

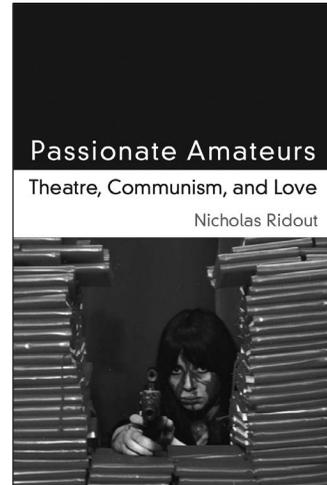
Books

Passionate Amateurs: Theatre, Communism, and Love. By Nicholas Ridout. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013; 216 pp.; \$55.00 cloth, e-book available.

Since the bust of the global financial system in 2008 there has been a boom in scholarship that uses performance as a lens for grappling with the temporal, spatial, and affective dimensions of contemporary forms of labor. To this workerist turn in performance studies, Nicholas Ridout's *Passionate Amateurs: Theatre, Communism, and Love* adds welcome historical perspective by charting how theatre practices through the last century have transformed alongside shifts in the labor process, from the effects of industrialization on the plays of Anton Chekhov and the Moscow Art Theatre to the odd jobs members of Nature Theater of Oklahoma perform to support their theatre making. Despite its title, Ridout's is not a book about communist theatre, however close it comes with chapters devoted to Jean-Luc Godard's *La Chinoise* and Walter Benjamin's "Program for a Proletarian Children's Theater." The titular relation between theatre and communism refers, instead, to the "communist potential" Ridout finds in certain performance practices situated squarely within capitalism (5). *Passionate Amateurs* is a daring and theoretically sophisticated meditation on the work theatre might do, not to make communism a reality in the future, but to keep alive for the present "an image of the unconstrained community of fellow-feeling that might ground a utopian politics" (4).

Guiding this search for the communist potential in modern theatre are the passionate amateurs of Ridout's title, whose theatrical pursuits are defined by a radical ambiguity: the labor they perform is not necessarily work, but neither is it *not* work. To put it simply, passionate amateurs make theatre out of love rather than to make a living. By confounding what it means to work under capitalism, they personify the possibility that a "realm of freedom" might exist within what Marx termed the "realm of necessity" (5). Theatre, as "the realm of the not-not," is well suited to what Ridout calls the "not-not work" of passionate amateurs and their turn to the distinct temporality of theatrical presence to produce an experience of social community altogether different from the rhythms and rhymes of wage labor (106). Through engagement with a wide range of social theorists, from Hannah Arendt and Jacques Rancière to Paolo Virno and Miranda Joseph, Ridout underscores the passionate amateur's radicality, even associating it with the tradition Michael Löwy and Robert Sayre have called "romantic anti-capitalism" (6). Opposed to yet constituted by capitalism, passionate amateurs are subject to the sways of history; their not-not work transforms along with the restructuring of the production process.

Thus, instead of a static portrait of the passionate amateur, Ridout's book offers a "discontinuous history" (32). He constructs his argument through case studies drawn from four distinct moments since the late 1800s and by focusing on figures both historical and fictional. The first passionate amateurs we encounter are the professionals who populate Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* and were employed at the Moscow Art Theatre in an industrializing Russia at the turn of



the 20th century. The attention to professionals such as doctors and actors helps Ridout clarify that passionate amateurs are not exempt from working, though unlike wage laborers they perform their duties for purposes in addition to and other than material survival. From Moscow we move to Weimar Germany where Ridout introduces us to the youths of Benjamin's "Program for a Proletarian Children's Theater," a 1928 text Ridout names as the manifesto of the passionate amateur. Then, in 1960s Paris we meet the would-be student revolutionaries in Godard's 1967 film *La Chinoise*, whose formation of a Marxist-Leninist *groupuscule* appears to Ridout less as training for revolution than habituation to the new world of work under deindustrialization. And before concluding with reflections on his own labors of love as a professional spectator, Ridout turns to the contemporary performance group Nature Theater of Oklahoma to tell "the story of the passionate amateurs of post-Fordism" who work jobs "they mostly hate in order to be able to make the work they say they love" (114).

