

Introduction

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The *Mosaic* issue that preceded this one, the conference special issue *Following Derrida: Legacies*, raises the question of writing as, in many ways, central to Jacques Derrida's work. The question emerges as central to the present issue as well: the following essays explore theories of writing as technology; claims about the relationship between writing and other media; theories of narrative, particularly in relation to individual and cultural memory; writing (poetry) as artistic expression; what Suzanne Rintoul calls the "tensions between orality and writing" (in the novels of Thomas King); and writing (the writer) as artifact. For instance, Tony Jackson in "'Graphism' and Story-time in *Memento*" sets aside Derrida's "poststructuralist understanding of the significance of writing" in favour of an approach to writing as a technology that "disembodies language by converting the sounds of speech into visual image." Through a discussion of the film *Memento*, Jackson relates this notion of writing-as-technology to photography and cinematography, which, as technology, disembody "looking," leading to a loss in our cognitive capacity, including our cognitively-based sense of time.

In "Word-Dust: William Burroughs's Multimedia Aesthetic," Daniel Punday reads Burroughs as a "multimedia" writer who, for reason of "his sophisticated, if at times incomplete, attempt to understand the nature of the physical act of writing," might well "serve as an icon of writing's relationship to other media at the turn of the millennium." Jessica Locheed offers another take on "multimedia" writing in "'Degas the Sonneteer': Transcending Disciplinary Boundaries and Building a New Aesthetic," which reads the poetry written by Degas late in his career through the perspective of themes he explored in his visual art, treating the oeuvre as a whole, and tracing its indebtedness to Mallarmé's poetry and critical writing on dance.

A number of the essays in this issue engage the question of writing's relation to memory. "In Memoriam: Levinas, the Holocaust, and The Immemorial" examines Emmanuel Levinas's understanding of memory, particularly as it connects to the

Holocaust. Michael Bernard-Donals argues in this essay “that Levinas establishes a theory of *post-Holocaust memory*, though it is a forgetful memory, that works through writing oriented toward a future rather than toward the irrecuperable, immemorial event.” Locating “a trace or an excess of memory” in Levinas’s juxtaposition of memory as *mneme* and memory as *anamnesis*, Bernard-Donals explains how, for Levinas, the witness is forced into language “to speak a memory that is not a memory at all,” and to produce “not so much an account of events (a testimony) as an account of the rupture of language and the void of memory.”

Read also Vikki Visvis’s “Trauma Remembered and Forgotten: The Figure of the Hysteric in Kerri Sakamoto’s *The Electric Field*,” which suggests how Sakamoto’s novel uses the discourse of hysteria to resist communal forgetting of the Japanese-Canadian internment. Indeed, read all of the fine essays this issue offers. We are proud to have these writers in our pages, and we are pleased to recommend their writing (on writing) to you.