BOOK REVIEWS
EDITED BY JEFFREY D. MASON

Geographies of Learning. By Jill Dolan. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2001; pp. 209. $45.00 hardcover; $19.95 paperback.

Reviewed by Janelle Reinelt, University of California, Irvine

Geographies of Learning maps the coordinates of several critical impasses in so-called progressive fields, while simultaneously insisting that the impasses may be negotiated or (in keeping with road terminology) maneuvered. Jill Dolan is passionately committed to the possibility of overcoming the sometimes fractious disagreements between feminists and lesbian/gay/queer folks, between theatre theorists and practitioners, between academics, artists, and activists. Her rich background in all of these areas (as lesbian activist, professor of theatre studies and women's studies, executive director of two programs, and president of a large professional organization) equips her to offer her readers substantial vision as well as concrete experience, and the example of someone who puts her convictions into practice—what my parents' class and generation called "putting your money where your mouth is."

I am reminded of my parents' vernacular because of Dolan's decision to call attention to the varieties of discourse, formal and informal, personal and impersonal, that make up a life in art, politics, and the academy. "My own voice here shifts among several ways of speaking," she writes. "I can't imagine writing a project like this one without sharing my personal investments in the structures of knowledge I'd like to revise" (21). These multiple terms of address add up to an ethical claim on her readers to engage the materials and ideas of the book from a similar plurality of levels and perspectives. Strengthened by her fair-mindedness as much as by her passion, the book demands a serious response.

The debates Dolan examines are perhaps well known, but often they are taken for granted, without adequate explanation or even description. Anyone who works within the field of theatre studies, for example, knows all about the theory/practice split, but Dolan looks at its institutional roots, its disciplinary specificity, and at the negative consequences for the well-being of departments that do not embrace change: "Some departments have built curriculum and created production projects to challenge traditional understandings of theater as an art. But the theory/practice split that rends the field has allowed many production programs to inculcate romantic notions of artistry that describe the actor, especially, as outside of history, as objective, empirical, inspired not by context but by genius and canonical knowledge. As a result these departments are often considered naïve or irrelevant to the larger intellectual project of the university or college" (54). While Dolan explains why even humanities faculties sometimes look down on theatre studies, failing to perceive any continuity

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among their intellectual commitments and research agendas, she also challenges those who have moved too far away from the embodied work of making performances for particular audiences; thus "Theatre scholars willing to engage with poststructuralism have allowed the field to be scientized by theory while they've not worked very hard to translate that theory into critical praxis" (55). Dolan advocates an activist vision of theatre departments that would take up public debates around issues of democratic culture, citing as examples the Robert Brustein–August Wilson arguments about representing race in the theatre and the arts-funding conflicts of the 1990s centered in the NEA. She concludes, "Theater faculty might broaden their perspectives and think clearly about the audiences for their scholarship, their directing, their teaching as a social force that connects them to history and to the movement of cultural life" (62). As do all her chapters, this one ends with ten practical ways to put some of her ideas into practice, a "road map toward addressing the theory/practice split in theater studies." Number five suggests, "Invite faculty from other departments and members of the community—other artists and theatergoers—to discuss season selection for university theaters" (63). Through this action, Dolan seeks to engage both the intellectual climate of the university and the lay culture of the community, and to take the risk of involving their voices in the choices of productions, usually not an open matter.

In writing about gay/lesbian/queer studies, Dolan takes up the tension between advocates of queer theory, emphasizing mobility across categories of gender and sex, and the historical gay and lesbian emphasis on identity and embodied experience. This has been a troubling impasse and, arguably, separates the political struggles of feminists and other identitarians from the radical queer movement. Dolan is at pains to explain these problems in several ways, partially as stemming from intellectual disagreement about how to characterize subjectivity (open, nonessentialist, and not fixed, versus situated, constrained, and historically marked), but also as due in part to the interplay of market economics, the ideology of individualism, and queer ideas of social and sexual mobility. In addition, Dolan points out that activists and academics seem divided into two groups, those who grapple with reality and those who write about representation, but at one remove from the trenches. This issue is a form of the theory/practice split she describes in theatre, and it pops up prominently when she turns to lesbian/gay/queer theatre artists and scholars who engage in these arguments on both disciplinary levels. Commenting on the first conference on gay and lesbian theatre in 1995, Dolan concludes: "Despite the promise, perhaps, of the coalitional concept of queer, we remained, I think, two hundred or more gay men and lesbians and others, some of whom perceive themselves as thinking, some as doing, some as consuming. For queer theater to really flourish, perhaps we need a community that thoughtfully, passionately, and responsibly goes about engaging in all three" (105).

The most surprising and enlightening chapter of Dolan's book compares working within a women's studies context to working within a theatre context.

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While theatre departments often try to avoid political commitments, women's studies was built on the fundamental plank of feminism. While theatre studies has often remained entrenched in old-fashioned methods and practices, women's studies is an almost brand-new discipline. Dolan writes about the seeming orthodoxy and narrowness of some women's studies and the relative freedom and diversity in some theatre programs. Writing specifically about her students in Madison, Wisconsin, Dolan explains, "The self-styled women's studies students at UW–Madison at the time seemed terribly dogmatic and rigid in their expectations about what feminism meant and how it should be taught; I was often ill at ease with their prescriptive, presumptuous behavior and ideas. The theater students seemed more open to ideas; I suppose I preferred their romanticism about art to the women's studies students newly suspicious attitude toward the history of 'male-dominated' intellectual thought" (124). By highlighting these contradictions within the two fields, Dolan somehow manages to keep faith with both of them. Perhaps it is her conviction that committed engagement with the relationship between academic and political life will lead to positive social change, however incrementally.

Dolan puts her finger on sore spots, but inspires the will to heal them. She ends with her personal list of Ten Commandments for teaching, almost all of which are student-centered. Dolan insists on the positive valence of pleasure in the classroom, and that is where the utopian impulse of this book most resides: "Believe in a classroom in which pleasure circulates freely: as desire, as humor, as intellectual inquiry, as the passionate commitment to ideas, theories, and practices" (145).

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The Making of American Audiences: From Stage to Television, 1750–1990. By Richard Butsch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000; pp. 438. $69.95 hardcover.

Reviewed by Bruce A. McConachie, University of Pittsburgh

Although we have long understood that audiences are comakers of meaning in the playhouse, most theatre histories pay scant attention to the role of spectators in constituting periods of theatrical history and motivating historical change. In part, our ignorance of audience dynamics has been due to the difficulty of researching the topic; reliable information on the social profile, expectations, behavior, and response of historical audiences is not easy to acquire. Before Butsch's survey, historians of American acting, playwriting, or theatre architecture—indeed, of the entire range of theatrical phenomena that had to accommodate itself to the habits, mollify the concerns, and inflame the desires of past audiences—might have been excused for their inattention to and/or misleading generalizations about American spectators before 1920. No more. *The Making of American Audiences* provides a firm foundation upon which a

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new generation of performance historians might build more socially engaged and responsible histories.

As Butsch's subtitle suggests, his book spans the entire range of spectating in the United States; it includes film viewing, radio listening, and television watching as well as audience behavior in past playhouses. While this inclusiveness has its uses, especially for historians of the twentieth-century American theatre, most performance scholars will be drawn to the first half of the book, where Butsch surveys major changes in theatrical audiences from colonial times to around 1920, with a focus on spectators for dramatic and variety entertainments.

In a cogent introduction, Butsch sets out the terms of his analysis and summarizes the major findings of his history. Interested in the power of past audiences and attempts to control or "incorporate" that power, Butsch notes that groups of spectators have shifted from relatively "active" to predominately "passive" participation over the course of two hundred and fifty years. Various entertainments in different media have also been more or less "embedded" for audiences; like inattentive family members chatting in the midst of a television sitcom today, the B'hoys in the 1840s ignored much of the onstage action at the Bowery Theatre to attend to their own concerns. Butsch also signals his interest in spectating as a mode of "collective identity" and "collective political action," which leads to the pessimistic thesis that drives the narrative of his book: from active, group participants in the "public sphere" of the nation, audiences became passive individuals, attuned to private consumption rather than to civic responsibility. The theatre of the mid-nineteenth century privatized the spectating experience, and radio and television broadcasting completed the process, making the home the primary center of entertainment and raising enormous barriers to political participation through spectatorship.

