

theories and practices of performance, visibility, affect and archives that continues to shape new trends in contemporary Southern Cone and world theatre.

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Transcultural Theater. By Günther Heeg. London: Routledge, 2023. Pp. 178 + 16 illus. £120/\$160 Hb.

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In an era marked by growing polarization and cultural divides, the concept of transcultural theatre emerges as a beacon of hope, offering a unique pathway to fostering understanding, empathy and unity. Günther Heeg's insightful book, *Transcultural Theater*, delves into the intricacies of this concept, shedding light on its transformative power and its potential to reshape our perceptions of the foreign and the alien.

This book challenges the notion that theatre is solely for entertainment, instead positioning it as a powerful catalyst for cultural change. The foundational section of the book, drawing from Gilles Deleuze's concepts, establishes transcultural theatre as the one that integrates theatre forms from diverse historical and spatial contexts. Heeg argues that, in contrast to intercultural theatre from the 1990s, transcultural theatre is characterized by a dynamic exchange and integration of theoretical insights and practical application in the realm of theatre, rather than relying on rigid cultural stereotypes or concepts.

As the book progresses, it navigates the complex terrain of globalization and fundamentalism, framing transcultural theatre within the context of these global forces. It demonstrates that transcultural theatre does not exist in isolation but emerges as a response to the existing movements of globalization and fundamentalism. The book underscores how fear of the foreign and xenophobia are reactions to globalization's socio-economic instability, further emphasizing transcultural theatre's role in this spectrum. The book delves into the everyday theatricality of fundamentalism and globalization, emphasizing their inherently theatrical manifestations. It discusses the localization of 'strangeness' within one's own culture and critiques theories that separate 'ownness' and 'strangeness', drawing inspiration from thinkers like Roland Barthes and Bertolt Brecht.

Additionally, the book explores various themes. These include the idea of living in transit, the absence of a set moral or ideological agenda in theatre, how the world is portrayed on stage, the worldly experiences rooted in *Widerfahrnis* (which means that world experience is not something we actively construct but rather something we encounter or undergo), the importance of repetition in transcultural theatre, and the significance of gestures and emotions in this type of performance. It also examines the contrast between empathy and identification, juxtaposing them with the concept of sharing and separation to harness emotional power in transcultural theatre.

The book offers a substantial contribution to the realm of theatre theory by establishing a firm theoretical foundation for the concept of transcultural theatre. Through its exploration of interaction with foreign and alien elements, the book presents a compelling perspective that counters the rise of xenophobic fundamentalist and populist movements on a global scale. It champions theatre as a powerful medium that fosters conviviality with the foreign and the alien, addressing pressing societal issues and promoting cultural exchange and coexistence. By highlighting the practical implications of its concepts, the book effectively bridges the gap between theory and practice, catering to a diverse readership, including scholars, students,

artists, educators and cultural practitioners. Moreover, its interdisciplinary approach, which probes into the interplay between the aesthetic experience of transcultural theatre, the creative processes behind it, and its academic study and representation, ensures engagement across various fields.

However, the book also presents certain limitations. Its theoretical complexity might pose challenges for readers without a background in theatre theory or cultural studies, potentially impeding a comprehensive grasp of its concepts. Additionally, the book's content or focus could not adequately address or include certain situations, settings or communities. In this context, it might not provide sufficient information or guidance for dealing with practical challenges related to implementing transcultural theatre in a wide range of different situations or communities.

All in all, it is a commendable contribution to the field of theatre studies, transcultural experience and cultural education. It stands as a source of inspiration and an intellectual guide for anyone seeking to explore the transformative power of theatre in a world that could greatly benefit from embracing the beauty of diversity.