

THE MEANING OF THE MUSIC-HALL: FROM THE ITALIAN FUTURISM TO THE SOVIET AVANT-GARDE

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Music-hall, not poetry, is a criticism of life.

James Joyce

The Music-hall as Tireless Ventilation of the World's Futurist Brain¹

If one can detect a common characteristic between the first avant-garde movements (Futurism, Dada, Surrealism), it is undoubtedly their predilection for popular art and forms of entertainment. This penchant was closely related not only to the rejection of traditional bourgeois art, i.e. the institutionalised forms of Art “with a capital A”,² but also to the necessity of a new rhythm, a renovated vitality. One of the most celebrated spectacles in the early years of the twentieth century was the music-hall, also called variety or vaudeville. Consisting of an explosive mixture of attractions, this spectacle revealed itself as the perfect metaphor for modern society. As Roland Barthes observes, it is indeed natural that the music-hall was born in the Anglo-Saxon world with its sudden urban concentrations and its Quaker myths of labour.³ More specifically, the origin of this form of entertainment can be traced back to the musical performances given during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the English town taverns. The first so-called variety theatres opened their doors in the middle of the nineteenth century in London, where the swiftly population increased, on the one hand, the demand for this kind of entertainment and, on the other, the necessity of institutionalisation by means of laws and licences. At the turn of the century the variety phenomenon penetrated into city life in the whole of Europe, likewise, first through taverns and night-clubs – namely the French *café-chantant* (later called *café-concert*, or briefly *café-cons*), the Italian *caffè-concerto*, the German *Kabarett*, etc. – and subsequently through real music-hall establishments.⁴

The music-hall, thus, is an exclusively urban phenomenon and this specific feature differentiates it from the circus, a spectacle that can be found both in the city and in the countryside. A second fundamental difference between these two related forms of popular entertainment is their architectural structure which greatly affects their relationship with the spectator (Fig.1). Because of its circular shape, the circus exercises a strong centripetal force: by collecting the audience all round the arena, the attention is automatically drawn to the centre. At the same time, this particular spatial organisation preserves, following Walter Benjamin, the “aura” of the artists, their fabulous perfection and especially their inaccessibility (*Unnahbarkeit*).⁵ The music-hall, on the contrary, is characterised by the use of the traditional stage which establishes a frontal, face-to-face relationship with the audience; furthermore, in a cabaret, the distance between stage and auditorium, namely the taproom, is practically non-existent.⁶ This contact with the spectator, close and

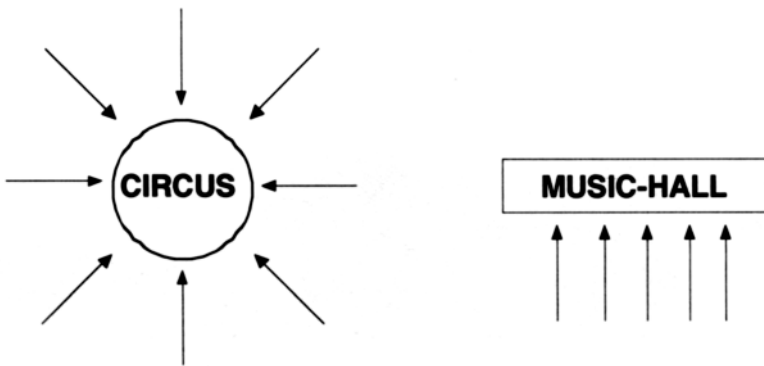


Fig. 1

straight, is the underlying condition for experimentation: here, more easily than in the circus, young artists can explore new forms of expression, violate the rules of the traditional theatre, and perturb or directly affect the citizen (*épater le bourgeois*).

The music-hall seems to be the ideal place for combining all kinds of acts, which can vary (as explicitly indicated by the term *variety*) from popular songs to conjuring tricks, from clownish nonsense to erotic dance performances. The inherited circus attractions (such as the numbers performed by acrobats, gymnasts, rope-dancers, jugglers and animal trainers) are transformed and dynamically re-assembled into a new spectacle. In contrast to the circus, no exceptional apparatus is utilised: the human body is exalted for itself. The music-hall, unlike the traditional theatre, has no use for intellectual and symbolic elaboration, let alone for psychology. Its nature is subversive, its expressiveness mechanised and definitely physical. Defined by Barthes as the “aesthetic form of labour”, the music-hall exhibits upon the stage the physical efforts of the performer: every attraction remains somehow an exercise. And Barthes continues: “In the music-hall everything is *nearly* acquired; but it is precisely this *nearly* that constitutes the spectacle, and preserves, in spite of the preparations, its virtue of labour.”⁷ The bodily, purely visual expression is, of course, a feature typical of the circus that is carried into the theatre by the music-hall and that, thanks to the reduced distance between performer and spectator, becomes more visible and more tangible.

A last significant distinction between the circus and the music-hall regards their fortune in history. Whereas the former seems to be timeless, resistant to the concurrence of new rising forms of entertainment, the popularity of the latter is tied to a very specific epoch, namely the first decades of the twentieth century. The music-hall is a form of spectacle that perfectly embodies the spirit of the roaring Twenties, and that can bear comparison with a “bursting balloon”⁸ spitting out innumerable new inventions. In the beginning of the thirties, the French drama critic Legrand-Chabrier started his essay “Le Music-hall” by defining his topic as an entertainment formula that expresses the epoch and that corresponds with the “actual evolution of human civilisation.”⁹ Precisely at that moment, with the advent of the sound film, the music-hall began inevitably to decline; and eventually, television would carry out the finishing stroke.

Although the sparks of the music-hall are still not entirely extinguished today (considering, for instance, the ongoing success of the Parisian tourist attractions at the Moulin Rouge, or the significant revival of music-hall genre in Hollywood with productions such as *Moulin Rouge* [B. Luhrman, 2001] and *Chicago* [R. Marshall, 2002]), it is clear that the inherent modernity of this spectacle can only be read from the perspective of the historical avant-garde and the modernist age. In that period it turned out to be the appropriate medium for the young experimenters of the stage, who exploited the means of music-hall for dislocating the traditional theatre, for hurting the good taste of the public, in brief, for provoking. This anti-bourgeois attitude was cultivated especially in the café-cabaret, which often fulfilled its function as breeding ground of avant-garde thoughts and concepts. Emblematic in this respect is, of course, the meaning of the Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich in relation to Dada and its foundation in 1916. In Paris, the Lapin Agile was circa 1900 the meeting place of the Montmartre artists, Picasso among them. Similarly, in Moscow, the Pink Lantern cabaret functioned as one of the experimental bases of the Russian Futurists and Rayonists; in St. Petersburg, the avant-garde rendezvous by excellence was the Stray Dog, opened in 1911 by Kulbin and Evreinov; in London, the Vorticists gathered in the Golden Calf, decorated by Wyndham Lewis, etc.¹⁰ As far as the Italian Futurists are concerned, it is true that they rather chose an established theatre for their provocative Futurist evenings (the so-called *serate*) – a tradition that was inaugurated on January 12, 1910 in the Politeama Rossetti of Trieste. But, as Günter Berghaus reminds us, they habitually invaded afterwards some public places, mainly cafés and restaurants, for an outrageous “post-performance”.¹¹ The proper Futurist cabarets, like Balla’s Bal Tic Tac and Depero’s Cabaret del Diavolo, will open their doors only in the beginning of the Twenties.