Besides giving a dynamic sense of passionate amateurs and their not-not work, Ridout's historical scope yields fresh ways to historicize theatre practice according to changing conditions and relations of labor. His take on *Uncle Vanya*, for instance, concentrates on how industrialization informed both what Chekhov wrote into the play and the very production process Stanislavsky used to stage it. Alongside such socially symptomatic cases, Ridout emphasizes more antagonistic relationships between theatre and work, such as Walter Benjamin and Asja Lācis's refusal of the division of labor between performers and audiences in their plans to repurpose theatre into a model of "communist pedagogy" that emphasized "the revolutionary value of play" (58–59). Ridout's historical materialist method also allows him to go against the grain of accepted scholarship in several instances, the boldest being his study of *La Chinoise*, which Ridout argues is not the harbinger of the May 1968 insurrection that some scholars insist it is, but rather a film that betrays "an intuition" of the decline of Fordism (95). For Ridout, the passionate amateurs of Godard's film are the "predecessors of today's precarious collectives" like Nature Theater of Oklahoma. Informed by autonomist thinkers such as Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, Ridout uses Nature Theater of Oklahoma's *No Dice* (2007) to challenge a certain fatalism in contemporary social theory that only sees in the relation of performance and immaterial labor the yoking of artistic qualities to the demands of managerial and service work. But in *No Dice*, Nature Theater of Oklahoma transforms its members' day jobs into material for performance. By redeploying necessity into passion, Nature Theater of Oklahoma evinces the central claim of Ridout's book: in theatre we find evidence, however faint, that "the subsumption of labor under capitalism might not be as complete" as is often assumed (14).

Ultimately these studies are more compelling as demonstrations of the explanatory possibilities of historical materialism than they are as evidence of theatre's communist potential today. But perhaps this has less to do with theatre itself than with what Ridout takes the connection of communism with theatre to be; he calls it "theatrical communism," a term that owes much to Jean-Luc Nancy's *The Inoperative Community* (1991) and designates a "collective and socially oriented art practice" that can actualize "something that is elsewhere only an idea of a vision of the future [...]: production and pleasure beyond the division of labor" (15). By such standards, communism in theatre is only and always something to which one can be "affectively attached," and Ridout leaves out of consideration other, perhaps more material, ways theatre might participate in an active and ongoing struggle of communization. This book is an essential contribution to theatre history, not least because of another question it allows us to ask of theatre's passionate amateurs today: besides providing "a fleeting realm of freedom within the realm of necessity" (4), what work can theatre do to permanently negate the very relation between freedom and necessity, a contradiction fundamental to the capitalist value-form?

—Michael Shane Boyle

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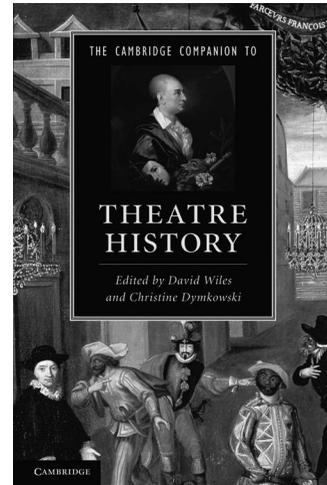
The Cambridge Companion to Theatre History.

Edited by David Wiles and Christine Dymkowski. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013; 332 pp.; illustrations. \$90.00 cloth, \$29.99 paper, e-book available.

The Cambridge Companion to Theatre History works to articulate the various challenges and anxieties facing contemporary theatre historians and historiographers. While these challenges cut across the volume and nuance the work of each of the contributors, there is not always agreement about the best way to proceed. David Wiles's introduction calls for reasserting the centrality of the "big stories" that form theatre's legacy, spark the imagination of scholars and students, and help us connect with the past (4). These stories, the editors believe, have been "abandoned" by conscientious left-leaning scholars in their efforts to accommodate the range of voices that have emerged with postcolonialism and an emphasis on global diversity and specificity—the danger being that theatre history's big story will be left to the ends of "right wing nationalism," which doesn't have qualms about engineering stories of the past to serve its interests (4).

This collection aims to reestablish some of that "big story" legacy, a "vertical line which cuts through the past," while finding points of intersection with a "horizontal line that reaches sideways to the diversity of the present" (4). Four essays provide an overview of how theatre's development has become known to us. In order to resist the conceit that "the progress of the narrative equates with the progress of humankind" (10), however, the editors sequence these pieces in reverse chronological order. The essays, then, treat "modernist theatre" (Stefan Hulfeld), "baroque to romantic theatre" (Christopher Baugh), "medieval, renaissance, and early modern theatre" (David Wiles), and "classical theatre" (Erika Fischer-Lichte) in that order, an interesting (if somewhat clunky) strategy that shows the book means business when it comes to challenging received narratives.