Butsch discusses the concept of the audience as part of a public sphere in significant detail in his chapter on the theatre of the early republic, covering roughly 1790 to 1812. Certainly, the discourses of the time gave authority to "the public" in the playhouse, as opposed to managers or actors or the mostly elite, coterie audiences of colonial times. Neither is there doubt that Federalist and Republican politics animated spectators to cheer certain plays, demand specific tunes, and, occasionally, to destroy the interiors of playhouses through riots when managers balked at audience sovereignty. Although Butsch stretches Jurgen Habermas's definition to accommodate such rowdy behavior, whether these modes of political participation were legitimate expressions of a Habermasian public sphere is open to interpretation, and Butsch recognizes that breaking up a theatre is a long way from the rational debate favored by the political theorist. Other historians, too, would question whether a Habermasian public sphere ever existed in the United States, within playhouses or anywhere else. Nonetheless, Butsch insists that significant aspects of a bourgeois public sphere were a part of audience dynamics in the early republic, providing his

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narrative with a high point from which he can tell the story of spectatorial pacification and decline.

Butsch's history gains credibility and complexity when he details the gradual shift toward privatization from the 1840s through the 1870s, a process Butsch sees as driven by three discourses: respectability, cultivation, and fashion. The pressures of respectability and female fashion were probably the most significant, prompting managers eager to attract matinee ladies to domesticate their playhouses through the exclusion of liquor and prostitutes and, finally, to feminize the theatregoing experience through the choice of repertoire and closer attention to the costumes of actresses. Even the B'hoys, Butsch alleges, were trapped by their connection to the cultural capital of the theatre; their knowledge of actors like Forrest and Chanfrau tied them to the charismatic power of these stars, pulling the teeth of their opposition to the dominant culture. Butsch is especially attentive to matters of class and gender in these chapters, noting the irony in a triumph by middle-class women in Victorian audiences that came at the expense of spectator power. Women filled the playhouses by the 1880s, but decorum and habits of viewing shaped by consumption kept them silent and submissive before stars and the stage illusion. Contrary to historical consensus, this transformation had largely occurred before the complete dimming of the house lights and the rise of fourth-wall naturalism.

Later chapters on theatre audiences provide similar gems of insight. Butsch's extensive research into audiences for minstrel shows qualifies what has been the assumption of nearly all scholarship on pre-1860 minstrelsy that spectators were predominately working class. Careful attention to the economics and performance conditions of vaudeville leads Butsch to posit a dialectic between performers' desires to activate audiences and managers' eagerness to pacify it. Butsch recognizes that active audience involvement led to social solidarity in Italian and Yiddish immigrant theatres from the turn of the century into the 1920s.

This latter insight qualifies the pessimism of Butsch's narrative. While audiences have rarely participated in direct political action in the theatre since 1850, they have used spectating as a means of building solidarity that could—and sometimes did—have indirect political consequences outside of the playhouse. The workers' theatre of the early 1930s, some community-based performances today, and even temperance theatre for matinee ladies in the nineteenth century are relevant examples. Butsch recognizes that the theatre can still play this indirect role, but such considerations, necessarily involving close ties between specific audience groups and certain kinds of entertainments, lie beyond the more general scope of his book.

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Italian Opera in Late Eighteenth-Century London, Volume 2: The Pantheon Opera and Its Aftermath, 1789–1795. By Judith Milhous, Gabriella Dideriksen, and Robert D. Hume. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001; pp. 883 + illustrations. $125.00 hardcover.

Opera and Drama in Eighteenth-Century London: The King's Theatre, Garrick and the Business of Performance. By Ian Woodfield. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001; pp. 339. $59.95 hardcover.

Reviewed by Leigh Woods, University of Michigan

Opera buffs and anglophiles are sure to find their own pleasures in *Opera and Drama in Eighteenth-Century London* and in volume 2 of *Italian Opera in Late Eighteenth-Century London*, but these new works will also appeal to general readers and theatre scholars who have long-standing interests in the profusion of theatrical entertainments in London during the latter half of the eighteenth century. Both volumes capture an overheated theatre scene, stoked by class-consciousness at its most acute. Both books, but especially *Italian Opera*, find uses for financial records. The meticulous bookkeeping of eighteenth-century London opera underscores the need for lots of money to run an enterprise made up largely of foreign performers, designers, and composers, none of whom came cheap, in the competitive bidding and prototypical stardom that marked the European opera scene of the time. Both works show opera managers spending money on attractions they could bring to London to aggrandize their patrons' vaunting senses of themselves, and vaunting came naturally at a time of high imperial ambitions and high colonial revenues, though neither book searches opera for its metatheatrical possibilities.

Multiple authorship seems quite in order for a project as massive as the second volume of *Italian Opera*. Gabriella Dideriksen replaces Curtis Price as Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume's collaborator in compiling this second volume, and in seeing it through to publication only six years after the nearly-as-weighty first installment. The authors rely more than ever on the labor-intensive tactics criminal investigators use to "follow the money." The money lavished on opera gives historians a way of appraising individual managements for measures adopted, measures ignored, and mistakes made. Actual criminal acts, except for arson and embezzlement, are rare in the record, though venality abounded as companies jockeyed for position, while those who ran them cut corners, covered tracks, and skirted the law (a Lord Chamberlain among them). Ostentation prevailed in an entertainment whose very identity was founded in cost and, outside Italy, in xenophilia. Ballet catered to some of the same tastes and, in London as in other European capitals, stood handmaiden to opera in ways that impressed audiences—at the King's Theatre, the Haymarket, or at its sometime

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rival, the Pantheon—who were rapt at Italians singing one night and agog at French dancing the next.

Milhous, Dideriksen, and Hume also make briefer, though no less telling, use of lawsuits. *Italian Opera*'s eight appendixes enlarge on the contents of the volume, with one appendix devoted entirely to legal actions generated around managements under pressure. Two other appendixes—on personnel and contracts—document additional costs, and three more deal with money in relation to subscribers, scenery, and wardrobe. The authors' interpretations of even the driest detail are seasoned with an even drier wit, the more noteworthy for having survived collective research and writing. What is more, Milhous, Dideriksen, and Hume show an impressive grasp of practical matters, such as housekeeping, accounting, investing, and contract law, that leavens even the most punctilious discussions.

In Woodfield's subtitle, the phrase "the Business of Performance" shows the extent to which his book shares the interest in finance of volume 2 of *Italian Opera*. Woodfield doesn't follow the money in the microscopic ways that Milhous, Dideriksen, and Hume do, but he often ascribes more personal motives to matters financial. *Opera and Drama* is especially strong in showing the cordial backstabbing between David Garrick and the playwright *manquée* and manageress Frances Brooke of the King's Theatre opera house, as they vied for control over what both coveted as London's most exclusive audience. If *Opera and Drama* is shorter and less detailed in treating the 1770s than *Italian Opera* is in handling the late 1780s and early 1790s, it is more compact and more speculative. *Italian Opera* speculates, however, only when the documentary record invites it. Woodfield's more free-ranging approach reflects the aim of the Cambridge Studies in Opera series to explore "the cultural, political and social influences of the genre." It's not that volume 2 of *Italian Opera* overlooks context, though there was more of it in volume 1, but that the book favors detail as a way of suggesting, in the aggregate, contexts of its own. While Woodfield does not discount the documentary record, he handles it synoptically, to serve the volume's broader interests in London society, in Anglo–Italian dealings, and in the qualities of stardom rich Londoners so prized.

