

Hermeneutics*, Gender, Performance, Mallarmé, and Metamorphosis

Language constructs an imaginary real that supports the fiction of a unified singular subject. Playing with language, both spoken and written, reveals this fabrication of coherent identity. Ask a schizophrenic 'where are you? And s/he will reply ' I know where I am but I do not feel I am the point I find myself'. Language can be used to play with the idea of a singular, individual, sexed subject, and mediates between self and Other, both female and male. Performance has the potential to be a site of interchange negotiation between self/selves of the performer, and Other (the ppublic). Engaging with Foucauldian social constructionism, spoken word and written words are exchanged and deployed across the gendered body, creating metaphors for the social and political powers which inscribe their relations and meanings into the very structure of being.

Woman has been compared to the absence or failure of meaning in language. Her/its self-negation is always split between failure of meaning and signification. In dispersing text, meaning fails, is deconstructed, deferred, its meaning remains a potential to be inferred or re-created. The co-creation of meaning through conversation, negotiation and exchange of words anticipates and yet is simultaneously a retro-action. This is Mallarmé's *antre* (in-between): a phantasmic *now*, that joins past and present.

Mallarmé's performer is a go-between, s/he initiate and presents an ambivalent contradiction of presence and absence, simultaneously between desire and fulfilment, anticipation and recall. S/he is a liminal figure capable of metamorphosis, and from debris, fragments (her) mime re-creates narratives, souvenir, announcements and traces.

*hermeneutics-,interpretive process which encompass all forms of communication: written, verbal, and nonverbal.