

text of *The Suppliants* that Jelinek originally wrote as an immediate response to events that unfolded in Vienna in the autumn of 2012, when a group of asylum-seekers occupied the Votive Church.

Revised and adapted three times between 2013 and 2015, *Charges (The Suppliants)* is exemplary of what Hans-Thies Lehmann defined as 'post-dramatic theatre', offering a pastiche of sources ranging from Aeschylus's *Suppliant Women* to Martin Heidegger, Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, and current media reports. The book includes two brief texts (*Coda* and *Appendix*) that Jelinek wrote in the autumn of 2015, as the European 'refugee crisis' escalated; without being directly linked to the 'original', these texts work as addenda, and *Charges* also features the perspective of Gitta Honegger, who reflects on the challenges that the translator faces when attempting to transpose Jelinek's 'chain of mutating words' into another language.

The book ends with a series of conversations that Honegger had with Jelinek that offer an invaluable insight into her approach to dramaturgy, tracing motives in her drama as well as explaining the ways in which she borrows from quotations 'like a bird of prey'. An important element that emerges from these conversations is Jelinek's reflections on the gendered dimension of representation. She argues that often women can only speak through the first person plural: 'This "we" [that I tend to use] . . . is always a camouflage for what one cannot say, because a woman doesn't have that "I", she has to construct herself.'

Rich and engaging to read, poetic as well as pragmatic, *Charges* offers a crucial perspective on theatre, migration, and their interrelation. For me, the most significant element of this work is that it invites readers to reckon with the role of theatre as a forum that responds (immediately and topically) to global crises. Jelinek's kaleidoscopic and urgent writing offers a provocative invitation to consider what – if anything – theatre can do in the face of one of the most complex crises of our times. Thus, Jelinek's drama, recognizing and transcending the limits of representation, offers a view on how politics might work in twenty-first-century theatre.

MARILENA ZAROULIA

doi:10.1017/S0266464X18000519

Kimberly Jannarone, ed.

Vanguard Performance Beyond Left and Right

Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2015.

334 p. \$70.

ISBN 978-0-472-11967-7.

This intriguing collection of essays, which began life as an ASTR seminar on 'Vanguards of the Right', attempts to provide some counterweight

to the academic tendency to treat all avant-garde performance endeavours as progressive or leftist in orientation. As Jannarone notes in her introduction, any examination of the historical avant-gardes reminds us that fascism, too, fed on artistic innovation – whether that be the massed Nuremberg spectacles immortalized in Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*, or the warmongering nationalism inherent in Italian Futurism from its very inception.

Some of the best material in this volume returns to those inter-war years in a spirit of chillingly frank reappraisal. For example, Patricia Gaborik's fascinating chapter on Pirandello's work as an art theatre director under Mussolini makes clear that Pirandello's famously relativist aesthetic sat quite comfortably with fascist absolutism: after all, if reality is all a matter of perspective, then perhaps strong 'authors' are needed, to impose truth frames for their 'characters' to subscribe to . . .

As the title of the book indicates, Jannarone extends her terms 'beyond left and right'. That is appropriate, given that some of the more contemporary topics under discussion are difficult to pinpoint on a left-right spectrum. Katherine Profeta's chapter, for example, focuses on the extraordinary massed biomechanics of the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, which owed at least as much to the hyper-mediatization of stadium rock concerts as to traditions of Communist state spectacle. Meanwhile, Erik Butler's consideration of the redeployment of fascist tropes in pop music imagery begs unanswerable questions about the political stance of, say, the Slovenian band Laibach.

This collection's historical breadth and inclusiveness is both its key strength and weakness. The chapters with more temporal distance on their subjects often seemed to me more rigorous and critically resolved. Conversely, Richard Schechner himself acknowledges that his chapter on '9/11 as Avant-Garde Art?' consists largely of 'musings'. Perhaps we are still too close to some twenty-first-century events to see them as clearly as we would like?

Equally, though, perhaps there is a limit to what we should be labelling 'avant-garde'. For example, Ann Pellegrini's chapter about 'Hell Houses' – the American evangelical Christian version of immersive haunted house spectacles – is completely fascinating, but I was unclear why this return to medieval fire-and-brimstone spectacle was under discussion here. The term 'vanguard' connotes advance movement rather than conservative retrogression, and while it's important not to mix that up too easily with 'progressive', in the leftist sense, employing the term too generally risks emptying it of whatever meaning it retains.

STEPHEN SCOTT-BOTTOMS