Neither book apologizes for the relatively slight place late-eighteenth-century operas hold in today's repertoire. Rather, both books defend the repertoire they examine not for its intrinsic merit but for its capacity to suggest ambience, *Italian Opera* through its encyclopedic approach, and *Opera and Drama* through composite images of the operas and audiences that watched them. Mozart figures as a shadow player in both books when the chance of luring him to London teased managers and glitterati, and both books offer welcome treatment of *opera buffa* in the same detail as the less popular but more prestigious *opera seria*. Milhous, Dideriksen, and Hume deal better with the *pastiche*, so typical of the period, than does Woodfield, given his conviction that better music would have forced greater unity and stronger *ensemble*.

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Much of the capacity of *Italian Opera* to consider the diffusion of production as a potential strength is due to the many kinds of facts its authors draw upon. For all the book's exhaustiveness—or indeed, *because* of it—volume 2 of *Italian Opera* testifies to the synergistic qualities of production. The interaction that most captivates Woodfield, on the other hand, lies in the ties between England and Italy and in the ways society, culture, and diplomacy brought together the aristocrats, artists, and businessmen of both nations.

Both books should spur future scholarship. Volume 2 of *Italian Opera* resembles its predecessor volume in laying out a documentary record and in drawing conclusions that invite supplement or modification rather than argument. Its authority as a reference work encourages perusal of its contents for the rich and sizable topics to be found there, and so promises to enhance and amend scholarship about spoken theatre into the future. Its reluctance to conjecture will invite more speculative approaches to the documents its authors have taken such pains to gather and put in order. *Opera and Drama* beckons not so much for the information it contains or the conclusions it draws as for its willingness to engage, head on, the issues of culture, society, and art that *Italian Opera*'s documentation and argumentation explore by implication. The quality of both books redeems the relative slightness of the repertoire they cover. Both works demonstrate how the material world can illuminate periods of theatre that leave behind voluminous archives and abundant relics. Tracy Davis and others have shown the value of applying such methods to nineteenth-century British theatre, where, in general, there are more records to be retrieved. History of this kind not only calls up remote events, but can, at its best, as in volume 2 of *Italian Opera* and *Opera and Drama*, resurrect the elusive experiences of participants on both sides of the curtain.

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The French Revolution and the London Stage, 1789–1805. By George Taylor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000; pp. 263. $60 hardcover.

Reviewed by Jeffrey S. Ravel, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

In 1978, French historian François Furet announced that "the French Revolution is over," by which he meant that the heated debates in France over the meanings of the Revolution, evident throughout the nineteenth and into the first half of the twentieth century, were at an end. Passions had cooled so sufficiently, Furet thought, that the historiography of the Revolution could pass from its long "commemorative" phase, dominated since 1917 by programmatic Marxist interpretations, to a more dispassionate, analytical approach. Since then, of course, historians in France and the anglophone world have vehemently debated the Furet thesis. While most of them have been willing to discard the idea that 1789 represented the triumph of a rising bourgeois class over a superannuated aristocracy, George Taylor's new book on the London and Paris

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stages in the Revolutionary period still situates theatrical production on both sides of the Channel within the context of a politically and economically ascendant bourgeoisie. Taylor argues that "new material circumstances created new audiences and new ideological opinions" (2) on the stages of both capitals during this sixteen-year period. Ultimately, however, the rise of Gothic melodrama by the time of Napoleon's self-coronation in 1804 was "reactionary;" the genre's Romantic emphasis on the "absolute self," at the expense of holistic links among the self, the body, and the community, betrayed the failure of the Revolutionary spirit felt in both countries in 1789. Theatregoing after 1800, according to Taylor, became an exercise in "alienation," allowing disaffected audiences to mourn a revolutionary moment that had yielded to oligarchy in Britain and Napoleonic authoritarianism in France.

The book's greatest value is as a chronological guide to the lesser-known productions of the London stage during the Revolutionary era. Taylor begins with a survey of the theatre in the years before 1789, discussing George Colman's *Inkle and Yarico*, a tragicomedy with thirteen songs that Colman labeled an "opera," as well as a series of plays about military deserters. These works exemplify what Taylor calls, following Alan Sinfield, "cultural faultlines," or stories that work through controversial contemporary issues, such as slavery and liberty or military conscription and capital punishment. The onset of the Revolution in 1789 generated an enthusiastic wave of ballads, pantomimes, and history plays (such as Colman's 1789 *Battle of Hexham*) on the London stage, since many Britons saw the fall of the Bastille and the establishment of the National Assembly as evidence that the French had finally endorsed a British understanding of political liberties. Their hopes for their cross-Channel neighbor and for domestic reform were crushed during the Terror (1793–1794), when state-sponsored acts of violence undermined the principles of French republicanism. On stage, censors rejected radical, pro-French works by Thomas Holcroft and others, while audiences developed a taste for Gothic romances that eschewed the overtly political narratives of the history plays in favor of sublime emotions, such as astonishment and horror, generated by ghosts and scenes in dungeons. Taylor suggests that by the turn of the century, the plurality of genres and performance styles on the London stage reflected "a confusion of cultural values and, probably, a lack of conviction in peoples' self-perception" (131). These alienated theatregoers were both disillusioned by the failure of the Revolution to create greater equality and ripe for the emotionally extreme melodramas offered by the former radical Holcroft and others in the first years of the new century.

Taylor's thesis extends beyond the London stage, however, as he attempts to integrate its history with that of the Paris stage, while providing an overview of the political, military, and diplomatic history of both nations during these years. This ambitious agenda is driven by the author's desire to move beyond a formalist narrative of genre and performance style to a theatre history integrated into the political culture of the period. The impulse is praiseworthy, but the

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execution falls short. His analysis of the Parisian stage relies solely on English-language works that are out of date or excessively quantitative, and he appears not to have consulted any of the pamphlets or periodical literature on the theatre published in France during the Revolutionary decade. While Taylor acknowledges the limitations of pre-1970 Marxist-inspired writings on the French Revolution, his view of the past is still almost uniquely materialist, in the sense that he believes economic conditions determine the content of "cultural" artifacts such as stage plays. He writes, "I have endeavoured to argue . . . for the influence of circumstance over agency" (188). This preference leads to two problems. First, it causes him to rely on a relatively unknown work (McGarr and Callinicos, *Marxism and the Great French Revolution*) when he invokes the world outside the playhouse walls, instead of dipping into the rich debates since 1989 between revisionist and postrevisionist historians of the Revolution. Second, it leads him to view the complex interactions among playwrights, readers, performers, and spectators as reflections of larger, determinant issues outside the theatre. Taylor is unwilling to grant that the practice of theatregoing in London might itself have altered the way that audience members perceived the news from Paris in these years. Once one takes away spectatorial agency, one does not have to travel far to arrive at an interpretation that reduces the variety of theatrical experience to a lament for the missed opportunities of the Revolutionary moment (221). Taylor, like other historians of the Revolutionary period, is unwilling to give up the commemorative approach to the past decried by Furet.

Unfortunately, the book reproduces only one of the many rich theatre engravings from the period. It also contains a surprising number of elementary typographical errors in both English and French, a disturbingly underedited volume for the price.

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A Triptych from the Russian Theatre: The Komissarzhevskys. By Victor Borovsky. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2001; pp. xxiv + 485. $49.95 hardcover.

Reviewed by Felicia Hardison Londré, University of Missouri–Kansas City

If there is one constant to be noted throughout the lives of the three Komissarzhevskys—the nineteenth-century operatic tenor, his turn-of-the-century actress daughter, and her half-brother, who made a career outside the USSR as a director—it is their unwavering devotion to an ideal of theatre art that permeated every aspect of their existence. Whether this is literally true or not, it is how Victor Borovsky sees them and presents them in his magisterial tripartite biography.

