## Mime Journal

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Addendum: Luane Davis

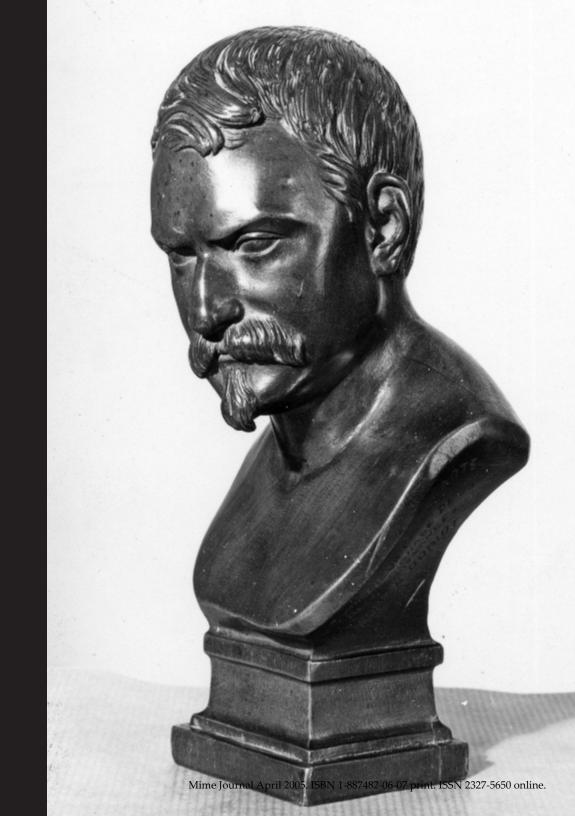
Luane Davis

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## ADDENDUM

Note: Contemporary theatre practitioners continue to be influenced by Delsarte's ideas, either through Delsarte's own words or books about him, or through others who were influenced by him. Two practitioners responded to our call for articles, and we have included photographs and text from each of them.

—The Editors

## Luane Davis



Left: The Emperor Jones (Troy Chapman) rules as his spirit (Christopher Coles) sits on the throne. IRT's 2002 production of Eugene O'Neil's The Emperor Jones at the New 42nd Street Theatre. Photographer Peter Haggerty.

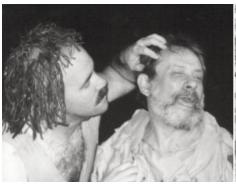
Right: Eugene (David Rosenburg) and Etienne's spirit (David Lockwood) try to communicate in IRT's 1997 production of A Flea in her Ear at the Samuel Beckett Theatre on 42nd St. Antoinette's spirit (Vivian Hasbrouke) looks on. Photographer Carl Sturmer.

Luane Davis, a professional American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter and actress, combined ASL with Delsarte to create a hybrid acting style named "Del-Sign." In 1986 she cofounded the Inter-borough Repertory Theatre (IRT) in New York, developing this synthesis which "enhances the actor's natural physicality, loosens selfconsciousness and builds an amazingly strongly-bonded cast." Ms. Davis recognizes two predecessors who made a similar synthesis: in 1891 Eva Allen Alberti and in 1923 Albert Ballin made their own combinations of the two forms, leaving behind just

enough information to tantalize Ms. Davis. She trained in Delsarte technique with the National Improvisation Company while doing improvisations of historical characters at the Javits Convention Center in New York City, but much of what she has developed comes from her own research and understanding of Delsarte literature. Ms. Davis has directed several awardwinning productions in New York using combinations of Deaf and hearing actors. Most recently the technique was used with the character "Pap" in the Deaf West's 2004 Broadway production of *Big River* which employed four actors trained in Del-Sign. She is deepening her understanding and development of Del-Sign as a Professor of Creative and Cultural Studies at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at Rochester Institute of Technology where she directs several productions yearly as well as continuing her work in New York at the IRT.



Prospero (Eddie Swayze) makes Ferdinand's (Chris Landry) sword heavy, while Miranda (Ann Holland Schroeder) clings to his leg. Each character has his parallel: Prospero, Peter Haggerty; Ferdinand, Gary Hoffman; and Miranda, Kori Schnieder. Interborough Repertory Theater (IRT) 2001 production of *The Tempest* at the Jose Quintero Theatre on 42nd St. *Photographer Andrew Jones*.



Caliban (losif Schniderman) communes with his spirit (Ed Wing) in IRT's production of *The Tempest*. Photographer Andrew Jones.



Anthony Bruscato, accompanied by the drumming group Tribe, performs his own poem in the National Technical Institute for the Deaf Drama Club's 2004 production of Motion Poetry. Photographer Luane Davis Haggerty.