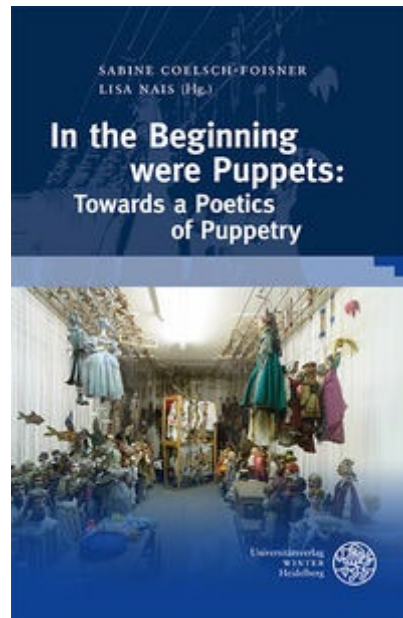


In the Beginning were Puppets: Towards a Poetics of Puppetry

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The study privileges the puppet as a new and revealing point of access to contemporary critical debates regarding performance, genre, affect, aesthetics, cultural production, political activism and the nonhuman studies. The contributors address a striking range of performance histories, aesthetic movements and theoretical positions, from the Arabic influence on Iberian shadow puppetry to the position of the puppet in post-Revolutionary Iran and the American anti-war movement; from the puppet's central role in the development of European theatre to avant-garde and modernist anti-theatre; from the puppet's place in the histories of visual art and experimental film to critiques of mass media.

By paying careful attention to the specific roles and varieties of puppets in these diverse historical, political and cultural contexts, the collection provides new insights into the practices, aesthetics and ethics of puppet theatre, which serve, in turn, to interrogate anew the relationships between the human and the nonhuman, the material and the immaterial, the uncanny and the sublime.

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