Fyodor Petrovich Komissarzhevsky (1832–1905) was trained as a singer in Italy, a circumstance that may have led Russian critics to resist his creative

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innovations as the product of a foreign sensibility. From his initial 1863 contract at St. Petersburg's Imperial Maryinsky Theatre, Komissarzhevsky pursued his own artistic quest for "truth in singing" (15), achieving a breakthrough synthesis of natural acting with singing in Aleksandr Dargomyzhky's *Rusalka* in 1865, and in Dargomyzhky's posthumous *Stone Guest* (1872). F. P. Komissarzhevsky's operatic career flourished in those two decades, during which his marriage to Maria Shulgina produced four children, the oldest of whom would grow up to be the leading actress of her day, Vera Komissarzhevskaya. In 1882, Komissarzhevsky divorced his wife to marry his mistress, Princess Maria Kurtsevich, who was already pregnant with their son Fyodor, the future director. Mitigating the shocking aspects of his personal life is the fact that it was his postdivorce move to Moscow to teach at the Conservatoire that brought him into contact with Konstantin Stanislavsky, upon whose formation as an artist Komissarzhevsky would have a seminal influence.

As Vera (1864–1910) grew into adulthood, she studied singing with her father and acting with Stanislavsky. She acted under a pseudonym with Stanislavsky's Society for Art and Literature, then played engagements with various private theatres, including two years in Vilnius, and made her debut at St. Petersburg's Aleksandrinsky Theatre in 1896. Lacking the stature expected of a conventional dramatic actress, the petite Komissarzhevskaya learned to draw upon her spiritual resources: "Every time she went on stage she revealed to the audience a part of her own soul" (110). Chekhov said of her work in the otherwise disastrous premiere of *The Seagull*, "the way she plays Nina . . . as though she had got inside my soul" (129). Komissarzhevskaya's zealous, idealistic search for truth in art led her to resign from the Imperial theatre to found her own company. In 1906, she hired Vsevolod Meyerhold, whose symbolist inclinations seemed to complement her own search for a theatrical truth apart from psychological reality. That partnership did yield some experiments of lasting impact before their parting in 1907. Despite the travails of her last years—her persistence in seeking new forms while audiences preferred the traditions they knew—Vera Komissarzhevskaya's death in 1910 elicited national mourning.

Vera and her half-brother Fyodor (1882–1954) worked together, not always harmoniously, in her theatre company. It was during those years that he began to see himself as a practitioner of the relatively new art of stage direction. Fyodor Komissarzhevsky's pre-Revolutionary years in Russia involved struggle on two fronts: to win recognition for the profession of director and to find his own nonrealistic aesthetic. In 1919, he began a new career in England and, in 1934, he began yet again in the United States. F. F. Komissarzhevsky's idea of theatre remained constant over five decades: "The first place belongs to the actor, but the whole purpose of the action on the stage is to reveal the 'philosophical meaning of the work,' and synthesis is the only way towards this" (289). Despite Komissarzhevsky's artistic consistency, elucidating this complex personality takes over half the book and, indeed, it well may be that F. F.

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Komissarzhevsky's achievements were not adequately recognized during his lifetime. Borovsky credits him with such contributions as, for example, making Chekhov work on the English stage, and John Gielgud is frequently quoted paying homage to Komissarzhevsky, his mentor.

Part of the fascination of Borovsky's treatment of the three lives is its very Russianness, that is, its privileging of philosophy about the meaning of life over mundane facts and dates. The biographer's narrative voice conveys an innately Russian sense of time and relationships, as well as a native understanding of cultural context. Russian proverbs crop up occasionally to augment Borovsky's observations. Little of the material in *A Triptych from the Russian Theatre* has hitherto been available in English, and Borovsky's impeccably documented Russian sources are impressive. His impressionistic approach, however, can be confusing. For example, there is no explanation for the statement, midway through the chapter on F. F. Komissarzhevsky, that "his personal life was once again disintegrating" (330), though we later learn that he had "nine officially registered marriages" (339). Few of Komissarzhevsky's wives are mentioned, and it takes some time to understand that the penultimate was Peggy Ashcroft (410). Borovsky's decision to focus on the subjects' artistic trajectories, as opposed to their personal lives, is understandable, even if it does force the reader to work a little harder to make the connections.

Certainly, the essential chronological *points de repère* are embedded in the analysis of the artists' development as spiritual and aesthetic beings. Because it frames its expatiations about life and art in often abstract terms, this is not an economically written book. Teasing out the distinctions between F. F. Komissarzhevky's and Stanislavsky's superficially similar approaches to theatre, for example, is the work of ten pages (268–78). Still, this is a book to savor, both as an entrée into Russian sensibility and as a reminder of the dedicated singleness of purpose that characterizes any artist who would make a lasting contribution.

Abundant and excellent black-and-white illustrations are provided for all three subjects of the book—studio portraits, renderings, and production photos—as well as a number of hitherto unpublished materials from the personal archive of F. F. Komissarzhevsky's widow, Ernestine Stodelle-Komisarjevsky. A strikingly designed dust jacket and an invitingly large typeface figure among the book's attractions.

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Theatre and War, 1933–1945: Performance in Extremis. Edited by Michael Balfour. Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2001; pp.189. $49.95 hardcover, $22.50 paperback.

Theatre under the Nazis. Edited by John London. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000; pp. 356, 30 black-and-white illustrations. $74.95 hardcover.

Reviewed by Günter Berghaus, University of Bristol

Michael Balfour's *Theatre and War, 1933–1945: Performance in Extremis* offers eleven essays, all previously published and in several cases abridged for this volume. They cover four aspects: theatre in service of Fascism, theatre of resistance, theatre behind barbed wire, and theatre at the front. With the exception of two contributions, the essays represent recent scholarship and cover developments in Italy, Germany, France, Britain, and the Soviet Union. The level of analysis varies from essay to essay, ranging from in-depth academic research to personal recollections of survivors and eyewitness accounts. The volume addresses theatrical formats ranging from simple, cabaretlike performances to large-scale public spectacles, including both state-organized events supportive of Fascist ideology and the theatre of resistance.

Theatre of resistance in occupied territories, ghettos, or concentration camps was often a matter of life and death. Given the high risk factors involved, why would people feel compelled to produce, act in, or watch performances? Balfour suggests that theatre provides a means to take control, to escape the enslavement of body and soul, and to affirm human values in the face of wanton destruction. Ultimately, theatre gives hope to go on living when reasoning can no longer nurture the human impetus to survive. Seen from this angle, Balfour's anthology of accounts and analyses offers quasi-anthropological insights into the human need to express oneself by means of performance.

John London's *Theatre Under the Nazis*, a collection of six essays, is a more original undertaking, the result of a conference he organized in 1996 at the Institute of Germanic Studies of London University. His comprehensive introduction to the present volume offers an apt summary of a large number of studies that have appeared on the subject over the past twenty-five years, and he provides information derived from the database of German performances of the Nazi era, compiled in the 1990s by Henning Rischbieter at the Freie Universität Berlin. London also contributes an essay on non-German drama performed in Nazi-controlled playhouses, and he gives a useful overview of some of the ways in which dramas from Allied countries were received in Germany. Given the low artistic quality of most contemporaneous plays supporting the ideology of Fascist regimes, it is not astonishing that they elicited little enthusiasm in the

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theatre profession and from audiences. Authors such as Calderón and Lope de Vega, however, possessed a distinguished history on the German stage and were of great significance to the Francoist reinterpretation of the Golden Age; thus they offered a parallel to Nazi attempts to create a modern German drama based on ancient precedents. Nazi critics also engaged in an extensive debate about whether Shakespeare was an arch-Nordic bard or an un-German dramatist. London offers a glimpse into this ideological minefield, but unfortunately omits from his discussion of the older drama of enemy countries, such as Britain and France, the convoluted condemnation/absolution of Molière. I also wish he had given more thought to the reception of ancient Greek drama as it fed into aesthetic debates about the *Thingspiel*, the only original contribution the Nazis made to twentieth-century theatre.

William Niven's essay on the Thing plays and their staging aptly summarizes the current state of scholarship, which, in the course of the past decade, has become quite extensive. I cannot quite follow his argument concerning the reasons for the demise of the new genre, however. The Nazis were perfectly aware of the Thing movement's links with the speech choirs of the Weimar years before they invested so heavily in the *Thingspiel*. Niven misjudges the nature of the speech and movement choirs, in which Marxist groups made up only a section of a much larger, and predominantly conservative, culture. Since the speech choir, in any case, had its roots in bourgeois predecessors, often linked to the "conservative revolution" that formed an important root of Nazi ideology, the audiences and participating amateur actors were unlikely to mistake the cultic experience of a *Thingspiel* with a Communist speech choir.

