

chapter, “Artaud and His Doubles: The Universalists”), his European, male lineage of Grotowski, Barba, and Brook—whom Knowles “loosely group[s] as ‘the universalists’” (16)—and their search for the missing genetic link connecting us all through the deployment of forms borrowed from sources as diverse as yoga and Balinese ritual. Such an ahistorical methodology endeavors to locate the archetype residing deep within the self—an essential humanity preceding notions of alterity.

We’ve come a long way since the heyday of “the universalists,” but Knowles’s book demonstrates how much farther we need to go in order to pay more than lip service to theatrical interculturalism—especially in today’s world of neoliberal agendas, and amid struggles to keep matters of diversity on political and theatrical agendas even as productions flow like water across continents. Knowles’s critical look at hybridities ancient and new begins with a historiography of intercultural theatre and ultimately calls for placing the means of production firmly into culturally diverse hands across real, acknowledged, and respected differences (79); it calls as well for the radical reexamination of how interculturality is performed in the global village, the creative city, and on stages and in rehearsal halls across the one world.

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Theatre & Nation. By Nadine Holdsworth. Theatre&. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010; pp. 89. \$9.00 paper.

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Reviewed by J. Riley Caldwell-O’Keefe, Boise State University

With *Theatre & Nation*, Nadine Holdsworth has created a valuable resource for any scholar navigating the quickly shifting theoretical ground of national identity. Her work shares the short format that is the hallmark of the texts in Palgrave’s Theatre& series, edited by Jen Harvie and Dan Rebellato. Holdsworth clearly positions herself in the text as a Western scholar, and focuses her study predominantly on the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia in the years after 1945. She approaches the conjunction of theatre and nation in terms of the pleasures and challenges of building communal national narratives, arguing that “theatre often deploys its content, formal properties and aesthetic pleasures to generate a creative dialogue with tensions in the national fabric” (7).

Holdsworth spends the first part of her book defining nation, national identity, and nationalism, and her performance studies background is apparent throughout: she draws on a variety of performative moments to demonstrate the global impact on the local, and vice versa. For example, she argues that Susan Boyle’s 2009 performance on *Britain’s Got Talent*, which went viral on YouTube, indicates the changing globalized nature of national identity; for Holdsworth, Boyle’s *Britain’s Got Talent* audition, and the subsequent worldwide media extravaganza that enveloped the singer, exploded national boundaries (3–4).

Drawing on many scholars and texts, including Homi Bhabha’s *Nation and Narration* (Routledge, 1990) and Paul Gilroy’s *After Empire: Melancholia or*

Convivial Culture? (Routledge, 2004), Holdsworth consistently questions any static definition of nation as she tackles shifting, polarizing conceptualizations of political and cultural nationalism that reinforce the idea of a national citizenry as an adaptive, but progressively unified, homogenous body (11–14). Holdsworth clarifies each historical position before presenting perspectives that attempt to expand the “we” demarcating national inclusion. Building on Paul Gilroy’s critique of contemporary cosmopolitanism, and following his proposal of “conviviality” as an alternative concept by which to navigate multicultural convergences, Holdsworth frames convivial cosmopolitan theatre as a space welcoming dissenting and diverging opinions and identities. She proposes that theatre can provide a model collaborative space in which alterity is both privileged and productive.

Analyses of two direct links between theatre and nation—formal national theatres and state-of-the-nation plays—comprise the last two-thirds of the book. Holdsworth posits that these sites variously invoke social transformation and build *communitas*. Examining nationalism’s European intellectual roots, and the specific case of German national theatre, Holdsworth asks, “What makes a theatre, play or performance ‘national’?” (29). Recognizing that national theatres were and are deployed for a multitude of functions, she considers their representation, access, financial support, and audience. She questions the stability of national efforts to create an “authentic” history through the reiteration of folk traditions, and hails the contemporary trend toward national theatres’ transnational collaborations and other cross-border movements.

In contrast to national theatres’ potential contributions toward disabling imperialist nationalism through international performance partnerships, Holdsworth argues that state-of-the-nation theatre, often working on a more localized level, creates a historical archive of ruptures in the national fabric. She proposes that works like those of performance artist Guillermo Gómez-Peña and filmmaker Derek Jarman “bring forth the instabilities of national iconographies to question their potency, significance and signification” (61). Hybrid, marginal identities often expose discontinuities in the national fabric and create a Derridean excess of meaning within mainstream conceptions of national identity; Holdsworth draws on Benedict Anderson’s concept of “imagined community”—psychological unity in spite of individual differences and geographic isolation—to argue that theatre provides the possibility to re/create communal identity in such contexts (20). She also, however, usefully adds nuance to Anderson’s claims by exploring them with reference to Loren Kruger’s work in *The National Stage* (1992). Holdsworth highlights Kruger’s attention to the limits of representation available to a national theatre, especially in terms of the disjunction between staged national identities, the composition of any given audience and, as Holdsworth argues, the limiting discourse of colonialism (35).

Holdsworth’s discussion of the physical impacts of nation building, as well as the cultural imaginary often symbolized by national icons (such as flags and songs), represents one of the most compelling sections of the book. She contrasts John Osborne’s *The Entertainer*, which she describes as a “petulant and rather lazy” critique of the declining British Empire epitomized by the disintegrating icon of the English music hall (62), with more contemporary and complex

British iconography, suggesting the latter is provocative especially when deployed to explore the often contested relationship between individual and national identity. The specificity of her analysis here moves briefly away from the book's survey format and provokes a vital question: What, in fact, makes for compelling, constructive theatre in relation to national identity?

Holdsworth's most in-depth textual analysis considers riot plays, and what she earlier terms "convivial theatre." Holdsworth positions Mohamed Rouabhi's *Vive la France!*, created in the wake of France's November 2005 riots, as complicating post-colonial and transnational theorists' optimism that wrestling with intersectionality will enhance multicultural understanding. Her argument then culminates with an analysis of two productions: the internationally touring Australian–Indonesian collaboration *The Theft of Sita*, and Anthony Gormley's public art project *One and Other*, a highly organized, Webcast and televised soapbox for 2,400 individuals in Trafalgar Square (72–8). This focus on riot plays, along with the following argument for "convivial" theatre, solidifies Holdsworth's through line that progressive conceptualizations of nation and theatre must grapple seriously with the issues of inclusion and exclusion on which more generally homogenizing discourses of nation depend.

Overall, Holdsworth gives her reader a clear window into the complexity of the relationships between theatre and nation. She conveys a complicated hopefulness for the possibilities of theatre creating productive, inclusive dialogue in an increasingly globalized world. Although Holdsworth's self-identification as a Westerner immediately alerts her reader to her book's perspective, and although the book's "Further Reading" section does provide some indication of the wider theoretical and practical world of theatre and nation, it is unfortunate that readers new to this subject will make a limited global journey in this book. Nevertheless, the brief textual and performance analyses incorporated into this survey provide enough tantalizing detail to encourage further exploration, making *Theatre & Nation* both a valuable text for anyone new to the subject, and a go-to resource for faculty advising undergraduate or graduate students.

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Dissident Dramaturgies: Contemporary Irish Theatre. By Eamonn Jordan. Dublin and Portland: Irish Academic Press, 2009. pp. ix + 278, 14 illustrations. \$74.95 cloth.

Theatre & Ireland. By Lionel Pilkington. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. 96 pages. \$9 paper.
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Reviewed by Deirdre O'Leary, Manhattan College

Eamonn Jordan's timely study of Irish theatre concentrates on work emerging since the 1980s; it thereby encompasses a few of the years preceding the