Nicholas Johnson is Associate Professor of Drama at Trinity College Dublin, where he convenes the Creative Arts Practice research theme, and co-founded the Trinity Centre for Beckett Studies. His 2020 publications include *Experimental Beckett* (Cambridge UP), *Bertolt Brecht's "David" Fragments* (Bloomsbury), *Influencing Beckett/Beckett Influencing* (L'Harmattan), and the "Pedagogy Issue" of the *Journal of Beckett Studies* (29.1, Edinburgh UP). He works as a dramaturg with Pan Pan, Dead Centre, and OT Platform. Recent directing credits include *Virtual Play* (1st prize, New European Media awards), *The David Fragments* (after Brecht), and *Enemy of the Stars* (after Lewis). He has held visiting research positions at FU Berlin and Yale.

During the Festival, as a part of the Beckett Seminar, he is offering theatre workshops on 15th May, at 4 - 7p.m (Gdańsk/Paris time). The cost of the workshops is 100 PLN.

Robson Corrêa de Camargo, creator and founder of the Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Program in Cultural Performances at Universidade Federal de Goiás. Director and theatre critic, he coordinates the Transdisciplinary Research Group in Theater, Dance and Performance. *The Máskara - Transdisciplinary Research Group in Theater, Dance and Performance* - will complete 20 years of activities in 2022. The first performance of *Máskara* was *Esperando Godot*, by Samuel Beckett, presented during the years 2005 and 2006 in several Brazilian cities, with great success and controversy. They also staged an adaptation for the theater of a short story by Bernardo Elis from Goiás: *Demographic Explosion - Minuet in Fó Menor*. In 2009, they premiered *Senhora dos Afogados* (Lady of the Drowned), by the Brazilian dramatist Nelson Rodrigues. In the years 2009, 2010, and 2014, the group returned to Beckett, now with *Company*, *What Where* (both staged at the invitation of the important Beckett Festival in Buenos Aires, Argentina) and *Short Beckett*.

Papers at:

<https://ufg.academia.edu/RobsonCamargo>;

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Robson_Camargo

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<https://scholar.google.com.br/citations?hl=pt-BR&user=aUsFDuoAAAAJ>
performances at
<https://maskaranucleodepes.wixsite.com/maskara>

Paul S. Shields is an associate professor of English at Assumption University in Worcester, Massachusetts. He teaches courses in writing, theatre, and dramatic literature. In 2018, he directed three of Beckett's short plays (*Catastrophe*, *Breath*, and *Footfalls*) as part of *BUT THE CLOUDLESS: ...a beckett show...* at the Sprinkler Factory in Worcester. The show included a screening of S. E. Gontarski's laboratory production of Beckett's *...but the clouds....* He is currently working on a production of Beckett's *Not I*.

Octavian Saiu is a scholar and professional theatre critic. He holds a PhD in Theatre Studies from the National University of Theatre and Film (NUTF) in Romania, with a thesis about theatrical space, and another PhD in Comparative Literature from the University of Otago in New Zealand, with a thesis about Samuel Beckett and Eugène Ionesco. He teaches in the Postgraduate Programme of NUTF, the Doctoral School of Sibiu University, and the Centre of Excellence in Visual Studies of the University of Bucharest.

He has been actively involved, as Conference Chair and Invited Speaker, in several major theatre and academic events around the world, including the Theatre Olympics, Wuzhen Theatre Festival, as well as the Edinburgh International Festival. Since 2004, he has been Chair of the Conferences of Sibiu International Theatre Festival.

He is Adjunct Secretary General of the International Association of Theatre Critics (IATC) and President of the Romanian Section – Theatre Studies of IATC. He has published academic articles in several international journals, as well as eleven books on theatre. He received the Critics' Award in 2010 and the Award of the Union of Theatre Artists (UNITER) in 2013. In 2020, he was awarded the Order of Cultural Merit by the Romanian state.

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The University of Gdańsk Samuel Beckett Seminars have been organized every year since 2010 by the Beckett Research Group in Gdańsk, led by Tomasz Wiśniewski. They have been attended by scholars and artists from various parts of the world and have resulted in several publications, film documentaries, workshops/laboratories, and theatre productions. Guest speakers have included: Marcello Magni (Complicite), Douglas Rintoul (Transport Theatre), Jon McKenna (UK), Antoni Libera (Poland), Jarosław Fret (Teatr ZAR), Enoch Brater (USA), H. Porter Abbott (USA), Derek Attridge (United Kingdom), Antonia Rodríguez-Gago (Spain), Nadia Kamel (Egypt), Mark Nixon (UK), Luz María Sánchez-Cardona (Mexico), Robson Corrêa de Camargo (Brazil), Octavian Saiu (Romania), and Patricio Orozco (Argentina). Professor S.E. Gontarski is the honorary patron of the research group. For more information see: www.between.org.pl.

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