The editors realize all too well, though, that the big story about the theatrical past has been shaped by a small handful of "intellectually and politically dominant" nations (9), and that new retellings, while continually necessary, will be informed by the subjectivities and values of historians. There is some ambivalence in the volume regarding this position. Certain contributors settle for compromise between reifying the grand narratives and continuing to shoehorn in the local histories: "There is no other way to give the past a shape and thereby perceive it as something other than a random stream of events," admits Wiles (55). Hulfeld writes, "theatre wanders through time and space in a circular and erratic trajectory," hence "only the standpoint of a particular historian can give it shape" (30). Others take more polar positions. Seeking an "overall reality" concerning the scientific and artistic heritage of acting, Josette Féral



inquires whether we should “speak of a hegemonic model that breaks with more fragmented and geographically limited perspectives” (184, 193). “I believe so,” she concludes, “despite the prevailing view that privileges the diversity of local practices” (193). Fischer-Lichte takes the opposite view in her chapter on classical theatre: “Instead of macro-history—i.e., the grand narrative—we have to deal with many microhistories” (73); “there is no place for a definitive linear history here” (83). And Thomas Postlewait’s careful reflection on the unreliability of written and oral evidence, using conflicting accounts of Christopher Marlowe’s death as a case study, warns scholars against a “totalising explanation for human activities” (242).

The *Companion* offers a series of representative “local” studies to intervene in the national histories rehearsed in the first four chapters. Ros Merkin gives a Liverpool-based history. S.E. Wilmer writes on Finland. There is a very good essay by Hazem Azmy on 19th- and 20th-century Egyptian theatre and performance, and another by Diego Pellecchia on Japanese *noh*. Other essays engage history from a point of view not confined to dramatic literature, including the audience (Willmar Sauter), music theatre (Zachary Dunbar), and the circus (Marius Kwint); or offer historiographic meditations on the scholar’s process, such as the work of assessing visual evidence (Barbara Hodgdon), and that of archiving and collecting (Fiona MacIntosh).

One of the most important contributions is Marvin Carlson’s “Reflections on a Global Theatre History,” which more forcefully demonstrates the extent to which theatre history has borne allegiance to a small number of European nation-states than any other piece in the volume. Rather than argue for a return to linearity as a narrative convenience, Carlson suggests the Deleuzian model of the rhizome as a way to conceive of the theatrical past(s) and the ways in which we apprehend and discuss them (157). The concept, while not new to the field, is a bold counterbalance to the compromises posed by others in the volume.

The final essay, a smart interlocution between Jacky Bratton and Grant Tyler Peterson, takes up Carlson’s call to consider the internet as a rhizomatic alternative to the textbook. While rightfully cautioning that a world of knowledge threatens to be lost to the “offline penumbra” (Patrick Leary’s term for what is presumed nonexistent if it cannot be found on the web), these authors ask, “Is the ability to keyword-search millions of books and billions of webpages transformative of the way we can learn, think, and document the intertextuality and intertheatricality of our subjects?” (310).

No doubt some readers will find the volume does not go far enough in challenging the “single story” of theatre’s past (there is not much here about theatrical practices in the Americas, Sub-Saharan Africa, or Asia, apart from Japan). At the same time, there are some surprises to the way the contributors tell us what our history is. Hrosvitha and Jarry make it onto the “indicative timeline” of events in theatre history on pages 13–14, but Aristotle, the Spanish Golden Age, and Brecht do not (indeed, Aristotle is not mentioned in the entire book and Brecht only merits four asides). Shakespeare keeps his central position, which, Wiles allows, “carries an all too obvious sense of priorities,” though he feels it makes sense nevertheless to keep him as a “reference point that allows dialogue amongst academics” (62).

Perhaps Gilli Bush-Bailey puts it best in her chapter on reenactment as historical research when she speaks of the “squeeze” historians feel between the “current political desire for ‘big stories’” and the “importance of local histories [...] that continue to add new dimensions to our understanding of community identity” (282). Without a doubt, in its ultimately conflicted attempts to negotiate traditional with more progressive historiographic approaches to the past, this volume can be found in that squeeze.

