jazz-shaped energy and force, which delights in repetition with difference and in controlled improvisation. Even if some of Dinerstein's riffs may at times seem to risk losing themselves in digression, he ultimately always lets the main motif break through at strategic moments.

Swinging the Machine is of particular interest for those studying technology and culture, black music, interwar cultural expression, and the dialogue between modernity and popular modernism. In addition, many others working on interrelations of aesthetic forms and social change will benefit from this dynamic, insightful, and well-researched study. And, last but not least: written by a self-confessed "grooveologist" (xi), it is a book to enjoy.

Tuire Valkeakari Yale University

Per Winther, Jakob Lothe, and Hans H. Skei, eds., *The Art of Brevity: Excursions in Short Fiction Theory and Analysis*. Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 2004. xx + 212 pages; ISBN 1-57003-557-1.

I spent part of last summer reading the collected shorts stories of Eyvind Johnson – a volume of 53 stories and 650 pages – an experience that highlighted the elusiveness of the short story genre's characteristics. I was again reminded of the variety of texts encompassed within the term short fiction, not only epic and lyrical, or syntagmatic and paradigmatic stories, but a whole spectrum of other texts such as fictionalized narratives bordering on the anecdote, the sketch, the reportage, the travelogue, and the fragment. Other issues were brought to mind: point of view (half of the stories were told by a first-person narrator); the resistance of the short story as the reader turns from one story to the next, causing the reader to slow down; the reader's lack of retention when one tries to take in a series of stories (which may explain why short story collections are so little read), and the structural variety in closure and openness, in the presence or absence of epiphanic moments, and in the linear vs. the spatial.

As I later turned to reading *The Art of Brevity: Excursions in Short Fiction Theory and Analysis,* edited by Per Winther, Jakob Lothe, and Hans H. Skei, it turned out that most of the above issues are addressed there in new and thought-provoking ways. After having read the introduction and the seventeen articles of this volume, I felt that I should go back to reread Johnson's fifty-three short stories, but then, unfortunately, my summer was over. But I will certainly carry the insights and new perspectives presented in the book with me for future short story reading.

Even though books on short story theory are infrequent, a few important works have appeared in the past. One may mention, for instance, Charles May, ed., *The New Short Story Theories* (1994), Susan Lohafer and Jo Ellyn Clarey, eds., *Short Story Theory at a Crossroads* (1989), Clare Hanson, ed., *Re-Reading the Short Story*

(1989), and John Gerlach, *Toward the End: Closure and Structure in the American Short Story* (1985). Winther-Lothe-Skei's *Art of Brevity* belongs among these significant contributions and will, I am convinced, be one of the standard works constantly referred to in the future. This collection of articles demonstrates a width and variety of issues and perspectives that make the reader feel informed, enlightened, challenged, and, at times, provoked. The contributions discuss national and regional differences in short fiction; varieties of texts (realistic vs symbolic, anecdotal vs epiphanic, fragments, short shorts, tall tales, etc); dis/similarities from/to the novel and the lyric poem; and the importance of the historical context and the evolution of the short story.

It is impossible for me as a reviewer to do justice to all the contributions, so I have selected only a few for further discussion. Let me first focus on a couple of articles devoted to the definition or re-definition of the short story, or the short story "proper" (as Rohrberger calls it), that is the lyrical/symbolic/paradigmatic story, after which I will pay attention to some contributions that rather look at the porous borders between, on the one hand, varieties of short fiction and, on the other, between short fiction and the novel.

In "Why Short Stories Are Essential and Why They Are Seldom Read," Charles E. May perceptively discusses what he considers to be five of the short story's most significant generic issues: sequence and significance, mystery and pattern, the problem of character, metaphoric resolution, and the refusal to explain. Even though May seemingly addresses these issues as they define the generic short story, it seems clear that the kind of text he has in mind is the lyrical or paradigmatic story. The shortness of the short story, he states, demands compactness; mere objects and events are transformed into significance; the story focuses mystery, the unexpected and the unfamiliar; the story that depends on the metaphoric meaning of events and objects can only achieve closure aesthetically rather than phenomenologically; the short story refuses to explain, it addresses those basic existential mysteries that are ultimately inexplicable in rational terms. May comes to the conclusion that, in comparison to the novel, the short story delves more deeply: "If ... we feel that beneath the everyday or immanent in the everyday there is some other reality that somehow evades us, ... if we have a sense of the liminal nature of existence, then the short story is more 'realistic' than the novel can possibly be." Maybe it would have been fruitful, for instance in his discussion of the short story's refusal to explain, to have made a comparison not only to the novel but also to the lyric poem, a point of reference that May is very familiar with, as Gerlach makes clear in his article in *The Art of Brevity*.

As a starting-point in "Narrative, Lyric, and Plot in Chris Offutt's *Out of the Woods*," John Gerlach uses Charles May's 1994 statement that the short story historically has pursued a "movement away from the linearity of prose toward the spatiality of poetry." Gerlach devotes his contribution to the tension between the forward-directed, linear, syntagmatic narrative and the paradigmatic "all-at-onceness" and to how plot can lead from syntagmatic to paradigmatic. To varying degrees, all short

stories include both of these tendencies. Gerlach argues, however, that also the syntagmatic, episodic events, even fragmentary ones, can generate paradigmatic elements. The increasing presence of embedded elements, in the form of, for instance, analepses, can generate a sense of lyrical spatiality. To me, however, this argument seems paradoxical. If the short story captures the everyday moment and makes it metaphorical, shouldn't fewer, rather than more, disruptions, flashbacks, etc, generate a stronger sense of the lyrical and paradigmatic?