Glen Gadberry contributes an essay on the history plays of the period. I admire his tenacity in tracing and studying this genre of drama, which for my taste qualifies as the theatrical equivalent of a stodgy Bavarian dumpling. The conclusions Gadberry draws from his reading of hundreds of history plays are highly informative and tell us a great deal about the Nazis' ideologically warped reinterpretation of European history. Similarly informative is Erik Levy's contribution on Nazi opera, which he has previously expounded in a book on music in the Third Reich and in my volume on Fascism and theatre.

Rebecca Rovit's examination of Jewish theatre in Berlin adds to existing scholarship on the Kulturbund by investigating archival material and raising important questions about artists' positions vis-à-vis Nazi authorities and their own Jewish patrons. William Abbey's and Katherina Havekamp's investigation of German theatre in the occupied territories focuses on Vichy France. Using Lille as an example, they examine that theatre's repertoire, audience composition, and impact upon local culture, and—not astonishingly—reveal how theatre formed part of a cultural offensive that followed the German military onslaught.

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The extensive bibliography at the end of the London volume contains a useful list of primary material and scholarly literature on the topics covered, as well as biographies and autobiographies of actors, directors, and designers active during the Nazi period. I have no reservations about recommending this volume both to students, as an introduction to the topic, and to scholars interested in new approaches to and interpretations of Nazi theatre. A balance between summing up existing scholarship and presenting new research is maintained and should ensure the volume a broad and varied readership.

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Theatre, History, and National Identities. Edited by Helka Mäkinen, S. E. Wilmer, and W. B. Worthen. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 2001; pp. 331 + illustrations. Paperback.

Reviewed by Laurence Senelick, Tufts University

The grandiose title and a three-person editorial team promise a *magnum opus* on some impressive topics. In fact, this volume is a collection of occasional papers originating in a summer school convened by Pirkko Koski in Suitia, Finland, in 1995, and two of the essays have been published elsewhere previously. The "international cast of scholars" touted in the publisher's blurb comprises five North Americans (one an expatriate), four Finns, and one Israeli. As in all such *Festschriften*, there is a certain imbalance and immiscibility, and some of the essays are only tenuously connected to the nexus announced in the title.

The name of S. E. Wilmer's opening essay, "German Romanticism and Its Influence on Finnish and Irish Theatre," has the arbitrary sound of a set question on an examination paper (e.g., "discuss the influence of German Romanticism, etc."). Since Wilmer teaches both at Trinity College, Dublin, and the summer school of the University of Helsinki, there is a certain autobiographical logic connecting his chosen subjects. His straightforward account draws parallels between the common uses of folklore and peasant culture, both genuine and synthetic, in the advancement of native theatres. As Dr. Johnson said of metaphysical images, however, these two nations are "yoked by violence together." In Finland, native ethnicity was threatened not only by the Russification policies of the Romanov Empire, but also by the hegemony of Swedish literature and language, a matter Wilmer doesn't discuss, while the Anglo-Irish and Protestant hegemony in Ireland was as much a class issue as a religious or linguistic one. Wilmer treats the influence of German Romanticism in only a few generalized paragraphs, and he fails to demonstrate any special relevance of Goethe, Herder, and Hegel to Irish and Finnish nationalism.

Finland dominates the volume, since six of the eleven essays deal with its stage. Hanna Suutela's study of "changing nationalist strategies" in the Finnish

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Theatre Company from 1872 to 1883 actually does what Wilmer sets out to do: she applies Hegelian concepts to Fennoman strategies for a national theatre. If one reads in sequence the other pieces, dealing with the struggle with Fascism in 1933, the travails of the National Theatre in the 1940s, "cultural liminality" at the Swedish-language Lilla Teatern, the reception of a recent play as staged by two Finnish language groups, and the devolution of dramatic acting into performance art at the Museum of Contemporary Art, one gets a vivid picture of the Finnish scene over the past century. If they tangentially touch on issues of history and nationalism, however, the essays do not do so in a cohesive manner.

The other pieces in the volume relate in varying ways to the themes set forth in the title. Freddie Rokem's lucid "The Bible and the Avant-Garde: The Search for a Classical Tradition in the Israeli Theatre" explores attempts to compensate for "the lack of an indigenous tradition of classical plays forming a regular repertoire" (95). The Bible, therefore, becomes the source of Israeli "classicism," and the bulk of Rokem's piece is devoted to describing experiments by three Israeli playwrights in shaping scriptural themes to their ends.

Three American contributors are tendentious in regarding the theatre and its study as agents of political activism, nor are they backward in advertising their biases. Bruce McConachie's essay, "Social Practices and the Nation-State: Paradigms for Writing National Theatre History," offers an incident in the career of John Howard Payne as it might be treated by "progressivists" and neo-Marxists. It will come as no surprise to learn that the progressive approach is given short shrift, while the neo-Marxist, Gramscian treatment receives extended analysis and promotion, enlisting Pierre Bourdieu into the ranks. Janelle Reinelt's "Performing Europe: Identity Formation for a 'New' Europe" confronts the current phenomenon of a "new Europe" that obliterates national boundaries. Her main concern is how performance might act as "an intervention into the discourse of the New Europe" (250), to which end she discusses three British plays in detail, *Mnemonic, Pentecost,* and *Europe*. Her own prejudice is for solidarity and, in her peroration, Reinelt expresses a hope that "theatre may emerge from this early millennial period as a powerful force for democratic struggle in its own unique imaginative and aesthetic modality" (253). Finally, there is an essay by W. B. Worthen on a theatrical movement that, in a paroxysm of politically correctitude, he sometimes designates Chicano/a, sometimes Chicana/o. He examines the works of El Teatro Campesino and other Mexican-American groups for "the staging of ethnic identities" (293) within specific political and critical contexts. Nationalism is less relevant here than the rewriting of history to provide alternatives to that offered by a dominant culture.

The rewriting of nationalism links to McConachie's demonstration of how facts may be skewed to make ideological arguments, and needs to be woven more tightly into the other essays, especially those which tout the formation of a national theatre as a healthy and valuable aim of art. In his more mature writings, Herder, often identified as a source of Nazi *Volkstum*, also offered a

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vision that was all-inclusive, not divisive. For him, the diversity of cultures made up the common substance of *Humanität* and disrespect for any one was an offense to all. Admirable though the yearnings for a cultural identity may be among latecomer nations and oppressed minorities, when this identity begins to harden into a mask of nationalism, scholars should recognize the danger. As Patrick Geary points out in *The Myth of Nations*, "Modern history was born in the nineteenth century, conceived and developed as an instrument of European nationalism. As a tool of nationalist ideology, the history of European nations was a great success, but it has turned our understanding of the past into a toxic waste dump, filled with the poison of ethnic nationalism, and the poison has seeped deep into popular consciousness. Clearing up this waste is the most damning challenge facing historians today."

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Method Acting Reconsidered: Theory, Practice, Future. Edited by David Krasner. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000; pp. 312. $59.95 hardcover; $18.95 paperback.

Approaches to Acting, Past and Present. By Daniel Meyer-Dinkgräfe. New York and London: Continuum, 2001; pp. 225. $29.95 paperback.

Reviewed by Peter Thomson, University of Exeter

When eighteenth-century deists dubbed John Wesley's galvanizing of Christian fervor "methodism," they generally meant it as an insult. Wesley was earnest and pugnacious, a tireless crusader with little sense of humor. Much the same could be (was, and is) said of Lee Strasberg. The volume of essays assembled by David Krasner in *Method Acting Reconsidered* is a conscientious attempt to rehabilitate a maligned acting model. Sanford Meisner emerges from this attempt more strongly than does Strasberg himself, while Stella Adler's contribution has still to be validated, despite (and sometimes because of) what is said about her here. The Method itself survives because, as Dennis Beck says in an essay that thoughtfully incorporates Stanislavsky, Strasberg, and Diderot, the actor's pursuit of truth (or authenticity) is "most fundamentally . . . the reactivation of acting's inherent paradox" (265).

