

coordinating his personalized non-conventional libretto directly with his musical score.

Prokofiev left Russia for the United States in 1918, where he wrote his opera in the abrupt dialogue *Bartig* beats out, like music. *Love for Three Oranges* was premiered in Chicago in 1921, and in Leningrad in 1926, directed by Sergey Radlov – a detail among other necessary details in *Bartig*'s map of its itinerary. (Radlov was formerly Meyerhold's student.) Inna Naroditskaya lovingly charts its music, and Natalia Savkina its narrative. The perplexing thing is that Prokofiev and Meyerhold were friends, yet the former never acknowledged, not even at the beginning (before Meyerhold's politics spelled his doom), that Meyerhold's play was his immediate inspiration; and Gozzi, who had become a third degree of separation, was not of direct interest to his artistic ambitions. Posner rightly points out the discrepancy in the Italian and Russian titles, explaining that collaborators had agreed to 'of' in the Italian and 'for' in the Russian because this corresponds with each language.

What is the *fiaba* of this wonderful story, in an erudite book invaluable both for those who know something about its subject and those who would like to know? It is that accrued overwriting gives a complete orange!

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Lisa Woyrnarski

### **Ecodramaturgies: Theatre, Performance and Climate Change**

London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020. 239 p. £71.50.  
ISBN: 978-3-030-55853-6.

This review was written travelling on a mixture of fossil-fuelled and electrified public transport somewhere between Glasgow and Manchester, major cities in two nations whose wealth was created through colonial exploitation of the Global South that has been used to power unsustainable economic growth while disproportionately contributing to global climate change. I start with this acknowledgment of the material and ecological context of scholarly production, following Woyrnarski's example in *Ecodramaturgies*. At its core, Woyrnarski's book makes an impassioned case for taking an intersectional approach to the subject of climate change in theatre and performance.

Intersectionality is taken to be both a politics and a reading practice, as the second chapter demonstrates. Here, intersectionality is understood as a 'multi-level analysis', used to expose how structures of (gendered, racialized, colonial, national) oppression interlock and sustain each other. Woyrnarski adds to this more common constellation of intersections questions about the position of

non-human nature and the ways in which environmental damage interacts with other distributions of power. In doing so, Woyrnarski engages with a varied set of case studies, including Canadian Chantal Bilodeau's play *Its starts with me* (2019); the women-led Green Belt Movement in Kenya (since 1977); Nigerian playwright Osonye Tess Onwueme's *Then She Said it* (2002); and two UK-based performances: *Common Salt* by Sheila Ghelani and Sue Palmer (2018); and *salt*. by Selina Thompson (2017).

The huge diversity of case studies – in terms of historical and ecological context as well as aesthetic form – is at once a strength and a weakness of this publication. On the one hand, there is a risk of losing depth in the analysis of how dramaturgical structures interact with local contexts (in terms of theatre history as well as social and natural history). On the other, this approach allows for proliferating connections and interactions between different moments in performance history to manifest, revealing the complex global histories that have produced our environmentally precarious present. To this effect, each chapter is formed around a different, key conceptual idea, namely: 'bioperformativity' (a neologism translating theories of thing-power to a performance-specific context); the politics of exposure; cosmopolitanism; and decolonized ecologies.

While each of these themes is intellectually provocative, and the chapters build on each other in illuminating ways, the final chapter on decolonized ecologies stands out especially. Engaging with Métis playwright Marie Clements's *Burning Vision* (2003), the collaboration between native and non-native groups in *Salmon is Everything* (2014), Bilodeau's *Sila* (2015), and the Idle No More movement in Canada and the USA (since 2012), this chapter enacts ways for non-Indigenous scholars to approach Indigenous practices and epistemologies through careful listening, a thoughtful politics of citation, and directing attention to the power structures which shape extant knowledge systems (that is, insofar as I can judge this as a non-Indigenous scholar myself). As a whole, this publication is an accessibly written, critically thoughtful, and politically astute contribution to scholarship on performance and climate change.

CARA BERGER

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Howard Webber

### **Before the Arts Council: Campaigns for State Funding of the Arts in Britain, 1934–1944**

London: Bloomsbury, 2021. 264 p. £85.  
ISBN: 978-1-3501-6793-3.

In this book, based on a PhD awarded by King's College London, Howard Webber charts a number

of key campaigns for and debates around arts funding in Britain before and during the Second World War. Webber identifies Alfred Wareing's 'League of Audiences', John Christie's 'Council of Power/National Council of Music', and Geoffrey Whitworth's 'Stage and Allied Arts Defence League' as key organizations in this respect. One of his main interests in writing this book is to counter a 'largely unbroken consensus' around arts funding in the literature, as Webber perceives it: that is, that the British government did not provide any financial support to the performing arts in the 1930s; there was little demand for subsidy in the 1930s; the outbreak of war changed this situation completely; and the creation of the Arts Council was a natural development of the work of CEMA (Council for Encouragement and Music in the Arts).

Webber's discussion of the various campaigns is detailed and noteworthy. He consults a range of primary sources and offers in-depth engagements with protagonists who have not been looked at in detail before – at least not in connection with a developing discourse around arts funding in the 1930s. The discussion of the role of the BBC overall is excellent, particularly in relation to the early funding to the Theatre Royal Covent Garden, the BBC's role as commissioner of new work, and the importance rightfully attributed to the foundation of BBC orchestras in the 1930s. Equally convincing is Webber's detailed analysis of two influential 1938 conferences at Glyndebourne, which illustrated some basic debates that remained at the heart of both CEMA and the Arts Council.

There are moments when Webber overstates his case, for example when claiming that the reduction of Entertainments Duty in the mid-

to late 1930s can be seen 'as a form of subsidy' and that the government actively provided 'substantial financial help'. It could be argued that the Entertainment Tax, introduced in 1916, had been seen as a temporary measure since its inception. That means that reducing it in the 1930s may not have been a revolutionary decision. Webber's bibliography is short and misses a number of key studies. Liz Schafer's monograph on Lilian Baylis is a key omission, for example, as is Margaret Leask's book on Lena Ashwell, and the contemporary journal *Theatre World*, the leading theatre magazine of the time.

Webber's book sheds new light on debates in the 1930s. It also shows that, despite all the hard work of the various protagonists, they did not succeed. Although people like Wareing and Christie provided useful arguments, and some state help was already forthcoming, it was the outbreak of war that kick-started the introduction of subsidies proper. The war, and the situation in which Britain found itself in 1939 as defender of 'Western Civilization', provided the key impetus for the foundation of CEMA and ENSA, and of both the National Theatre and the Arts Council immediately after the war.

So does the history of arts funding, and recent research on the crucial importance of CEMA and the significance of the outbreak of the Second World War, need to be rewritten in the light of Webber's book? No. Yet, at the same time, Webber adds an interesting perspective by focusing on key debates in the 1930s and by stressing the fact that the 'revolution in the arts', as identified by contemporary commentators in the 1940s (Miles, Dean, Marshall), did not come out of the blue.

ANSELM HEINRICH