Yet in 1913 Marinetti fully developed the role of the music-hall as vehicle for new, aggressive emotions and avant-garde experimentation in one of his most fortunate manifestos: “The Variety Theatre”, dated September 29.¹² Because this manifesto was republished many times and translated from the very beginning into several languages, its historical value is indisputable. On the other hand, its wide distribution led to misconceptions in relation to the original edition.¹³ In fact – and, as far as I know, this detail has never been pointed out – there exist two different Italian versions: a short one, which corresponds to the original text published in 1913 in *Lacerba*, and a longer one, which is the traditionally best (or even only) known version of the manifesto, reproduced in all Futurist anthologies as if it were the original. The latter is a re-elaboration carried out by Marinetti himself for the publication of *I manifesti del Futurismo*;¹⁴ it includes – as I shall discuss below – an interesting formula for the use of cinema. Originally, the structure of the manifesto was twofold: in the first part, composed of fifteen programmatic points, Marinetti praises the music-hall because of its *anti-passéist* qualities and its explosive character; in the second, he proposes in five paragraphs a transgression of the genre, a transformation of the Variety Theatre into a “Theatre of Wonder and Record”. In the final version, the first part of the manifesto is re-organised in nineteen programmatic points (of which only the numbers 4 and 18 are really new); the second part is followed by a passage of *parole in libertà* (words-in-freedom). Furthermore, Marinetti added the anti-psychological concept of *fisicofollia* (body-madness), that is essential to the transgression of the genre: “The Theatre of Amazement, of Record-Setting and of Body-Madness”.

The Resonance of “The Variety Theatre” Manifesto in Russia

In 1914 the first Russian translations of “The Variety Theatre” manifesto appeared. While the St. Petersburg journal *Teatr i iskusstvo* published a translation of the original version of the manifesto,¹⁵ the volume *Manifesty italienskago futurizma* translated the manifesto in its final version (with exception of the words-in-freedom passage that has been omitted).¹⁶ The issue of these different Russian translations is crucial, as we shall see further.

In the same year, Marinetti undertook a tour to Russia, giving lectures on poetry and provoking the necessary skirmishes among his audience members.¹⁷ Along with this first open confrontation between the two Futurist camps, it is interesting to remember that Marinetti spent several nights in the company of the painter Kulbin at the Stray Dog, tasting in that way the vitality of the Russian variety theatre. Russian theatrical experimentation did not have to wait for Marinetti’s manifesto to be translated (suffice it to say that the two key spectacles of the Russian Futurism, i.e. Alexander Kruchenykh’s *Victory Over the Sun* and Vladimir Mayakovsky’s *Tragedy of Vladimir Mayakovsky*, took place in December 1913). In fact, as František Deák has pointed out, it is only after the Russian Revolution that “The Variety Theatre” manifesto starts exerting an effective and provable influence.¹⁸

Nevertheless, parallels can be drawn between Marinetti’s ideas concerning the stage and a few pre-Revolutionary statements by Russian Futurist poets and painters. The founding manifesto “A Slap in the Face of Public Taste”, dated December 1912 and signed by Mayakovsky, Burliuk, Kruchenykh and Klebnikov, recalls some of the basic concepts of the Italian Futurism, such as the command to get rid of the classics (“Throw Pushkin, Dostoyesky, Tolstoy, et al., et al., overboard from the Ship of Modernity”) and adopt an anti-audience attitude, i.e. standing amid “the sea of boos and indignation” rather than appealing to the taste of the public.¹⁹ This last idea had already been promoted by the Italian Futurists in their “Manifesto of Futurist Playwrights” (1911), a polemic text in which they expose their contempt for the audience, their “horror of immediate success” and their “lust of being whistled at”. These statements are the base of all the coming Futurist theatre experiments that often will be conceived as mere *happenings*.

Another interesting pre-revolutionary manifesto is Larionov’s and Zdanevich’s “Why We Paint Ourselves” (1913), that explains one of the provocative habits of the Rayonist artists, namely their face and body painting.²⁰ In “The Variety Theatre”, Marinetti proposes likewise to “oblige the *chanteuses* to dye their décolletage, their arms, and especially their hair, in all the colours hitherto neglected as means of seduction”²¹. Although one might argue that Rayonist tattooing aimed toward a deeper, more symbolic dimension, revealing itself as “a modern extension of an ancient rite, i.e., ritualistic face- and body-painting in primitive societies”²² (Marinetti view of this practice, however, was one of extravagance, or absurdity), it is important to underline that the Russian painters experimented their extraordinary appearances on stage, most specifically with dance performances. And Natalia Goncharova shocked the good taste of the public by appearing with her décolleté painted with Rayonist patterns.

After the Revolution of 1917 a large number of theatre manifestos emerged in the context of the Soviet avant-garde’s education of the proletariat. It is in this context that the resonance of Marinetti’s ideas concerning the stage becomes manifest. Yuri

Annenkov was one of the first who openly acknowledged Marinetti as a source of inspiration. As a matter of fact, he quoted almost half of “The Variety Theatre” manifesto in one of his own manifestos: “Teatr bez prikladnitchestva” (The Theatre to the End), published in 1921. In this pamphlet, he defines his concept of “Theatre of Pure Method”, that is clearly impressed by the Futurist notion of dynamism: “In all the stage space there would be no moment of calm.”²³ Annenkov regards “artistically organised” movement as the end in itself. His idea of the theatre as a “tempest of movements wrought by rhythm”, as a “synthesis of velocities in a visual form” can be associated with the program of “The Futurist Synthetic Theatre” (1915). Marinetti, Settimestelli and Corra, the co-authors of this latter manifesto, specifically emphasise the necessity of brevity, of “synthesising velocity.”²⁴ Furthermore, they propose to drag the audience “through a *labyrinth of sensations imprinted on the most exacerbated originality and combined in unpredictable ways*”,²⁵ which recalls the method of the music-hall, i.e. the principle of combining acts in an unusual way and thus creating surprising chains of associations. The mixture of attractions will reoccur in several Russian experimental productions of the early Twenties in Russia. It was Annenkov himself who inaugurated this tendency in 1919 with the staging of *The First Distiller* at the Hermitage Theatre of St. Petersburg, to which I shall return.