Authenticity, Krasner observes, in his measured opening chapter, has been highly valued in American culture, and there is broad acceptance that "being real" involves access to the inner self, where the emotions reside. Strasberg's early appeal was as the apostle of authenticity, the man upon whom, however unknowingly, Stanislavsky had laid his hands. The essays in this volume are largely unconcerned with that early appeal. They are written by people who continue to test and develop the model. Marla Carlson finds Bakhtin a useful reference. Louise Stinespring perceives a lively interaction between Derrida and Meisner. David Wiles reminds the readers that, whatever the "given

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circumstances" of the play, the actual circumstances of its performance include an audience. James Luse writes about Michael Chekhov. Paul Kassel argues that the Method is "exceptionally good preparation for the actor working in so-called nonrealistic, experimental, avant-garde theatre" (220). Terry Donovan Smith introduces a program at the University of Washington in which the Method merges with the expressive discipline of Suzuki Tadashi. There is nothing wrong with this kind of interfusing, though I confess to some (probably Anglo-Saxon) squeamishness about Pamela Chabora's advocacy of Alba Emoting, "a psychophysiological method for inducing basic (pure) emotion" (230). I intend to steer well clear of that, not least because it carries echoes of the Lee Strasberg of the dark days of the Group Theatre's dissolution. Alba Emoting, as described in the volume, comes close to being an interference with the actor's metabolism.

Many of the essays refer to the Method's focus on the (free) will of the actor. This is the positive aspect whose negative is the willfulness of which many Method actors stand accused in familiar anecdotes. David Krasner has been bold enough to include an essay that might be seen as a threat to his enterprise. Deb Margolin, one of the iconoclastic founders of Split Britches Theatre Company, quotes with approval the view of her first teacher that acting is simple: "One needed only to say one thing while thinking another." Hers is not a scholarly essay, but it is a wonderfully witty one. "Method," she asserts, "is all about the problem of redistributing autobiography," and she and her colleagues in Split Britches are "just Method actors who didn't bother to clean up" (132). It is Margolin who offers the most elegant memorial to Strasberg as "a great acting teacher who was *willing* to contradict himself, which is what made him such a great philosopher of theatre" (133).

Strasberg and the Method are allotted less than four pages in Daniel Meyer-Dinkgräfe's unpredictable *Approaches to Acting, Past and Present*. The sheer quirkiness of this book is its most endearing characteristic. The author has his own agendum, though he half conceals it until the final chapter on "The Future of Acting," where he applauds the opportunity "to reassess existing approaches to acting in the light of a cogent model of human consciousness." The model he has in mind is "beyond expression . . . beyond the senses, beyond the intellect, and even beyond the emotions." It is, in fact, "the Indian model of consciousness . . . because of its ability to make sense of non-ordinary experiences such as translumination, presence, the third organ of the body of theatre, or total theatre" (178). This might be the insight of a visionary or mere psychobabble. It certainly isn't the outcome of an argument conducted through the earlier chapters of this oddly constructed book, wherein two short introductory chapters are followed by a thirty-page "history" of Western theatre from the Greeks to 1900. Some attention is paid to acting here, though it is necessarily scant.

Twentieth-century European and American innovations are covered in a little over fifty pages, with curtailed, encyclopedia-style comments on a

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selection of actors, sages, and directors (also Freud, Jung, Dada, Expressionism, Derrida, etc.). At no stage is an argument developed. The "Western" half of the book is a sporadically well-informed survey. There follows a chapter on "Non-Western Approaches to Acting"—thirty pages of explication of the Vedas and the Natyashastra, five pages on Japan, five on China, and three pages on the Islamic countries—but still there is no argument. The first shadow of one is presented in a chapter concerning the intercultural paradigm, in which Meyer-Dinkgräfe proposes that interculturalism is in need of reorientation in the light of consciousness studies regarding subjectivity. A brief survey of actor training both in the West and the East follows, then a wholly superfluous, though heartfelt, chapter on theatre criticism, before the clarion call to a higher consciousness is sounded in the final chapter. It is so charmingly dotty and so disarmingly ingenuous a book that any further comment would be inappropriate.

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The Pickle Clowns: New American Circus Comedy. Edited and with interviews by Joel Schechter. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2001; $25 paper, $50 cloth.

Reviewed by Ron Jenkins, Wesleyan University

Joel Schechter's new book of oral-history interviews with members of the Pickle Family Circus offers an unparalleled journey into the mind of the clown. Audiences are accustomed to seeing clowns, but they rarely hear them think. *The Pickle Clowns* places a slapstick stethoscope under the fright wig of comic performers like Bill Irwin and captures the pulse of their thought processes, as they invent gags and re-create the trajectory of their most memorable comic inventions.

This is an invaluable book for performers and directors because it re-creates all the wacky details of classic comic routines in the words of the clowns themselves. The voices of these bumbling stage figures are remarkably articulate, as they claim inspiration from sources as diverse as Dario Fo, Maxim Gorky, and Ed Sullivan. The performers offer descriptions and analyses that enable the reader to appreciate that the text of a clown routine like "Spaghetti" (included in the collection) is a blueprint for an existential vaudeville in the tradition of Samuel Beckett and the Marx Brothers.

Schechter opens the collection with a deftly engaging essay on the history of the Pickle Family Circus that puts their clowning in the context of great physical comedy from Aristophanes to Molière. Particularly enlightening and original are the insights revealed in his discussion of Étienne Decroux's concept of controlled disequilibrium, which is at the heart of all clowning techniques, from juggling to pratfalls. By quoting figures like Walter Benjamin and Vsevelod Meyerhold, Schechter manages to create a densely textured analysis

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of the clown's function while still conveying the anarchic delight of clowns in action.

The interviews in the volume offer this same, unusual combination of incisive analysis and joyful revelation. Kimi Okada speaks unselfconsciously of her debt to Fred Astaire as she recalls the difficulty of coordinating a chorus line of tap-dancing gorillas. Geoff Hoyle, who went from the Pickle clowns to performing in *The Lion King* on Broadway, muses ironically about the political implications of the dialogue in the Disney musical. Larry Pisoni, the founding artistic director of the Pickle Family Circus, speaks of the company's artistic roots in the political *commedia dell'arte* style of the San Francisco Mime Troupe, and is equally informative when he describes precisely how his colleagues threw a pie in his face as a regular part of their act.

Schechter is the author of other excellent books on the history of clowning, including *Durov's Pig* and *Satiric Impersonations*, but this volume is particularly noteworthy for the generosity of its conception. Rather than impressing the reader with his considerable mastery of the field, Schechter has chosen to step into the background and let the clowns speak for themselves. Like a highly skilled straight man, however, Schechter's seeming invisibility is deceptive. His encyclopedic knowledge and deep appreciation of contemporary clowning have guided the choices he made in asking questions, putting the performers at ease, and in shaping the transcribed interviews into a readable, coherent structure. Schechter's book is as satisfying as a well-timed double take in the circus ring. It makes you stop and look again at something you took for granted, and to realize that the art of the clown deserves closer examination.

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Dan Rice: The Most Famous Man You've Never Heard Of. By David Carlyon. New York: Public Affairs, 2001; pp. xix + 506. $30.00 hardcover.

Reviewed by Don Wilmeth, Brown University

For readers of this journal and certainly for students of the American circus, the subtitle of this book ("The Most Famous Man You've Never Heard Of") is an exaggeration that serves (as does the dust jacket) as a kind of circus bally to get the attention of the reader. Dan Rice's position is surely secure in the history of the American circus, both as a pioneer circus entrepreneur and as the greatest American clown of the nineteenth century, a presence as well known in his own time as the great P. T. Barnum.