—Scott Magelssen

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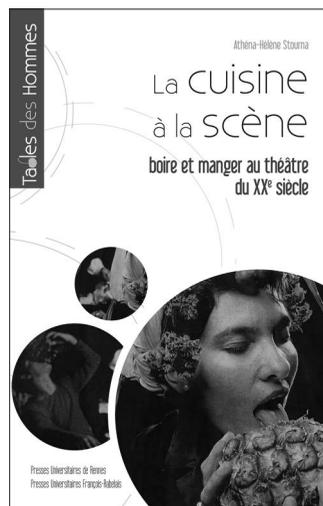
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La cuisine à la scène: Boire et manger au théâtre du XXe siècle [Cuisine onstage: Food and drink in 20th-century theatre]. By Athéna-Hélène Stourna. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2011; 340 pp.; illustrations. 20.00€ paper.

Athéna-Hélène Stourna's book offers a wide-ranging reflection on the role that food and drink play in modern theatre. Others, notably John Wilkins (2000), Chris Meads (2001), Joan Fitzpatrick (2007), and Ronald Tobin (1985), have focused on the treatment of culinary and gastronomic themes in earlier works for the stage, from ancient Greek comedy, to English Renaissance drama, to Shakespeare, to Molière. But this is the first book-length study to tackle such themes in theatre from the late 19th century through the present. As this is a revision of Stourna's doctoral dissertation, defended at the University of Paris III, Sorbonne-Nouvelle in 2010, it's not surprising to find in it the advantages and disadvantages of that well-oiled rhetorical machine, the French *thèse*. It treats a well-defined research area in an admirably ambitious spirit of comprehensiveness, but at the expense of the more compelling, synthetic, overarching argument that might be achieved through more selective analysis.

Stourna begins by examining the role of actual food in theatre. After some brief background on the use of real and artificial foodstuffs in theatre from the 18th century onward, she moves on to the consumption of food and drink in realist and naturalist theatre, with particularly long and fruitful consideration of Anton Chekhov. Her next section looks at cooking and representations of kitchens onstage from 1888 to 1988, beginning with plays by August Strindberg and Matthias Langhoff, then continuing with works by Arnold Wesker, Ariane Mnouchkine, Stephen Daldry, Harold Pinter, Günter Grass, Michel Vinaver, and Franz Xaver Kroetz, among others, while pausing along the way to consider changes in our collective vision of the kitchen and the development of a consumer society, scrutinizing in particular how these phenomena have been depicted through the visual arts. In the following section she turns to the use of food as metaphor and artistic medium in avantgarde plays and performances, from Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi* through the Bread and Puppet Theater. The final section tackles the historical, political, and social implications of food in contemporary theatre, with examples from productions in Latin America, the United States, Catalonia, Greece, France, and Germany.

Stourna's approach to her subject is historical and thematic, taking into account as well its social, political, and aesthetic dimensions. One might regret that her study is not more deeply gastronomic in its orientation, paying closer attention to the cultural and historical specificity of foodways, and to the evolution of gastronomy as an art form in its own right. But Stourna,



despite her interest in the table, is above all a scholar and practitioner of the theatre (currently serving as artistic director of the Okypus Company in Greece), so food and drink, while providing a lens through which she analyzes theatre, remain secondary to her primary focus on theatre itself, which she analyzes knowledgeably, and with a keen eye to telling detail.

The book contains 27 black-and-white illustrations, mainly photographs of theatrical productions, with some drawings of sets and certain period caricatures. Almost all of these images are small, however, and of mediocre quality, undermining their usefulness as documentation. There are also 16 color illustrations—11 photographs of artworks used as comparisons, and 5 of stage productions. These color images are generally larger and sharper than the ones in black-and-white. This discrepancy gives an unfortunate impression that is at odds with the love of the stage so evident in Stourna's prose: in her book's images, theatre seems gray, drab, and indistinct, while the visual arts stand out, in contrast, as something vibrant, colorful, and dynamic.

The book has two indexes, one listing names of artists and theatrical companies, the other titles of plays. While such limited proper name indexes are standard in French scholarly publishing, in this sort of broad-based study, thematic indexing would be welcome, allowing readers to locate easily all references to, say, "alcoholism," "bread," or "futurism." In contrast, Stourna's extensive bibliography is 40 pages long and includes everything from more general works in anthropology, visual arts, history, philosophy, gastronomy, literature, theatre, and performance, to studies of specific plays that she examines. While specialists might quibble with some details, and wish for greater depth in certain areas, it is nonetheless a strong bibliography, appropriate for a broadly conceived, wide-ranging study.

