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Special issue: Beckett and pedagogy: introduction

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## Editorial Introduction

We often forget that many of us are not only Beckett researchers but also Beckett teachers, and that these two areas are intrinsically connected. We are thus extremely pleased to present this special issue on 'Beckett and Pedagogy', guest edited by Jonathan Heron and Nicholas Johnson. The genesis of the pages that you are reading can be traced back to a roundtable discussion held at the Beckett Summer School at Trinity College Dublin in 2015. Hosted by Jonathan Heron, a panel consisting of Chris Ackerley, Amanda Dennis, Rodney Sharkey, Paul Stewart, Derval Tubridy and David Wheatley discussed the topic 'Beckett and Pedagogy'. Following on from this, Jonathan Heron was invited to speak on the topic at the annual Beckett International Foundation Research Seminar that same year. It is from these two events that the idea for this special issue emerged, and it should be noted that many of the strands raised by colleagues at these events have informed the editorial approach behind this volume.

This special issue on 'Beckett and Pedagogy' aims to capture three spaces: pedagogy in Beckett, pedagogy of Beckett and pedagogy through Beckett. As they did with regard to the theatre space in their 'Performance Issue' of this journal in 2014, Heron and Johnson are highlighting the significance of the teaching encounter as an essential aspect of the living legacy of Beckett, as well as an under-theorised and under-discussed element of how Beckett scholars spend their time. The international scholarly community operates at certain 'nodes of practice' that network with one another, are by no means exclusive, but are all three crucial to the ecology of the field. The 'Fizzles' project presented here allows for a recognition that the international community of Beckett scholarship is also a community of educators. In both areas, this special issue is meant to serve as an invitation, opening a space for more discussion about pedagogies of place or testimonies of teacher experiences.

Readers familiar with the *Journal of Beckett Studies* will find various editorial innovations in this issue, as they will have done when they came upon Heron and Johnson's 'Performance Issue'. At the same time, it is worth noting that structural choices surrounding the Dossier and the Fizzles build upon the history of the journal, developing for example the tradition of including 'Practitioner Voices'. The guest editors have structured the issue in order to reflect and open a debate on 'Beckett and Pedagogy'. The essays cover the three areas of

pedagogy in/of/through Beckett mentioned earlier through biographical, practical and pedagogical/philosophical approaches, ranging from traditional methods to the contemporary. The sequencing of the 'Dossier' allows 'pedagogies of place' to emerge at 'nodes of practice' that both stand alone and work in dialogue with one another (Dublin, Reading, Antwerp). The 'Fizzles', finally, have been arranged alphabetically to avoid emphasising one experience over another.

We are extremely grateful to Jonathan and Nicholas for assembling this special issue, and hope that readers will find it as fascinating and relevant as we do.

The cover of this special issue on 'Beckett and Pedagogy' reproduces a sketch of Samuel Beckett teaching at Trinity College Dublin in the early 1930s. It can be found in a notebook kept by one of Beckett's students, Leslie Daiken, who went on to become a close friend of the writer. We are grateful to the Beckett International Foundation at the University of Reading for allowing us to print this sketch, and to Xander Ryan for his help in sourcing it. Leslie Daiken's sketch is reproduced here with the kind permission of his daughter, Elinor Papadopoulos.