As Gerlach builds on May's earlier work, so does Per Winther use Gerlach's *Toward the End* as a basis for his contribution "Closure and Preclosure as Narrative Grid in Short Story Analysis." The focus for Winther's argument is Gerlach's discussion of five closural categories for the short story: solution of the central problem, natural termination, completion of antithesis, manifestation of a moral, and encapsulation. Winther discusses and questions, complements and refines Gerlach's categories in a sensible way. In particular, he expresses reservations concerning the category of "completion of antithesis" when he correctly argues that also the other four closural signals establish conceptual antithesis or polarization. To be able to distinguish between the various forms of antithesis, Winther suggests a new term, "emotional and/or cognitive reversal." He also suggests that "circularity," which in Gerlach's taxonomy belongs within antithesis, be made a category of its own, and that Gerlach's "encapsulation" be changed into "perspectival shift" to make it possible to discuss the *gradual* shift of narrative focus at the story's end. In addition, Winther proposes that we keep the terms "closural signal" and "closural marker" separate (to Gerlach they are synonyms), the first one promising closure, the latter delivering on that promise. Winther's revision of Gerlach's categories is well argued and sensible, and improves an already established analytical model.

Let me now turn to a few contributions that deal with alternative forms of short fiction or the overlappings between short and long fiction. Here one could easily have included the very interesting contributions by Gitte Mose on the Danish short shorts and by W. H. New on the Australian tall tale, but I will limit myself to articles by Sillars, Skei, and Kleppe.

Stuart Sillars's "The Illustrated Short Story: Toward a Typology" is to me an eye-opener. The article analyzes the interplay between image and discourse in illustrated stories from the 1890s. As he points out, through the inclusion of the illustrations a dual text is created. Basing his argument on Barthes, he distinguishes between "anchorage" and "relay" images, the latter more common and more proleptic. The relay illustrations appear about a page prior to the event in the text, thereby being anticipatory in nature; the "text" of the image is repeated in the discourse, making it a double narrative. Sillars also points out that the illustration depicts the action from outside the narrator's mind, creating a dialogic way of telling. However, what Sillars does not address is the way in which the illustrations restrict the written text for the reader. The reader participation in forming his or her imaginary world becomes limited. All readers of the illustrated story adopt identical images of what the characters

and the settings look like. So, the illustrated story is not only a dual, dialogic exciting text, as Sillars seems to argue, but it is also imprisoning the reader's imagination.

Hans H. Skei wants to explore, in "A Life Remembered: Store Porch Tales from Yoknapatawpha County," whether the borderlines between short story and novel make sense in Faulkner's case, and finds that they do not. The novel, he holds, "seems to have an unlimited capacity to include and transform any and all texts, being as it were a growing and changing genre." Skei analyzes Faulkner's store porch tales "Fool about a Horse" and "Spotted Horses" both as shorts stories and as parts of *The Hamlet*. He is ambivalent about "Fool about a Horse." On the one hand, he says, it is "superimposed" and not "fully integrated" in *The Hamlet*, on the other it fills its place if one regards the novel as a "more flexible and dialogic genre than the established types of short fiction." "Spotted Horses" evokes no ambivalence; it is perfectly and totally integrated in the novel. Skei's conclusion is that the same texts can easily belong in different genres. What I ask myself, however, is the following: What would happen if one did not define *The Hamlet* as a novel but as a short story composite or cycle? Skei's problems with incorporating, for instance, "Fool about a Horse" would vanish. When he writes about *The Hamlet* as an "episodic novel" and about the novel as a "flexible and dialogic genre," isn't he then actually writing about the short story composite?

Speaking of the short story composite, let me in conclusion address the only article devoted to that genre, Sandra Lee Kleppe's "Faulkner, Welty, and the Short Story Composite." Kleppe approaches Welty's *The Golden Apples* and Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses* from the point of view of authorial intention, presenting a convincing case that Welty very deliberately wrote a composite while Faulkner's expressed intention was to compose a novel. She takes exception to one of my own earlier statements that Faulkner's intention in this case is irrelevant. Maybe that was insensitively put by me. What I meant was that what *label* a writer (or editor) puts on a text doesn't necessarily make it such a text. Faulkner also said that *The Unvanquished* is not a novel but a "series of stories." But don't we all agree that the latter book is more novel-like, more unified, more linear, than the former? So, should we trust Faulkner's, or any writer's, labels? One of the less well integrated stories of *Go Down, Moses* is "Pantaloon in Black," which I term a fringe story. Kleppe gives a very sensitive reading of this story, showing that it, thematically and structurally, is better integrated than I once argued. It is thus less of a fringe story than I claimed, but that fact does not, to me, make *Go Down, Moses* into a novel. In my book, Faulkner's text is still a short story composite.

It is unfortunate that space allows me to touch on only one third of the contributions of this fine collection; the other two thirds certainly also merit attention. The book as a whole deserves to be read both by those who need to know more about the short story genre and by those who already are informed but who need to re-think many of the basic concepts, definitions, and narrative strategies of the field.

Rolf Lundén — Uppsala University