In 1919, Annenkov also published the manifesto “Merry Sanatorium” that, in opposition to Marinetti’s exaltation of the variety theatre, glorifies the circus. The circus, as will result from my comparative study, remains an important point of reference in the Soviet avant-garde.²⁶ Annenkov defines the magnificent art of this timeless spectacle not only in terms of an “heroic theatre” (which conforms to Marinetti’s concept of a “school of heroism”,²⁷ but also – as the title of the manifesto indicates – in terms of a “medical treatment”, a cure against the oppression of city life.) In a quite anti-Futurist way, he renders homage to the countryside, with pastoral metaphors such as the poultry yard and the quacking of ducks. However, the general tone of the manifesto recollects much of the Futurist hilarity, and pays attention to the figure of the eccentric comic:

*Right under the big top, a painted puppet leaps to the barrier of the gallery with a loud laugh. Who is it? A gigantic parrot, a wonderful wood-goblin, or a red-haired orang-utan – this is the joyous clown in colored wig and checked pantaloons.*²⁸

In opposition to the seriousness of the white clown, the eccentric comic bodily displays the ridicule and avows absurdity as the only possible logic. Whereas this character has a merely supporting role in the circus, in the music-hall it exists independently, detached from the white clown; its subversive acts are both physical and verbal.²⁹ The use of the eccentrics appears as well in “The Variety Theatre”, as fifth and last proposal to subversively change the music-hall into a “Theatre of Amazement, Record-Setting, and Body-Madness”:

*In every way encourage the type of the eccentric American, the impression he gives of exciting grotesquerie, of frightening dynamism; his crude jokes, his enormous brutalities, his trick weskits and pants as deep as a ship’s hold out of which, with a thousand other things, will come the great Futurist hilarity that should make the world’s face young again.*³⁰

The clown's pants, "as deep as a ship's hold", bring us to the very root of the FEKS (Factory of the Eccentric Actor), more specifically to the manifesto "AB! The Eccentric's Parade" by Grigori Kozintsev, who quotes Marinetti's statement as follows: "The Eccentricist's pants are deep, like a bay, from which squeals forth the thousand toned joy of Futurism." In an interview with Natalia Noussinova, Leonid Trauberg relates how in December 1921 the young Kozintsev, merely 16 or 17 years old, proclaimed during a public debate that "eccentrism was the theatre of Marinetti, of *l'épate*, i.e. of amazement, of nervousness and what they needed was a theatre that came from the circus, from the music-hall and from the cabaret."³¹ Moreover, Trauberg declares that Kozintsev and himself have become alive to this new form of theatre after having read Marinetti's manifesto.³² On July 9, 1922, the FEKS was officially inaugurated, Kozintsev and Trauberg being by then joined by Yutkevich and Kryzhitsky.

Convergences and especially divergences between the Italian Futurism and the Russian Eccentrism have often been pointed out by critics and historians. In my view, the similarities seem preponderate, at least in the early years of the FEKS (1922-1929). If, according to Trauberg's comment, one can regard the pursuit of a stunning, overwhelming theatre as the chief inheritance from Marinetti, other typically Futurist characteristics and methods are immediately involved. First, the importance of dynamism, velocity and rhythm is a recurring topic of the FEKS manifestos published in 1922.³³ In Kozintsev's "AB! The Eccentric's Parade" eccentricism is defined as "a synthesis of movement"; and Kryzhitsky's "The Theatre of Hazard" recalls not only Marinetti's love of danger, but also his concept of Record-Setting Theatre: "Theatre programs will indicate the most recent record of the actor and his *top speed*". Beside the beauty of speed, they also glorify modern technology that inspires both the mechanical/mechanised expressiveness of the actor and the protagonism of the machine. Proclaimed deity by the Italian Futurists, the machine seems to be adored by the young FEKS alike. In "Eccentrism" they whistle to the actor: "Forget about emotions and celebrate the machine!"³⁴ While this exaltation of technological progress and new mechanised society, is a thoroughly Futuristic characteristic, in the FEKS program it is symbolically related to America. As Bernadette Poliwoda observes, they are obviously not concerned with industrialisation following the example of American capitalism; on the contrary, what they aim at, is an inner Americanisation by appropriating some American "techniques", such as advertising gimmicks, sensational press, detective stories and slapstick comedy.³⁵ This is, in fact, not much more than an original "clothing" of Marinetti's lesson. For the young members of the FEKS, America is a metaphor: it represents a world of joy and hilarity, of amusement parks with breath-taking roller coasters (or Russian mountains, as they are called both in French and in Italian).

The world of the FEKS is a very imaginative one where the strangest and most extreme things can be associated. The Americanisation is therefore not exclusive to Americans. Next to the American detective hero Nat Pinkerton, for example, they include the British Sherlock Holmes; next to Charles Chaplin (or better, his "rear")³⁶ they refer to the Italian variety artist Leopoldo Fregoli, who was at the turn of the century celebrated world-wide for his art of lightning-speed character changes. In one evening, he could interpret more than sixty personalities, incessantly changing clothing, voice and sex: his success was, indeed, very related to his ability as female impersonator. While Kozintsev mentions his name just briefly in "AB! The Eccentric's Parade"

(“Flying from the fantastic to clever hands, from Hoffman to Fregoli”), Trauberg commemorates more specifically his protean capacity in “The Filmmaker as Denouncer”:

On the 5th of December when we catapulted ourselves as Eccentrism into the public, we didn't realise that suddenly there would be Fregoli! And before you could sneeze a transformation had taken place!