In sum, despite shortcomings in its conception and execution, this thoughtful book contains a good deal of fine analysis that will be useful for scholars of the modern period in particular. In a more general sense, *La cuisine à la scène* will remain a necessary reference for those wishing to delve further into the suggestive connections between gastronomy and theatre.

—Michael D. Garval

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Puro Arte: Filipinos on the Stages of Empire. By Lucy Mae San Pablo Burns. New York: New York University Press, 2012. 205 pp.; illustrations. \$75.00 cloth, \$22.00 paper, e-book available.

Lucy Mae San Pablo Burns's incisive scholarly text positions Filipino/a performance within discourses of transnationalism and globalization. The author considers a wide breadth of historical and cultural material, ranging from the display of natives from the Philippines at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis, to agit-prop plays by anti-Martial Law activists between the years 1973 and 1981, to the employment of numerous Filipino/a performers in the musical *Miss Saigon*, which premiered in London in 1989 before it was produced in theatres worldwide.

While Burns proceeds chronologically, she avoids making an argument that depends upon the idea that circumstances improve over time. Rather, she interweaves similar thematic con-

cerns into each chapter, probing the historical relationship between the United States's imperial project and representations of the Filipino/a performing body. She is ultimately less interested in reaching definitive conclusions about this relationship and more concerned with identifying critical sites for its expression and leaving "room for contradictions, interruptions, and continuities" (145) that can be subject to further exploration and interpretation.

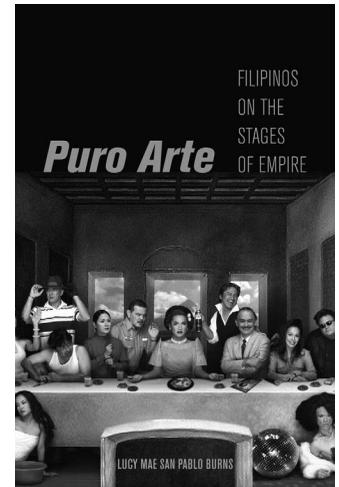
Puro arte is loosely translated from Spanish to English as "pure art," but Burns also acknowledges the nuances the phrase takes on for Filipino/as both in the Philippines and in the United States. She tells us that it "performs a much more ironic function, gesturing rather to the labor of overacting, histrionics, playfulness, and purely over-the-top dramatics" (2). Burns foregrounds both race and embodiment as she interrogates the workings of power at key historical moments between the United States and the Philippines. She views *puro arte* as both an object of study and a means to theorize this fraught interaction.

This technique is ably demonstrated by Burns in her close look at Filipino patrons of taxi dance halls in the US during the 1920s and 1930s. In these establishments, men purchased tickets for the chance to dance with young women employed there, who were called "taxi dancers" because customers paid per "ride" and were also expected to tip. The halls catered primarily to immigrants of various ethnicities, who doled out 10 cents a dance (lasting the length of a single song) to move to the music with one of the female taxi dancers, whom Burns identifies as "largely white, occasionally Mexican and very rarely Filipina" (51). *Puro arte* signals an aesthetic of excess, with the skill of the Filipino dancing body remarked upon not only by these women, but also sociologist Paul Cressey, who penned a landmark 1932 study of the taxi dance hall scene. Yet, while Burns acknowledges prior readings of this phenomenon that are more celebratory in nature, she points out that the exceptional dancing ability of Filipinos made them a sexual threat to white patrons who saw them as preferred partners to the taxi dancers. This attitude in turn fed into racial tensions resulting from the economic threat the Filipinos posed to white laborers. This can be clearly seen in the circumstances surrounding the Watsonville Riot of 1930, started by a mob of white men who purportedly wished to save the honor of the white women who worked at a taxi dance hall with a largely Filipino clientele. Moreover, Burns argues that the different modes of mobility performed by the Filipino dancer and the Filipino migrant worker—who were, of course, one and the same—are evidence of a corporeal colonization process (a phrase she borrows from ethnic studies scholar Catherine Ceniza Choy) that must be read within the context of US imperialism.

