

of the essays. One issue that the editors set out to interrogate was to what extent the Americas could be seen as 'post-colonial' and how this was explored through the classics.

One unifying theme that can productively be looked at through a post-colonial lens is the transatlantic slave trade. *Medea* has been a play used from Brazil to the USA to think through racial politics in the twentieth century, so much so that it has become a trope to be parodied. I share, however, Barbara Goff and Michael Simpson's lament that more was not made of indigenous engagements with classical drama, an important element in any post-colonial analysis of the Americas. The majority of the essays concern performances in the USA. Canadian receptions, for instance, are only given a single essay, the only one to discuss adaptations of the classics by indigenous people. Still, the issues of race discussed in Latin American performances form an important counterpoint to the American ones, while Cuban works are richly explored.

Susan Curtis described the book as 'something of an archive' and the breadth of theoretical and textual subject matter that it covers is an invaluable resource to scholars of classical reception globally. The willingness of the editors to engage with many forms of performance, from dance to hip-hop, along with the final section of interviews with practitioners, means that it will also provide much for those who work on performance in the Americas. The collection stands as a fine tribute to the editor Kathryn Boshier, who sadly died very young in 2013.

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Clelia Falletti, Gabriele Sofia, and Victor Jacono, ed.

Theatre and Cognitive Neuroscience

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Intended to introduce readers to the burgeoning scope and applications of research bridging art and the broad field of cognitive neuroscience, this volume covers a wide range of perspectives that link experimental psychology, physiology, neuroscience, and semiotics to theatre practice, pedagogy, and therapy. Twelve chapters are organized into four sections focused on theatre as a space of relationships, the spectator's performative experience, the complex interface between theatre and cognition, and interdisciplinary perspectives on applied performance.

The volume's scope is admirable, extending to an essay on the cognitive processes specific to circus arts. However, it overextends into the tangential with an empirical essay investigating the perception of 'motor acts' (intention-based move-

ments) that uses abstract artworks as stimuli and assumes that application to live theatre events will be understood.

Section introductions by Giovanni Mirabella and the editors vary in function and quality. Gabriele Sofia frames and underpins the embodiment-based studies to follow, as does Victor Jacono's fascinating epistemological exploration of actor pedagogy and the complexities of cognition. By contrast, Clelia Falletti glosses mirror neuron theory (as do perhaps too many of the volume's authors) and actor training on the way to prescribing further interdisciplinary study of theatre's 'strategic weapons' of ambiguity, chaos, and the unexpected. Mirabella's introduction to the applied performance section aptly warns that despite art therapy's potential to improve health and well-being, it 'cannot be thought of as a panacea'.

Within sections, the diverse empirical studies included exemplify the breadth and striking productivity of current research in the (inter) discipline. Corinne Jola and Matthew Reason's excellent study of the spectatorial experience of performer proximity and 'co-presence' (witnessing performance live as opposed to via video) resonates with Giorgia Committeri and Chiara Fini's finding that the presence of a human body increases the range of space judged by subjects as being 'near'. Sofia and colleagues' pilot experiment, which revealed how theatre training positively affects voluntary control of action, could have reflected further on the limitations of laboratory protocols for measuring response time and how theatre practice might indicate ways to overcome them.

A further study by Nicola Modugno and colleagues details the effects of a theatre training programme on Parkinson's Disease patients' well-being. Some of the empirical studies have been summarized and others reduced in length, with a clear aim to make them reader-friendly for theatre scholars. It bears emphasizing, however, that those interested in interdisciplinary arts/sciences research are best served by engagement with empirical research in its 'unfiltered', fully developed form.

Beyond the empirical studies, chapter quality is somewhat uneven, ranging from an outstanding exploration of the perception and organization of theatrical time (Luciano Mariti) to a rather jumbled reflection on performer training (John J. Schranz). Two semiotically informed essays – Lorraine Dumenil's brief 'anachronistic' reading of Artaud's theory of effective action against recent neuroscience research, and Marco de Marinis's longer glossary of multidisciplinary concepts – are particularly informative and round out the book's broad and interesting offering.

FREYA VASS-RHEE