The Italian artist visited Russia and performed both in Moscow and in St. Petersburg at the end of the nineteenth century, that is before Kozintsev and Trauberg were even born. Since Fregoli retired in 1918, it is evident that we have caught the FEKS committing an anachronism. It confirms, once again, that they did study Marinetti's manifesto, wherein Fregoli's name appears twice, first to exemplify the formula “synthesis of velocity plus transformations”, and second in a list of artists (next to Eleonora Duse, Sarah Bernhardt, Zacconi, and Mayol). A central difference between the FEKS manifestos and Marinetti's “Variety Theatre”, is, once more, the importance given to the circus. That is, the FEKS evaluate it on the same level as the music-hall. In the manifesto “Eccentrism”, the latter is even not alluded to, instead: “Technology is circus, psychology is turned inside out!”

As far as stage techniques are concerned, most of FEKS' rules are in direct line with Marinetti's: provocation of the audience, “prostitution” of the classics, and improvisation as the supreme values. In 1928, Vladimir Nedobrovo discusses the method of the FEKS, and asserts that its eccentricism was not at all that of the music-hall, this being the “most primitive, indelicate and absurd” form of eccentricism, that generates from the “deformation of the realistic form”.³⁷ The FEKS method is defined by Nedobrovo as the method of *complicating* the form. This is related to the principle of estrangement by which the objects, put in a new, abnormal context, are withdrawn from their perceptive automation. The object is no longer understood through recognition, but through vision. Eccentric combinations of objects that “complicate the form” can be found, for instance, in the first FEKS film *The Adventures of Octobrino (Pokhozhdenya Oktyabrina, G. Kozintsev-L. Trauberg, 1924)*, which featured an itinerant office, composed of a desk, a typewriter, an inkwell, and its accessories mounted on a motorcycle. This technique of estrangement – closely linked, indeed, to the Formalist process of semantic distortion – was conceived in a very similar way by the Italian Futurists during the Teens. In their “Manifesto of Futurist Cinema” (1916), one of the fourteen cinematic proposals is the realisation of “dramas of objects” that aims at the de-familiarisation (or *Verfremdung*) of common things:

*Objects animated, humanised, baffled, dressed up, impassioned, civilised, dancing – objects removed from their normal surroundings and put into an abnormal state that, by contrast, throws into relief their amazing construction and non-human life.*³⁸

In the summer of 1916, the Italian Futurists shot their film *Vita futurista (Futurist Life)*, that may have illustrated this formula for “dramas of objects” wherein a discussion between a foot, a hammer, an umbrella, and an exploration of herrings, carrots, and eggplants took place. The film, unfortunately, is lost. In 1915, Marinetti had already experimented on stage with some “dramas of objects” in which inanimate things moved and spoke, namely in the theatrical syntheses *Il teatrino dell'amore (The Little Theatre of Love)* and *Vengono (They Are Coming)*.

This particular treatment of objects can be associated with the Futurist concept of “analogy”, appropriated by Marinetti in terms of a new synthesising of literary techniques and applied to the arts and the cinema alike (similar to the creation of very condensed – and irrational – metaphors, defined as “nothing more than the deep love that assembles distant, seemingly diverse and hostile things”).³⁹ In fact, the very first proposal of the “Manifesto of Futurist Cinema” concerns the application of “filmed analogies”. In order to express the state of extraordinary happiness, the Futurists suggest showing a group of chairs “flying comically around an enormous coat stand until they decide to join”, whereas the fracturing of a character character “into a whirlwind of little yellow balls” would be the visualisation of the state of anger.⁴⁰

In “The Variety Theatre” there is a brief allusion to the analogical technique as well: among the ingredients of the Futurist *marvellous*, one reads “profound analogies between humanity, the animal, vegetable, and mechanical worlds.”⁴¹ The Futurist “marvellous” is a mixture – or should we say *montage*? – of absurdities. With such a mixture of absurdities, Marinetti seeks to produce not only general hilarity (“The whole gamut of laughter and smiles, to flex the nerves”), but also an antirational hygiene of the human psyche (“The whole gamut of stupidity, imbecility, doltishness, and absurdity, insensibly pushing the intelligence to the very border of madness”). Because of this specific goal, this preoccupation of provoking a shock among the audience, the Futurist “marvellous” can be associated with Eisenstein’s *montage of attractions*. Remember that Eisenstein theorises this fundamental mechanism in the first place as a theatrical device! Written in consequence of the subversive staging of Alexander Ostrovsky’s play *Enough Simplicity in Every Wise Man* (and published in 1923 in Mayakovsky’s journal *LEF*),⁴² “Montage of Attractions” proposes a new approach of constructing a performance:

*[...] We advance to a new plane – free montage of arbitrarily selected, independent (within the given composition and the subject links that hold the influencing actions together) attractions – all from the stand of establishing certain final thematic effects – this is montage of attractions.*⁴³

In other words, the subject – *in casu* Ostrovsky’s play – is a mere pretext in order to give way to a chain of effects, a “montage of surprises”, as Victor Shklovsky has defined it.⁴⁴ Furthermore, the Formalist explains that in Eisenstein’s staging of *The Wise Man*, the montage was indeed not a way to create a conceptual construction forcing us to consider both the single parts of the work and its totality; on the contrary, the montage “reconciles the irreconcilable”, which is rather close to the idea of assembling “distant, seemingly diverse and hostile things”, operated by Marinetti’s analogy.

Eisenstein distinguishes an attraction from a trick in terms of the involvement of the spectator:

*The attraction has nothing in common with the trick. Tricks are accomplished and completed on a plane of pure craftsmanship (acrobatic tricks, for example) and include that kind of attraction linked to the process of giving (or in circus slang, “selling”) one’s self. As the circus term indicates, inasmuch as it is clearly from the viewpoint of the performer himself, it is absolutely opposite to the attraction – which is based exclusively on the reaction of the audience.*⁴⁵

Basically, an attraction should produce “emotional shocks”.⁴⁶ The aggressive dimension to which Eisenstein aims can be considered a Futurist inheritance passed on by the FEKS, and more specifically as a lesson learned from the variety theatre.⁴⁷ Already in 1913 Marinetti was “seeking the audience’s collaboration”,⁴⁸ and proposed to transform the spectator from “stupid voyeur” into an (inter)active element of the show, to surprise and to fool him/her, for instance, by selling the same ticket to several persons or by putting glue on the seats.