Rice has too frequently been remembered for the myths that have come to be associated with his career and his personal image, however, and, in this regard (though the telling is often taken up by the fanciful reconstruction of incidents and the hyperbolic language of the circus), David Carlyon provides a narrative of

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Rice's life and times that should put to rest such apocryphal tales once and for all. Most prominent among the fictions attached to Rice are the notions that he was a friend and confidante of Abraham Lincoln, that he was the sole inspiration for the figure of Uncle Sam, and that he was able to earn enormous sums of money as a clown while operating a "one-horse show." We can thank earlier biographers for most of these anecdotal stories and exaggerations, beginning with Maria Ward Brown's life (1901) and gaining momentum with John C. Kunzog's *The One-Horse Show* (1962) and Don Carle Gillette's *He Made Lincoln Laugh* (1967)—all three, by the way, self- or locally published. (As Carlyon observes, at least Brown was a "chum" of Dan Rice's and could provide some personal observations.)

Of Rice's four biographers, Carlyon is uniquely qualified to investigate, explicate, and narrate the life and times of Dan Rice, not only from the vantage point of a trained researcher and theatre historian (Ph.D. from Northwestern, where this study began), but also that of a graduate of Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey's Clown College and a clown on the "Big One." The result, though it wavers between a scholarly tome and a popular biography, provides us for the first time with as credible, reliable, thoroughly researched, and documented a biography of Rice as the paucity of precise documents permits. The value of the book, however, is that it offers much more than this, for it is also an excellent example of a cultural history of the mid-nineteenth century. Carlyon remains consistently aware of context in narrating Rice's life and accomplishments, including a strong sense of the nature of Rice's own and of other circus performances. As a consequence, Carlyon's perceptive insight into the development of the American circus during its formative period, when it was largely adult entertainment, makes clear its place among and indebtedness to other popular entertainments of the day (such as blackface minstrelsy) and details the evolution of the American clown (from "talking" in intimate one-ring circuses to serving as a physical presence in oversize spectacles). Above all, Carlyon analyzes the struggles of a complex, basically uneducated humorist whose personal life was plagued with unhappiness (including three largely acrimonious marriages), whose business acumen was suspect, and whose politics wavered during both the turbulent antebellum period—Unionist in the North and anti-abolitionist in the South—and the years immediately thereafter.

Rice's desire for respectability in a business that was considered "low" culture and that suffered from a deleterious reputation prompted him to bill himself as a "Great American Humorist" rather than a clown, and to call his endeavor (among other names) "Dan Rice's Great Show" instead of a circus. Rice began his career in 1837 with a "Learned Pig" act, was first billed as a circus clown in 1845, and gave his final performance in 1894. Despite highly successful stands, especially in New Orleans, where he introduced a Barnum-like museum, Rice had to contend with a difficult life on the road during his long career, and with lively competition from, and conflict with, other circus managers and such financial backers as Gilbert Spalding and Wessel Van Orden.

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Carlyon is generally successful in taking us through the maze of Rice's life, drawing excellent parallels between his career and significant changes in U.S. culture and popular taste. Carlyon also creates a vivid portrait of the dramatis personae of the story, especially of Rice himself. Along the way, there are wonderful anecdotes, apt observations, and a plethora of excellent illustrations, many from Carlyon's personal collection.

Though far better written than most pedestrian, and rarely well documented, studies of the circus, Carlyon's admirable work suffers from careless proofreading. For a major publication, there are too many repeated or omitted words, inconsistencies in punctuation, garbled or clumsy phrases and sentences, and such lapses in knowledge as: that Odell's mammoth study of the New York stage is an annals not a history; that it is Macbeth, not Hamlet, who says, "Is this a dagger I see before me"; and that the late Lord Olivier was Sir Laurence, not Lawrence. Despite these flaws, Carlyon's is an entertaining, witty, accessible, insightful, and informative study of an important chapter in the history of American popular entertainment.

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O'Neill: Long Day's Journey into Night. By Brenda Murphy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001; pp. 250. $59.95 hardcover, $21.95 paperback.

Reviewed by Ronald Wainscott, Indiana University

Using both published and unpublished sources, Brenda Murphy's carefully researched account of important productions of Eugene O'Neill's realistic, autobiographical masterpiece devotes the first twenty percent of the text to the famous New York premiere and continues with briefer accounts of major productions in English, foreign-language productions, and film and television adaptations. As appendixes, Murphy also includes a production chronology from 1956 to 2000, a discography and videography. The fifteen black and white photographs are portraits and close-ups, notably excepting one image from the first José Quintero New York production (displaying the much-discussed stained glass window treatment behind the four principals) and one nearly full stage shot of the famous interior from the first Stockholm production.

Murphy's account of the Quintero production of 1956 includes examination of the heavily annotated rehearsal copies used by Fredric March and Florence Eldridge, who played James and Mary Tyrone. Quite rightly, Murphy notes that Quintero's published account of the rehearsal process is more impressionistic than factual, but she makes excellent use of his subjective "memories." This production is also the beginning of Jason Robards's long involvement with *Long Day's Journey into Night,* first as Jamie in the play and

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first film, and then as James, in revivals in 1975 opposite Zoë Caldwell (directed by Robards) and in 1988 opposite Colleen Dewhurst (directed by Quintero). Murphy uses the first Quintero production as a model against which all others are measured: uncut, faithful to O'Neill, and generous with silence.

Murphy examines other significant productions, including the 1956 Swedish rendition that was actually the world premiere. The play was stunningly produced in Stockholm by the Dramaten (Royal Dramatic Theatre), a significant company for early European productions of O'Neill, and directed by Bengt Ekerot as a naturalistic experience, emphasizing Mary Tyrone (played by Inga Tidblad) rather than James and the sons, as Quintero had done. This shift characterized other continental European revivals and some later American interpretations, such as Arvin Brown's 1971 Off-Broadway production, starring Geraldine Fitzgerald as Mary.

Britain's National Theatre gave Laurence Olivier a star turn as James in 1971, an interesting choice, since Olivier was, by that time, an aging classical stage star. Although critical attention was largely devoted to Olivier's remarkable performance, director Michael Blakemore guided a talented acting ensemble, including Constance Collier, Dennis Quilley, and Ronald Pickup, toward a brilliant interpretation of the close-knit but dysfunctional Tyrone family. (The National production was filmed for television in 1973.) The first African-American production, staged in 1981 and taped in 1982, was directed by Geraldine Fitzgerald and featured Earle Hyman and Gloria Foster (replaced in the taped version by Ruby Dee). Some reviewers complained that the ethnic switch was inappropriate, and both the stage and television version raised eyebrows over their up-tempo vocal delivery (Quintero's had been slow and deliberate). O'Neill purists were also troubled by the overlapping dialogue and high-speed delivery of Jonathan Miller's 1986 version of the play, starring Jack Lemmon.

Murphy carefully treats the highly charged account of Carlotta O'Neill, the playwright's widow, who negotiated production rights for *Long Day's Journey into Night* soon after O'Neill's death, even though he had explicitly insisted that the play remain unproduced for twenty-five years. Murphy notes that accounts are widely contradictory, and, rather than applauding or despising Carlotta's actions, wisely takes a middle course.

Murphy's book is an important place to begin when examining the life of this famous play on the twentieth-century stage and screen. Her account is much more detailed than the production histories that appear within more comprehensive studies, and isolating the play underscores not only its importance to American theatre history but also how difficult it is to produce it well. Murphy's study amply demonstrates why *Long Day's Journey into Night* presents a remarkable challenge to actors and is likely to enjoy at least another full century of important stage and media interpretation.

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No Surrender! No Retreat! African American Pioneer Performers of the Twentieth-Century American Theater. By Glenda E. Gill. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000; pp. 230. $49.95 hardcover.