Burns simultaneously embraces discursive readings that challenge the status quo while also revealing their limitations and contextualizing the constraints surrounding certain modes of cultural production. For example, in her analysis of Filipino/a performers in *Miss Saigon*, Burns recognizes her own pleasure in seeing these Filipino/a bodies onstage. At the same time, however, she situates the training school set up in the Philippines to prepare performers for roles in the musical within the history of the exportation of female labor from the Philippines.

The author pays attention to the liveness of performance, and how the significance of a script can change when produced in a different locale. In her analysis of Jessica Hagedorn's play *Dogeaters* (adapted from Hagedorn's bestselling novel of the same name), Burns tracks some of the alterations made when the play moved from the US to the Philippines in 2007. She notes, for example, how actors in the company felt some of the translation from Tagalog to English that Hagedorn built into the script for a presumably monolingual US audience was simply unnecessary for a crowd made up predominantly of people who spoke Tagalog fluently.

The book cites a range of sources including historical texts, popular press articles, unpublished manuscripts, personal communications with artists, and books on performance theory.



Endnotes demonstrate an attention to detail and offer an insight into Burns's scholarship; individual entries reveal the ways she came to some of her conclusions through symposiums that she helped organize, conversations she had with colleagues, and the intellectual histories that she traces.

The volume also includes several images that help to illustrate Burns's objects of study. Sheet music covers from the early 20th-century musical *Shoo-Fly Regiment* (1907) accompany a discussion of "brownface" by an African American company that set part of that musical during the 1899–1902 Philippine-American War, for which the show's main character volunteers as a soldier. All roles—including those of Filipinos—were played by black actors, and Burns considers the complexities of this cross-racial performance by noting how the musical's progressive representation of African Americans is offset by their participation in the formation of the US empire.

There are also archival photos of early Filipino life in America, as well as posters and production photos of shows such as *Rolling the Rs* (2008) and *Miss Saigon*. The book cover to *Puro Arte* is a publicity image for the Manila production of *Dogeaters* (photograph by Raymund Isaac, Graphic Design/Art Direction by G.A. Fallarme) that intentionally invokes Leonardo da Vinci's famous painting of *The Last Supper*. In it, the actress playing the Philippines's First Lady Imelda Marcos occupies the position traditionally held by Jesus. While not one of the protagonists of this 1982-set play, Marcos is nevertheless a towering presence, as well as a symbol of the corruption of her husband's dictatorship. The image is beautifully rendered, but also extremely campy—a perfect example of Burns's description of *puro arte*.

—Dan Bacalzo

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Performance, Politics, and the War on Terror: "Whatever It Takes." By Sara Brady. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. 224 pp., illustrations. \$90.00 cloth.

Within the growing body of work dedicated to the performative underpinnings of the "war on terror," including the "Forum on Theatre and Tragedy in the Wake of September 11, 2001," commissioned by David Román for *Theatre Journal* (2002), Jenny Hughes's *Performance in a Time of Terror: Critical Mimesis and the Age of Uncertainty* (Manchester University Press, 2011), and Jenny Spenser's *Political and Protest Theatre after 9/11: Patriotic Dissent* (Routledge, 2012), Sara Brady's excellent book stands out with its brilliantly drawn connections across genres and its analytical range. The war on terror involved a conflation of politics and theatre that performance scholars are uniquely capable of articulating and examining.¹ Brady points out that the

1. Brady chooses not to capitalize "war on terror" in this book, which I believe reflects both the political nature of punctuation, and the fact that this "war" was not a specific war, but rather a performative state of exception, the inauguration of an indefinite crisis that the Bush administration used to justify rendition, black sites, torture, and the invasion of two countries.

war on terror broke with the traditional, conscious agreement to suspend disbelief made between the performers (in this case, the Bush administration and its surrogates) and the audience (the public). Rather, the war on terror kept the audience in the dark about the highly crafted scripts and improvisational performances that created and sustained military actions and a culture of fear. Her investigation ranges from performance art and protest performance, to military training exercises and video gaming, to documentary and reality theatre. She incorporates rich performance analysis and empirical data about the number of protests in the United States and worldwide against the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Additionally, she draws from her personal experiences as a traveler witnessing military stopovers in Ireland's Shannon Airport, and as an undercover observer at the Army Experience Center in a mall outside Philadelphia, a sweeping installation dedicated to educating the public about the military. Her source materials come from both the archive of government policies, codes, and public statements, and the repertoire of rallies, performances, and simulations.