Interesting enough, the term “attraction” appears in “The Variety Theatre” manifesto, since its very first version:

*The Variety Theatre destroys the Solemn, the Sacred, the Serious, and the Sublime in Art with a capital A. It cooperates in the Futurist destruction of immortal masterworks, plagiarising them, parodying them, making them look commonplace by stripping them of their solemn apparatus as if they were mere attractions.*⁴⁹

Although Marinetti’s use of the term seems rather fortuitous and not so well thought-out as Eisenstein’s, it is nevertheless one of the few words printed in italics (next to “*meraviglioso*” *futurista* and as well as some French expressions such as *chic*, *couplet*, *Revues*). Moreover, Marinetti shares with the young Eisenstein the fundamental attitude of rejecting “Art with a capital A” in favour of a minor art (the circus or the music-hall): according to the former, “Art” should be reduced to a *mere number* of attraction; according to the latter, it should be (de)constructed as a *montage* of attractions.⁵⁰ For both, cinema can function as an attractional element, a subject I will return to shortly.

It is important to note here that the very first English and Russian translations of “The Variety Theatre” manifesto did not conserve the notion of “attraction”. Both *Daily Mail* and *The Mask* translated the Italian expression into “ordinary turn”. In the Russian journal *Teatr i iskusstvo* the notion of “attraction” is rendered as “veshch”, i.e. “thing.” In Shershenich’s volume, however, the original term is conserved: “attraksiona”. It remains to be verified which version the founders of the FEKS (and, more importantly, Eisenstein) actually read.

Futurist Attractions on the Stage

The Italian Futurists rarely transposed their principles concerning the revolution of the theatre into a full-scale production. As a matter of fact, their performances took place mostly in the form of Futurist evenings, that consisted of a chain of attractions: words-in-freedom, speeches, explanation of exhibited paintings, pieces of Futurist noise music, theatrical syntheses and, eventually, film projection. With their original concept of “synthetic theatre”, they conceived extremely short pieces (called *sintesi*), two pages average in length. Presumably, most of the Futurist sketches were *hic et nunc* creations, improvised on stage or at least performed without too much rehearsal. A Futurist evening was a *happening*.

This dimension of uniqueness in some way characterised in some way the spectacular productions of the Russian avant-garde as well. Often, they could not endure more than two evenings since they were simply too chaotic or even too dangerous to be performed during a whole season. Furthermore, in terms of the level of freshness and scan-

dal, only the premiere could reach the best and highest effects. This “rule” is certainly valid for the two pre-Revolutionary productions *Tragedy of Vladimir Mayakovsky* and *Victory over the Sun*, which were performed in St. Petersburg on alternate evenings from December 2 to 5, 1913. The latter was an especially authentic Futurist set-up (with scenery and costumes by Malevich and music by Matyushin). According to the testimony of the actor Tomashevsky, Kruchenykh’s concept was nothing more than “pure nonsense and abracadabra”, but the audience was delighted: “The opera was as easy to look at as it was interesting, and there were many intermissions. In other words, it was just this abstruse but interesting Futurism that the St. Petersburg public wanted, since they had a weakness for unusual sights.”⁵¹

Very probably, both Mayakovsky and Kruchenykh were, at that specific moment, unfamiliar with “The Variety Theatre” manifesto; as already stated, it is only after the Revolution that Marinetti’s ideas concerning the stage are fully intercepted in Russia and deliberately implemented into several theatre productions. Representative of this actualisation are *The First Distiller* by Annenkov, *The Wedding* by the FEKS, and *The Wise Man* by Eisenstein. When in 1919 Annenkov was given the opportunity to direct at the Hermitage Theatre of St. Petersburg, he decided to stage *The First Distiller*, an almost unknown play by Tolstoy, published in 1886. This play was purposefully chosen, as a pretext for a completely free and subversive *mise-en-scène*. The entire staging was built on circus attractions performed by acrobats, trapeze artists and clowns. Most specifically, the scene in Hell was decomposed into a Futurist variety theatre. Similarly, the FEKS took advantage of Gogol’s play *The Wedding* for their first eccentric performance on September 23, 1922. The production was promoted as an “electrification of Gogol” (the author was literally “electrified” on stage), as a mixture of “operetta, melodrama, farce, film, circus and Grand Guignol”.⁵² During the rehearsals, the scenario was incessantly adapted and enriched with new tricks. The lack of time and the chaotic dress rehearsal made the premiere’s unfolding as a real, unforeseen happening.⁵³ In direct line with these two innovative productions is Eisenstein’s staging of *The Wise Man* that consisted of a revolutionary modernisation of Ostrovsky. Its conception was conditioned by Meyerhold’s production of *Tarelkin’s Death*, for which Eisenstein was an assistant director and in which Meyerhold introduced a large number of traditional fair and circus tricks.⁵⁴ The premiere of *The Wise Man* was given in Moscow on April 16, 1923. Conceived as a dynamic montage of stunts, it turned into an extremely physical performance, involving tremendous risks. Several of the 25 attractions that constituted the epilogue of the show can be defined as utterly Futurist: the *mise-en-scène* of a fight (no. 19: “Battle with swords”) and the physical involvement of the audience (no. 25: “A salvo under the spectators as the final chord”), for example. As for the montage principle, it has to be regarded as an intrinsic quality of the variety theatre. To repeat Shklovsky’s words, the technique of montage “reconciles the irreconcilable”, and emphasizes the strangeness of the alternation of attractions; only because of the bizarre, unusual combination, a stunning spectacle is created.⁵⁵ When in 1934 Eisenstein looks back at this production of *The Wise Man*, his conclusion concerning the meaning of the music-hall is unequivocal: “The music-hall element was obviously needed at the time for the emergence of a ‘montage’ form of thought.”⁵⁶ As far as the setting was concerned, Eisenstein transformed the traditional stage into an arena, three-fourths of which were surrounded by the audience. This particular spatial organisation emphasises, once again, the importance of the circus within the context of the Russian avant-garde.

More generally, one can state that the Russian revolution of the theatre results in a real amalgam of different forms of entertainment, which perfectly reflects Marinetti's original designation of the variety theatre as a collective notion (properly translated in *The Mask* as "Theatre of Varieties"). So far, I have not focused my attention on the remarkable integration of film in these hybrid theatre productions. In fact, the interplay between live action and illusion of action, between reality and its substitute, is a highly relevant aspect of the experimental staging in the Teens and the Twenties. It was emblematically applied by the FEKS in the final scene of *The Wedding*, where the fake (but real) assassin-character Chaplin was killed on stage by Nat Pinkerton (= live action), and then resurrected on the screen in the shape of the real (but fake) Charlie Chaplin (= illusion of action). This demonstration of "Technique against death!" aptly reflects the growing occurrence of the use of cinema in the theatre. Eisenstein, at his turn, shot some film fragments for the staging of *The Wise Man* that were integrated in the play. Among the attractions of the epilogue, there are two film segments: one showing the theft of Glumov's diary, an unmistakable parody of an American detective film, and the other revealing Glumov's transformations into various shapes, an homage to Georges Méliès (or even to Leopoldo Fregoli).

