

Abstracts

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Suzanne Jacob

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Abstracts

« “Être est une activité de fiction.” L’écriture de Suzanne Jacob » (Christl Verduyn)

In stating that “being is a fictional activity,” Suzanne Jacob unveils the major reference points of her writing. This article deals with the triad of being/acting/writing, a central combination of motifs that structures her work. Through fiction, Jacob bears witness to the fact that women need to act, and the act of writing becomes highly important because it allows women to be present to the world.

« Suzanne Jacob : poèmes de la femme piégée » (Pierre Nepveu)

Suzanne Jacob’s only collection of poems, published in 1980, should be viewed both in the context of women’s writing of the period and as part of a personal project to subvert voice and representations, to sing off-key in order to speak truly, and to search for presence even within the ugly and the grotesque. Akin to the desire for presence and orality expressed in Suzanne Jacob’s song recitals of the same period, this poetry embodies the “anti-novelistic” aspect of the novelist’s work as she attempts, with an often convulsive lyricism, to struggle against a tenacious confinement and to name a “thirst” and a desire for being.

« Suzanne Jacob, à l’ombre des jeunes femmes en fuite » (Lori Saint-Martin)

This article takes as a starting point Alice Jardine’s reading of Woman and modernity in contemporary French theory, tracing the figure of the feminine in Suzanne Jacob’s works as that which cannot be seized, immobilized, or mastered. Refusing to possess or be possessed, Jacob’s female protagonists multiply their departures, their love affairs, their forms of resistance to the crushing uniformity of modern life.

« L’éloge du fortuit dans *Les Aventures de Pomme Douly* » (Lucie Lequin)

Les Aventures de Pomme Douly is an iconoclastic and subversive work by Suzanne Jacob. To reach abstraction and rationality, Jacob suggests that we go through the concrete and the fortuitous instead of following traditional logic. Through incongruous combinations of words, objects,

the body, laughter, and meaning, her character Pomme Douly tries to grasp the world by creating a different way of thinking, which develops in movement and on the edges of tradition. Incoherence is risked for the purpose of making sense.

« Suzanne Jacob et *La Gazette des femmes*: le “beau risque” de la rhétorique et de la subversion » (Lucie Joubert)

Along with her novels, Suzanne Jacob wrote a regular column for many years in the journal *La Gazette des femmes*. The analysis of this less-known aspect of her work shows that Jacob was able to combine literary writing with journalistic writing. Her column put forth a very personal, light-hearted reading of minor facts of everyday life that fits in with the feminist approach of the journal but showed a bias toward the individual to the detriment of the collective feminine voice.

« “Figures de fuite”: densité des textes et travail des lecteurs de Suzanne Jacob » (Jean Anderson)

Three texts by Suzanne Jacob — *La Passion selon Galatée* (1987), *Maude* (1988) and *Les Aventures de Pomme Douly* (1988) — are studied here with particular reference to their use of textual density. The main focus of the article is on the applicability of this concept as it is described by Wolfgang Iser in *The Act of Reading* (1978). Some consideration is also given to Patricia Smart's notion of texture as the density created by what speaks “in the gaps between the words” (*Writing in the Father's House*, 1988). In essence, Jacob's writing employs a number of strategies which, by working against traditional reading practices and expectations, ensure that the reader must reflect on these same practices and expectations. The texts are not “transparent,” in that they do not serve only as vehicles for the narration of events or emotions; they are, rather, texts which demand that the reader give close attention to their surface features, their textuality.

« Dé-lire les “délires” de *À l'inconnue nue* de Gilles Hénault » (Antoine Spacagna)

This study attempts to define Gilles Hénault's poetic art in *À l'inconnue nue* through close analysis carried out at several levels: typographic presentation, phonetic and semantic games (anagrams, metagrams, etc.). The study focuses on the body, the natural world and the sea, which are major themes of the twenty-six poems making up this short collection. The conclusion locates Gilles Hénault within the major currents of the Francophone corpus, while emphasizing his Québécois “difference.”

« Le jeu d'imitation dans *Copies conformes* de Monique LaRue »
(Daniel Canty)

The novel *Copies conformes*, by Monique LaRue, raises a series of questions related to fictional ontology. These questions arise from the environment in which the characters move (San Francisco and its immediate vicinity), which is seen through the representation of technology in the novel as a source of simulation (Baudrillard) and of the utopia of communication (Wiener). Turing's machine provides a narrative model and the imitation game symbolizes the interactions between the characters. Their ontological dilemmas find an imaginary solution in Turing's technical metaphors.

« Le *Journal* d'Henriette Dessaulles : la contre-aventure » (Annie Cantin)

One of the aspects of Henriette Dessaulles's *Journal* that has attracted the most attention is its functional and modal transformation of discourse. Some critics have tried to explain this shift of the diaristic essence towards what appears to be its negation by referring to the novel of love and the novel of initiation. This article suggests that the conversion of the diaristic discourse is in fact related to a program of personal reform undertaken by the young Henriette as she faced the constraints and conventions inherent in her bourgeois condition. In providing the space for a rite of institution and a process of social integration, the diary of Henriette Dessaulles might be seen as the locus of a counter-adventure in which the intimate I, far from finding itself, is projected towards its own disintegration.

« La folie de Marcel : étude d'un personnage de Michel Tremblay »
(Alain-Michel Rocheleau)

In Michel Tremblay's work, mental illness often appears as a reassuring refuge for those who lack the ability to deal with reality. Despair and madness may drive some characters to suicide; others, however, plunge into a supernatural world inhabited by comforting fairies. Such is the case of Marcel. Concepts related to the "New Communication" are used in considering the madness assigned to this character. Marcel's delirium and hallucinations — which cannot simply be equated with the imaginary activities of children — reveal a counter-image of the universe described by Tremblay; they also represent Marcel's specific defense against a social, family and school environment that is beyond his control and in which any attempt at development is doomed to defeat.