

tion du *Testament du couturier* ont été gracieusement fournies par Joël Beddows, directeur artistique du Théâtre la Catapulte, qui a créé la pièce en février 2003 à La Nouvelle Scène.



Michel Ouellette, Stitch by Stitch

INTRODUCTION

by Louise Ladouceur

Guest Editor

This collection of articles results from a session on Franco-Ontarian literature that Patrick Leroux and I organized in May 2005 at the University of Western Ontario and that was presented during a conference held under the auspices of the Association for Québec and Canadian Literatures and the Association for Theatre Research in Canada. What was striking about this panel was that all the papers that were presented, covering the drama of Michel Ouellette, examined his play *Le testament du couturier* with particular insistence. It seemed to me that this play marked a turning point in the elaboration of a Franco-Ontarian dramatic repertoire and this collection of articles is published in order to underline its significance. Viewed in this light, the three articles and the self-critical analysis that follow constitute a kaleidoscope of readings that centre upon this play.

In an analysis pointing out how the work redefines the notions of locale and dramatic space that have shaped the reception of Franco-Ontarian theatre, Stephanie Nutting also explores the dual nature of a fabric-fable wherein a story is constructed around a seamstress who becomes the avatar of the writer. Nicole Côté, for her part, explores the roles attributed to women and to men, the relationship between bodies, illness and desire, and the frontiers between past and present in this play that she reads as a tale on counter productivity. Through the critical reception devoted to *French Town* and *Le testament du couturier* between 1993 and 2005, Lucie Hotte and Johanne Melançon trace the evolution of the critical horizon in which the plays are produced and the readings to which they gave birth over different time frames. Finally, the author himself takes on the role of critic and presents us with a reflection on his journey, beginning with his first plays, and on the relationships created between his work and the critical discourse

that it inspires. A list of Michel Ouellette's work completes this overview that I hope will incite an irresistible urge to read or to reread a playwright who has become essential to the francophone dramatic repertoire of Ontario and of Canada.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this issue. The photos of the production of *Le testament du couturier*, created at La Nouvelle Scène in February 2003, were graciously provided by Joel Beddows, Artistic Director of Theatre la Catapulte.