The Wedding and *The Wise Man* were not the first examples of interaction between stage and screen. According to Yuri Tsivian, similar hybrid performances were given in Russia already in 1911; such attempts were meant not only to animate the backdrop with the help of film projection, but also to alternate theatrical and cinematic scenes in function of the action. Tsivian especially refers to the experiments of the Theatre of the Mosaic and the troupe of Pavel Orlenov⁵⁷ The originality of the post-revolutionary productions, however, consists of the treatment of film as a music-hall or variety attraction, as a spectacular element in the chain. It is exactly this use of the cinema that Marinetti promotes in "The Variety Theatre" manifesto, at least in its traditionally best known version of 1914:

*The Variety Theatre is unique today in its use of the cinema, which enriches it with an incalculable number of visions and otherwise unrealisable spectacles (battles, riots, horse races, automobile and airplane meets, trips, voyages, depths of the city, the countryside, oceans, and skies).*⁵⁸

Again it would be very useful to know which version the FEKS (and Eisenstein) read, in order to know precisely whether or not the "use of the cinema" in their subversive theatre productions can be considered as a lesson taken directly from Marinetti. As far as Marinetti himself is concerned, it is not unlikely that the idea of utilising film as an enrichment of the variety theatre was inspired by Fregoli's shows. Since 1898, the latter had started to fill his performances with cinematic images, at first with views from Lumière and then with his own films. One of Fregoli's favourite tricks was to show a film backwards, which always provoked hilarity in the auditorium.

In this context of hybrid spectacles, the distribution of *Vita futurista* is emblematic as well. Screened at the end of Futurist evenings, with its premiere at the Theatre Niccolini of Florence on January 28, 1917, it was shown as a spectacular attraction rather than as an autonomous work of art (and this in spite of the position taken in the "Manifesto of Futurist Cinema" wherein the Futurists no longer consider the new medium as an auxiliary element of the stage, but fully acknowledge it as an "autonomous art").⁵⁹

Furthermore, instead of presenting a well organised structure, the film consisted of a chain of sketches, of a juxtaposition of Futurist attractions, each of which illustrated an aspect of “Futurist life”. In contrast to the kolossals produced at the same time in Italy, *Vita futurista* signalled a return to the origins of the cinema. With this occasional experiment, the Futurists re-appreciate the cinema in its original form as fairground attraction, and as base popular amusement.

This homage to the so-called “primitive” cinema underlies likewise not only the FEKS program, but also Eisenstein’s “Montage of Attractions” that refers to Chaplin and “the specific mechanics of his movement.”⁶⁰ This is precisely why André Gaudreault and Tom Gunning have used the term “attractions” to indicate the early conception of non-narrative cinema (that dominated the screens until 1907-08). According to Jacques Aumont, they rely on an Eisensteinian definition of the attraction, as music-hall number, as spectacular and as an “autonomisable” performance.⁶¹

From the perspective of the revolution of the stage and especially from that of the exploitation/exploration of the variety theatre, the reassessment of the cinema as attraction (or the cinema as a “cinema of attraction”) is very significant. It is noticeable that more than one avant-garde short emerged from within the context of the performance art. The very first example is not *Vita Futurista*, but *Drama v Kabaré futuristov No. 13* that was shot in late 1913 in one of the Moscow café-cabarets and that featured, presumably, Larionov, Goncharova, the Burliuk brothers and Mayakovsky. It contained some poetry reading and dance performances, such as the “Futurist tango” and the “Futuredance of Death”.⁶² Another good illustration is *Retour à la raison*, that Man Ray made in one day in 1923, on demand of Tristan Tzara, for the Dadaist evening “Le Cœur à barbe”. Similarly, René Clair’s *Entr’acte* (1924) was conceived as an attraction, or as the title indicates, as an act to be shown during the interval of another spectacle, namely the Dadaist ballet *Relâche*.

Thus, the meaning of the music-hall can be considered in terms of a link between the early cinema and the experimental cinema of the Twenties. In a re-appreciation of the cinema as attraction, or by conceiving it as entr’acte or short entertainment, a bridge between primitive and avant-garde film is built. And it is also thanks to this specific role that the music-hall of the roaring Twenties still survives, at least in some fleeting images.

- 1 This is the closing formula of Marinetti’s manifesto “The Variety Theatre”, in Umbro Apollonio (ed.), *Futurist Manifestos* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973), p. 131.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 129.
- 3 Roland Barthes, “Au music-hall”, in *Mythologies* (Paris: Seuil, 1975), pp. 178-179.
- 4 For a historical overview of the music-hall, see J. Feschotte, *Histoire du Music-Hall* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1965); on the role of the *chanson* within the history of the French café-concert, see G. Harris, “Regarding History: Some Narratives Concerning the Café-Concert, Le Music Hall, and the Feminist Academic”, *The Drama Review*, no. 40 (Winter 1996), 70-84.
- 5 Walter Benjamin, *Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit: drei Studien zur Kunstsoziologie* (1936) (Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 1974), p. 53.
- 6 Harris, who quite rightly points out the differences between the café-concert and the music-hall, stresses that the latter is marked by “the presence of the *promenoir*, a walkway where