Brady begins and ends the book by focusing on Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama, whose administrations engaged the vocabulary and tools of theatre and performance to initiate and conduct military action. These chapters demonstrate that while “Buchismo” and “Obamania” might be distinct in their characteristics, they both created a cult of personality that enabled the public to willfully blind themselves (36). Brady deploys Diana Taylor’s term “percepticide” to elucidate the public’s refusal to see “the erosion of civil rights, the cost of permanent war, and the reality of violence both committed by and victimizing military, paramilitary, and civilian populations” in the aftermath of 9/11 (40).

In the chapter “Protests Visible and Invisible,” Brady argues that demonstrations against the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were better organized and attended than those against Vietnam, but were misreported and underplayed in the media, which treated them as nostalgic revivals of Vietnam protests. Brady links the invisible aspects of the war on terror—rendition, the personal cost to those serving in the military, and so forth—with citizens’ willful determination to remain blind to these realities. In so doing, her book makes visible the protests and dissent that the media sought to hide or discredit. Looking specifically at performances by Rimini Protokoll, Coco Fusco, and veterans of various military conflicts, Brady examines how anti-war performances employ markers of “reality theatre.” For example, she traces the complicated association of camouflage with visibility and invisibility, pointing out that soldiers use camouflage in the field to mask their presence, but veterans use it in Rimini Protokoll’s *Resist, Refuse, Rebel* to lend their performance more *gravitas* and authenticity.

In “War, the Video Game,” Brady delves into the military’s reliance on representation—television, film, pop culture, fiction, and in particular, gaming—to recruit public support and trained fighters. This military-industrial-entertainment complex, which uses performance to educate and train civilian and military populations alike, creates incursions into everyday life until war becomes everyday culture. The insidious nature of war-as-culture represents, as Slavoj Žižek might say, non-ideology, or ideology appearing as its opposite; in the case of gaming, for example, war appears as recreation (71). Distinguishing war games from war *as* a game, Brady finds that perpetual rehearsal and simulations create a space for mundane violence such as prisoner abuse. While players of war games might get to choose which camera view they prefer—either an arm holding a gun in the immediate foreground or an over-the-shoulder view from slightly behind the protagonist—and whether they want to play as an American or as the enemy, these games ultimately create “a sociocultural anxiety that speaks to the breakdown



between civilian and soldier, real and virtual, agent and event that corresponds to a digital generation who plays games within and outside theatres of war” (84).

“Torture Simulated and Real” discredits the “ticking time bomb” scenario and its prevalence in arguments that attempt to legitimize torture. In 2001, Karl Rove led a Beverly Hills Summit that outlined for Hollywood elites how they could best support the war on terror, including giving the war effort “a narrative that should be told” (112). Reaching out to Hollywood for the inverse reason in 2006, Human Rights First put together The Primetime Torture Project, which detailed examples of military personnel replicating in the field what they saw on Fox’s *24*, specifically the protagonist Jack Bauer’s violent methods of acquiring information from suspected terrorists. The Primetime Torture Project chronicled the material effects of the violence produced on *24* and pointed out the pervasive influence of Jack Bauer’s approach to torture on military policy, the torture debate, and the mentality of US soldiers. Brady elucidates the ways in which torture relies on the visual and sensory realms of performance, arguing that it is important to maintain the distinction between reality and fiction when it comes to counter-intelligence and counter-insurgency.

Sections of the book get weighed down by litanies of performance examples, and would be better served by a more in-depth look at fewer protests, games, or theatre pieces. Still, Brady draws beautiful and haunting connections across performance genres, questioning their aesthetic evolutions, efficacy in the political realm, and invasion into daily life. The personal narrative of her visit to the Army Experience Center, in particular, stands out as an excellent blend of visual culture, gaming, and performance analysis in order to reveal the propagandistic operations of immersive military education.

This book is a must-read for anyone interested in how war has become performance, and how the government has deployed the tools of theatre to justify acts of violence.

—Lindsey Mantoan

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More Books

Performing Hybridity in Colonial-Modern China. By Siyuan Liu. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013; 260 pp.; illustrations. \$90.00 cloth.

