

Performing Neurology: The Dramaturgy of Dr Jean-Martin Charcot


By Jonathan W. Marshall

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This text provides a study of Jean-Martin Charcot, a founding figure in the history of neurology as a discipline and a colleague of Sigmund Freud. It argues that Charcot's diagnostic and pedagogic models, explaining both how disease is recognized and described and how to teach the act of neurological diagnosis, should be considered through a theatrical lens. Considering the constitution of the living, moving body in terms of performance, Charcot created a situation whereby the line between deceptive acting and real pathology, scientific accuracy and creative falsehood, and indeed between health and unhealth, becomes blurred. The physician becomes a medical subject in his or her own display, transforming medicine into a potentially destabilizing, even grand guignolesque, discourse. Offering a unique insight into Charcot's work, his concepts and his methods, this text represents a unique and interdisciplinary analysis cutting across the fields of art and neurology.

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Editorial Review

Review

“The potential readership for this new book is quite broad, and interested readers new to the topic will profit, but also those who are familiar with the large literature on Charcot but open to new perspectives will find insightful reading within this very well-organized book. ... Contemporary neurologists ... will learn from this analysis and reflect on their own practice and teaching methods with a greater sensitivity to verb and tense as we ‘perform’ our neurological examinations daily.” (Christopher G. Goetz, *Brain: A Journal of Neurology*, Vol. 140 (6), June, 2017)

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Jonathan W. Marshall, born on February 22, 1970, is an interdisciplinary scholar who has published on the relationship between neurology and the arts, as well as photomedia, sound art, butoh dance, Australian painting and choreography, and other topics. Marshall is a freelance critic and reviewer of contemporary arts. He is currently based at the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts, Edith Cowan University, Perth.

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