- prostitutes could encounter clients.” In other words, the stage literally intrudes in the auditorium. See: G. Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 74.
- 7 R. Barthes, *op. cit.*, pp. 177-178. The English translation is mine.
 - 8 This metaphor is taken from the experimental Flemish poet Paul Van Ostaijen (1896-1928), who twice composed a series of five poems celebrating the music-hall. The second series, dated from 1921, is an explosion of words-in-freedom that starts as following: “SUDDENLY / within the circle of its dejection / the city began to / live // Music Hall is / full / vague / desire / in its electric economy / people in suspense / before the banal marvel // Music hall a balloon that will / b u r s t.” See Paul Van Ostaijen, *Verzamelde gedichten* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1992), p. 350. The English translation is mine.
 - 9 Legrand-Chabrier, “Le Music-hall”, in *Les Spectacles à travers les âges*, Vol. I (Paris: Editions du Cygne, 1931), p. 247.
 - 10 See S. Fauchereau, “Café-Cabaret in the World”, in Pontus Hulthen (ed.), *Futurism & Futurisms* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), p. 439; on the Russian cabarets, in particular the Stray Dog, see J. E. Bowlt, “When Life Was a Cabaret”, *Art News*, no. 83 (December 1984), pp. 122-127.
 - 11 G. Berghäus, *Italian Futurist Theatre, 1909-1944* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 90.
 - 12 Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, “Il teatro di varietà”, *Lacerba*, Vol. 1, no. 19 (October 1913).
 - 13 Generally, one regards the publication in *Daily Mail* (November 21, 1913), as the very first one. Not only was the text published by the London newspaper not the original version (but its translation), it was also a very revised form of Marinetti’s manifesto. The editors of *Daily Mail* conceded that they had “slightly – very slightly” edited the article by “Signor Marinetti”. In reality, the manifesto underwent drastic changes: the title altered into “The Meaning of the Music-Hall”, at least ten paragraphs were entirely cut, and – most importantly – the typical manifesto structure, i.e. its division into numbered items, vanished. In 1914 another English version appeared in Florence, in Gordon Craig’s theatre journal *The Mask*, Vol. 4, no. 3 (January 1914), pp. 188-193. Translated by D. Neville Lees, the manifesto is followed by some notes “On Futurism and the Theatre” by Craig himself, who is probably also the author of the anonymous, somehow ironic footnotes added to Marinetti’s text. In spite of the remark “The first unabridged English translation – By permission of Marinetti & Papini” that accompanies this second English version, one is wrongly tempted to consider it as unfaithful to the original, as in his study does: Michael Kirby: “This version was also incomplete. Although it retained the original format, three one-paragraph sections and Marinetti’s fanciful *parole in libertà* ending were omitted, and one fabricated paragraph – apparently an attempt at summarising the final poetic passages – was inserted.” It was indeed the “first unabridged English translation” of the first version of the manifesto (as published in *Lacerba*, Vol. 1, no. 19, October 1913). See Michael Kirby, *Futurist Performance* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co, 1971), p. 20.
 - 14 Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *I manifesti del Futurismo* (Firenze: Edizioni di Lacerba, 1914).
 - 15 *Teatr i iskusstvo*, Vol. 5 (1914).
 - 16 V. Shershenevich (ed.), *Manifesty italianskago Futurizma* (Moskva: Russkago Tov-va, 1914).
 - 17 Originally, the Russian Futurists planned to welcome Marinetti with rotten tomatoes, but they did not. During his conferences, they principally insisted – according to the testimony of Antonio Marasco, who was travelling with Marinetti – on the equality of languages. Since Marinetti was reading poetry in Italian, they wanted to speak in Russian. In fact, what happened was a genuine linguistic combat between two strongly nationalistic movements. See Antonio Marasco, “Marinetti en Russie”, in Giovanni Lista, *Futurisme. Manifestes – Proclamations – Documents* (Lausanne: L’Age d’Homme, 1973), p. 433.

- 18 František Deák, "The Influence of Italian Futurism in Russia", *The Drama Review*, no. 19 (December 1975), p. 89.
- 19 The manifesto is translated in: Ian Christie, John Gillet (eds.), *Futurism Formalism Feks* (London: British Film Institute, 1978), pp. 62-63.
- 20 The manifesto is translated in John E. Bowlt, *Russian Art of the Avant-Garde. Theory and Criticism. 1902-1934* (New York: The Viking Press, 1976), pp. 80-83. Larionov and Zdanevich declare: "The synthesis of decoration and illustration is the basis of our self-painting. We decorate life and preach – that's why we paint ourselves. [...] City dwellers have for a long time been varnishing their nails, using eye-shadow, rouging their lips, cheeks, hair – but all they are doing is to imitate the earth. We, creators, have nothing to do with the earth; our lines and colours appeared with us. [...] We paint ourselves because a clean face is offensive, because we want to herald the unknown, to rearrange life, and to bear man's multiple soul to upper reaches of reality."
- 21 F. T. Marinetti, "The Variety Theatre", *cit.*, p. 130.
- 22 John E. Bowlt, "Natalia Goncharova and Futurist Theater", *Art Journal*, no. 49 (Spring 1990), p. 46.
- 23 Quoted in F. Deák, *op. cit.*, p. 91; the manifesto is partly translated in Italian in Cesare De Michelis, *Il futurismo italiano in Russia 1909-1929* (Bari: De Donato, 1973), pp. 178-181.
- 24 Bruno Corra, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Emilio Settimelli, "The Futurist Synthetic Theatre", in *Futurist Manifestos*, *cit.*, p. 184.
- 25 *Ibid.*, p. 195.
- 26 It has to be said that Marinetti too included the circus in his "Variety Theatre" manifesto, at least in the first version of 1913. In the introductory words, the variety theatre is explicitly considered as a collective noun covering "Music Halls, Café-chantants or equestrian circuses". This specification disappears in the later version, yet the horses remain thanks to the attractions of "colourful riding masters" and "Looping the loop on bicycles, in cars, and on horseback" See: F.T. Marinetti, "The Variety Theatre", *cit.*, pp. 127-128.
- 27 *Ibid.*, p. 128.
- 28 The manifesto is translated as: Yuri Annenkov, "Merry Sanatorium", *The Drama Review*, no. 19 (December 1975), pp. 110-112.
- 29 See Claudine Amiard-Chevrel, *Du cirque au théâtre* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1983), p. 12.
- 30 F.T. Marinetti, "The Variety Theatre", *cit.*, pp. 130-131.
- 31 Natalia Noussinova, *Leonid Trauberg et l'excentrisme. Les débuts de la fabrique de l'acteur excentrique 1921-1925* (Crisnée: Yellow Now, 1993), p. 28. The English translation is mine.
- 32 Next to Marinetti at least three other names have to be mentioned as inspirational persons for the FEKS: first, their master Mardjanov (who was at his turn a pupil of Stanislavski), because of his concept about the actor; secondly, Radlov whom Kozintsev and Trauberg considered the father of eccentricism for having introduced the circus and the music-hall in his Theatre of Popular Comedy (1920-1922); and lastly, Foregger because of his search for a "music-hallization" of the theatre. See: N. Noussinova, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-23.
- 33 Grigory Kozintsev, Georgy Kryzhitsky, Leonid Trauberg, Sergei Yutkevich, "Ekscentrism" (Eccentrism); Grigory Kozintsev, "AB! Parad ekscentrika" (AB! The Eccentric's Parade); Georgy Kryzhitsky, "Teatr azarta" (The Theatre of Hazard); Leonid Trauberg, "Kinematograf v roli oblicitelja" (The Filmmaker as Denouncer); S. Yutkevich, "Ekscentrism - ZivopiS - ReklamA" (Eccentrism Painting Publicity). For the English translation of these manifestos, see *The Drama Review*, no. 19 (December 1975), pp. 95-109.
- 34 The cult of the machine is even more explicitly expressed in: S. Yutkevich, "Eccentrism