Siyuan Liu explores the *wenmingxi* (civilized drama) of early-20th-century China, looking to remedy the academic blind spot regarding hybrid dramas situated outside the modern/traditional binary that organizes much Chinese theatre scholarship. Liu traces the influence of European-style spoken theatre that contributed to the revolution in Chinese theatre forms during the late 19th to early 20th century. The popular appeal of Western dramas intertwined with the influence of the Japanese *shinpa* (new school drama) to inspire Chinese theatremakers, who forged *wenmingxi* as an intentionally hybrid new form within the discipline of *huaju* (spoken

theatre). Liu considers the nationalist and revolutionary ambitions of wenmingxi, as well as the various production models that were later adapted to make this form commercially successful. The book will be of particular interest to those studying Asian theatre from a global perspective, as well as scholars engaged in colonial-modern Chinese theatre and history.

Grotowski, Women, and Contemporary Performance: Meetings with Remarkable Women. By Virginie Magnat. New York: Routledge, 2014; 244 pp.; illustrations. \$125.00 cloth.

Virginie Magnat seeks to redress the omission of female practitioners from the majority of scholarly analyses of the work of Jerzy Grotowski (due both to the relatively limited extant literature and the focus on masculine embodiment of Grotowski's rigorous physical training by performers such as Ryszard Cieślak). In order to illuminate the roles that women have played as collaborators and inheritors of Grotowski's methods of intercultural exploration of performance, Magnat analyzes the work of key female practitioners from several generations—both original Grotowski collaborators and those whose work has been profoundly influenced by his legacy. As both a scholar and a performer herself, Magnat's research relies upon an interdisciplinary methodology, combining fieldwork, artistic collaboration with her subjects, and the articulation of her embodied research through writing. The result is an insightful account of the work of such artists as Rena Mirecka, Ewa Benesz, Katharina Seyferth, and Ang Gey Pin. This book will be a valuable resource for scholars interested in the work of Grotowski, Polish theatre, women theatre practitioners, as well as those engaged in practice-as-research.

Theatre in the Expanded Field: Seven Approaches to Performance. By Alan Read. New York: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 2013; 296 pp.; illustrations. \$140.00 cloth, \$44.95 paper.

Assisted by Beryl Robinson's simple and elegant line illustrations, Alan Read synthesizes theatre history with a range of disciplines to trace a path through the evolution of performance. Read divides *Theatre in the Expanded Field* into seven distinctive historical and theoretical "approaches" for analyzing the fields of theatre and performance studies. Each of these approaches—prehistorical and archaeological (38,550 BCE), pastoral and anthropological (429 BCE), theological and historical (1613), digital and technological (1720), psychological and legal (1889), social and sensible (1964), tactical and critical (2012)—seek to braid together two theoretical frameworks within the locus of a historical moment. However, the range of performances discussed in each section is pulled from a multifaceted, synchronic selection of theatre history and the author's own contemporary experiences. For example, as part of his chapter "Third Approach: Theological & Historical," Read particularly focuses on 17th-century theatre (especially the contributions of Inigo Jones) through the lens of Hans Thies-Lehmann's theories of the postdramatic, but also weaves together such diverse connections as *Les Misérables*, Romeo Castellucci's 2011 production *On The Concept of the Face*, and the role of monarchy in contemporary Britain.

Lives in Play: Autobiography and Biography on the Feminist Stage. By Ryan Claycomb. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012; 272 pp. \$55.00 cloth, \$30.00 paper.

Building on the 1970s feminist mantra, "the personal is political," Claycomb focuses on female artists who, in his phrase, are "performing real life to reveal real life as performative" (2). This book investigates feminist artists from the 1970s to the present day who use personal narrative as agitation or as a mode of questioning cultural norms. Part I focuses on feminist performances

of autobiography, highlighting the work of artists such as Kate Bornstein, Bobby Baker, Holly Hughes, Terry Galloway, and Karen Finley, and ends with a detailed discussion of Sarah Kane's *4.48 Psychosis*. Part II examines productions that focus on a historical personage as a way of reframing accepted sociohistorical narratives, including works such as H el ene Cixous's *Portrait of Dora*, April De Angelis's *Playhouse Creatures*, Maria Irene Fornes's *The Summer in Gossensass*, Suzan-Lori Parks's *Venus*, Isabelle Eberhardt's *New Anatomies*, and Judith Thompson's *Palace of the End*, along with a more general overview of biography plays by feminist playwrights. This volume will be of particular interest to feminist scholars, and those studying the epistemologies of solo, biographical, and autobiographical performances.

—Tanya Dean

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