- Painting Publicity”, *cit.*, that recommends not only to study machines (“Locomotives, autos, steamships, motors, mechanisms”), but also to love them: “We teach the love of the machine!”.
- 35 Bernadette Poliwoda, *FEKS - Fabrik des exzentrischen Schauspielers. Vom Exzentrismus zur Poetik des Films in des frühen Sowjetkultur, Slavistische Beiträge*, B. 312 (München: Otto Sagner, 1994), p. 115.
- 36 See G. Kozintsev, “AB! The Eccentric’s Parade”, *cit.*: “We revere Charlie Chaplin’s rear more than Eleonora Duse’s hands!”.
- If the person of Chaplin appealed to the FEKS, it was in the first place because of his ambivalent reputation, that is his success in West-Europe and the label of vulgar that he had in Russia (where he was yet practically unknown at that moment). Thus, the FEKS used his name to shock. Chaplin is also mentioned in the poster list established by Yutkevich in “Eccentrism Painting Publicity”: there he figures among other eccentric representations such as laxative pills and fantastic cigars.
- 37 Vladimir Nedobrovo, “FEKS”, in Paolo Bertetto (ed.), *Ejzenštejn, FEKS, Vertov. Teoria del cinema rivoluzionario. Gli anni venti in URSS* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1975), pp. 239-240. The English translation is mine.
- 38 Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Bruno Corra, Emilio Settimelli, Arnaldo Ginna, Giacomo Balla, Remo Chiti, “Manifesto of Futurist Cinema”, in *Futurist Manifestos*, *cit.*, p. 218; I underline.
- 39 *Futurist Manifestos*, *cit.*, p. 99.
- 40 FT. Marinetti, B. Corra, E. Settimelli, A. Ginna, G. Balla, R. Chiti, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-217.
- 41 FT. Marinetti, “The Variety Theatre”, *cit.*, p. 126.
- 42 An excerpt of this first article by Eisenstein is translated in English in Sergei M. Eisenstein, *The Film Sense* (New York: Meridian, 1957), pp. 230-233.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 232.
- 44 Viktor Shklovsky, *Eisenstein* (Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1977), p. 102.
- 45 S. Eisenstein, *The Film Sense*, p. 232.
- 46 *Ibid.*, p. 231.
- 47 Eisenstein himself, however, refers to another tradition, namely the French Grand Guignol Theatre, that was notorious for its horror and special effects: “An eye is gouged out, an arm or leg amputated before the very eyes of the audience.” *Ibid.*
- 48 FT. Marinetti, “The Variety Theatre”, *cit.*, p. 127.
- 49 *Ibid.*, p. 129.
- 50 For a further analysis of the Futurist dimension in Eisenstein’s work, see: Wanda Strauven, “Notes sur le ‘grand talent futuriste’ d’Eisenstein”, in Dominique Chateau, François Jost, M. Lefebvre (eds.), *Eisenstein: l’ancien et le nouveau* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2001), pp. 45-65.
- 51 K. Tomashevsky, “Victory Over the Sun”, *The Drama Review*, no. 15 (Fall 1971), pp. 95 and 100.
- 52 F. Deák, *op. cit.*, p. 92.
- 53 An important detail is that Eisenstein came over from Moscow to help his FEKS friends with the dress rehearsal. See Grigory Kozintsev, “Découverte de Péetrograd”, in Marcel Martin, Jean Schnitzer, Luda Schnitzer, *Le Cinéma soviétique par ceux qui l’on fait* (Paris: Les Editeurs français réunis, 1966), p. 96.
- 54 D. Gerould, “Eisenstein’s Wiseman”, *The Drama Review*, no. 18 (March 1974), p. 76; see also R. Hutzler, “Vom Mexikaner zu Gasmasken”, in Claudia Dillmann-Kühn (ed.), *Sergej Eisenstein im Kontext der russischen Avantgarde 1920-1925* (Frankfurt/M: Deutsches Filmmuseum, 1992), pp. 42-43.

- 55 V. Shklovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 102.
- 56 Sergei M. Eisenstein, "Through Theater to Cinema", in *Film Form. Essays in Film Theory* (New York: Meridian, 1957), p. 12. Such idea was already expressed in the closing sentence of "Montage of Attractions", where, together with the film and the circus, the music-hall is explicitly considered as an apprenticeship for montage: "Schooling for the *montageur* can be found in the cinema, and chiefly in the music-hall and circus, which invariably (substantially speaking) puts on a good show – from the spectator's viewpoint. This schooling is necessary in order to build a strong music-hall-circus program, resulting from the situation found at the base of a play." S. Eisenstein, *The Film Sense, cit.*, p. 233.
- 57 Yuri Tsivian, "L'Ecran sur la scène, chez les Feks et chez Eisenstein", in N. Noussinova, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-122.
- 58 F.T. Marinetti, "The Variety Theatre", *cit.*, p. 126.
- 59 F.T. Marinetti, B. Corra, E. Settimelli, A. Ginna, G. Balla, R. Chiti, *op. cit.*, p. 208.
- 60 S. Eisenstein, *The Film Sense, cit.*, p. 231.
- 61 André Gaudreault, Tom Gunning, "Le cinéma des premiers temps: un défi à l'histoire du cinéma?", in Jacques Aumont, André Gaudreault, Michel Marie (eds.), *Histoire du cinéma. Nouvelles approches* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1989), p. 59. In this paper, which was delivered at Cerisy-la-Salle in 1985, the authors distinguish two modes of film practice in the early cinema: 1) the system of *attractions monstratives* (1895-1908); 2) the system of narrative integration (1909-1914). As far as the definition of Eisenstein's attraction is concerned, Jacques Aumont proposes three different concepts: the attraction as performance (i.e., the music-hall or circus number), as association of ideas, and as "efficiency" (*efficience*). See: Jacques Aumont, *Montage Eisenstein* (Paris: Albatros, 1979).
- 62 On *Drama v Kabaré futuristov No. 13* and the "inconclusive, unreliable or very incomplete" data that exist about this movie, see J. Heil, "Russian Futurism and the Cinema: Majakovskij's Film Work of 1913", *Russian Literature*, no. 19 (1986), pp. 175-191.