Reviewed by Annemarie Bean, Williams College

At the beginning of *No Surrender! No Retreat! African American Pioneer Performers of Twentieth-Century American Theater*, Glenda E. Gill asks, "What shall the Negro dance about?" She poses the question as a "metaphor for all African American performing artists who faced . . . overwhelming discrimination" and lets it drive her passion and admiration for her chosen subjects. Her admiration for these theatrical heroes began through her early childhood contact with prominent African Americans on the campus of Alabama A. & M. College. Gill's palpable enthusiasm, germinated from the life-altering performances she saw as a youth, is the clear source of the power behind her scholarship and writing style. The chief value of the book lies in the balance Gill achieves between her quests to document and to celebrate these "pioneer performers," people who have made her "dance" intellectually and inspirationally. She features the stories of Rose McClendon, Paul Robeson, Ethel Waters, Marian Anderson, Canada Lee, Pearl Bailey, Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, James Earl Jones, and Morgan Freeman.

In a chapter entitled "Five Interpreters of *Porgy and Bess*," Gill discusses the work of Todd Duncan, Anne Wiggins Brown, William Warfield, Leontyne Price, and Maya Angelou in relation to the 1935 Gershwin opera. Gill notes that although George Gershwin borrowed from the work of African-American composers, such as William Grant Still, his opera was accused of inauthentic portrayals of African-American life by the African-American composer, arranger, and choir director Hall Johnson. *Porgy and Bess* presented a conundrum for the great African-American singers of the 1930s and 1940s. Plays, musicals, films, and operas ostensibly about African-American life, written and produced by whites and influenced by lesser-known African-American composers, such as Still, necessitated the participation of African-American singers to make them seem authentically black to white audiences. These marginally black works were often well financed and paid their casts living wages. For African-American performers, these productions offered both a way to practice craft and the possibility of creating what Gill calls a triumph. What was the nature of the triumph? Gershwin imagined Bess as "a very dark woman" who was most comfortable singing spirituals. When Anne Wiggins Brown, trained at Juilliard and with a "café au lait" complexion, came to her audition with only classical music, Gershwin convinced her to sing "City Called Heaven," unaccompanied, and cast her on the spot. By communicating through presence—through performance—the actors of *Porgy and Bess* moved beyond the constraints of the stereotypes white writers and producers could imagine.

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No Surrender! No Retreat! does a nice job of balancing the biographies of the best-known African-American performers of the twentieth century (such as Paul Robeson) and the biographies of those who produced less known, but just as impressive, work. Few scholarly studies have been written about Canada Lee, for example, an actor of immense talent and diverse achievements. Unlike Robeson, who was most frequently cast as a leading man, Lee specialized in character roles, such as Caliban in *The Tempest*, a production directed by Margaret Webster in 1945. According to Gill, Webster believed Lee's interpretation of Caliban as an "animal emerging as a man" offered a commentary on the postwar plight of the African-American (120). It would have been provocative for Gill to explore Webster's remark in light of the numerous characters with a political bent that Lee played, for example, his role in Paul Peters's and George Sklar's *Stevedore* (1934), a drama with a black and white cast that highlighted the horrors of mob justice. Lee also played Banquo in Orson Welles's *Voodoo Macbeth* (1936), a production of the New York Negro Unit of the Federal Theatre Project. One of his more notable film roles was in Alfred Hitchcock's *Lifeboat* (1944), where Lee played a steward named Joe who impressed even Tallulah Bankhead's character with his heroism in saving a drowning white woman and child. Because he took on controversial roles, Lee's name was mentioned sixteen times at the 1939 hearings of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, chaired by Martin Dies. Lee was involved in political activities throughout his life, especially the voting-rights movement. In 1946, he presented a petition of 25,000 signatures requesting that a racist Mississippi senator be removed from office. Not surprisingly, Lee was eventually blacklisted. He died in 1952, at the age of forty-five.

Gill highlights the true struggles of those African-American actors who chose, against all odds, to live in both art and politics. Her work reinvigorates their political causes and documents their performance careers. Inspired by the magic of the performances she saw as a young child, Gill now pays homage to and substantiates recognition for the contributions that the artists she studies have made to the American theatre. This book reminds me of James V. Hatch's and Camille Billops's "Artists & Influences" series, an oral-history project for which Hatch and Billops interviewed African-American artists who have made a profound difference in the way we, as Americans, view the artistic potential of African-American performers. In the interview format, the artist is engaged through what he or she has accomplished as an artist, and the art itself is neither interrogated nor ascribed a theoretical value. Gill operates from this same premise: her writing is about the work the performers have done. Informed by Gill's scholarship, it is up to us to seek out that work and make our own judgments about the art of these pioneer performers.

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The New York Times Book of Broadway. Edited by Ben Brantley. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001; pp. 268. $35 hardcover.

Reviewed by Yvonne Shafer, St. John's University

In his introduction to this very interesting collection of reviews from the *New York Times*, Ben Brantley says that he and theatre critic Peter Marks faced great difficulty selecting 125 productions to constitute the 125 "unforgettable plays" of the twentieth century. They "focused not only on the intrinsic merits of the work reviewed, but also on its historical context and the degree to which it engages the critic" (xviii). They also limited themselves (by choice, one assumes) to daily reviews, "passing over the longer and more contemplative pieces that appeared in the Sunday paper" (xix), a decision that surely eliminated at least some reviews that have had the most impact and revealed the most mature appreciations of O'Neill, Odets, Albee, August Wilson, and others.

Brantley's introduction provides an engrossing overview of the *Times*' theatre critics, from the anonymous figures of the early part of the century through Brooks Atkinson—who, in his long career, "got to review the Ziegfield Follies and the first New York production of Samuel Beckett and discovered particular virtues in both" (xv)—to such critics of the 1990s as Frank Rich and Brantley himself. The introduction offers insight into changing theatrical practices and the general theatrical climate throughout the century, though Brantley argues that, despite differences in time and styles, there has been "a strong continuity of voice that transcended social context and the personality of the critic" among *Times* reviewers (x). Brantley also marks the decline of live theatre in America, observing in his introduction that, even before World War II, Atkinson noted that Broadway had begun to lose its originality and drive. Brantley himself references the many glamorous openings each season of the early part of the twentieth century compared to later years, and cites the statistics for 1927–1928, during which, for example, 270 productions were mounted, whereas in the 1999–2000 season, there were only 37 openings. (Brantley defines "Broadway" according to current practice as including Lincoln Center, and thus, does not limit his choices to the geographical boundaries traditional earlier in the century.)

The reviews are divided into two sections—"Twenty-five Productions That Defined the Century" and "The Unforgettable Productions of the Century"—immediately raising the question why the twenty-five definitive plays are not among the unforgettables. The result of the division is reviews in both sections for *Streetcar Named Desire, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, and others. This doubling creates a puzzling waste of space, especially when Brantley bemoans the impossibility of including such significant productions as *Nicholas Nickleby*. Each reader will have quibbles with Brantley's choices. Mine include wondering

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why he thinks the 1925 production of *The Green Hat* (few readers will be able to identify the author, Michael Arlen) "defined the century," rather than the production of George Kelly's Pulitzer Prize play of that year, *Craig's Wife,* or Eugene O'Neill's *The Great God Brown,* with its controversial expressionistic production style and use of masks. Similarly puzzling to me is the omission of playwright August Wilson. Most of the productions that are discussed are illustrated with black-and-white photos of the playwright, the director, and a scene from the play (though there are no full-page pictures).

Whether one agrees with the selections or not, however, the book holds the reader's interest from review to review. Most entries are highly positive about the productions they consider, but some losers are tossed in just for fun. The notice for Mae West's *Sex*, for example, describes the piece as "a crude, inept play, cheaply produced and poorly acted" and concludes, "The scenes of *Sex* are laid in Montreal, Trinidad and Westchester County. The authorities of all those places have ample cause for protest" (72). Regarding *Moose Murders*, which ran for one performance in 1983, Arthur Bicknell stated that, as disasters went, this would be one treasured by those who had seen it: "A visit to *Moose Murders* is what will separate the connoisseurs of Broadway disaster from mere dilettantes for many moons to come" (218).

A list of all the Pulitzer Prize winners for drama and the Tony Award winners for Best Play and Best Musical concludes the volume. Scholars are ill-served by the book's lack of an index, allowing one to track the career of an artist or to check all of the reviews by one critic. As it is, however, *The New York Times Book of Broadway* serves as a useful quick reference to reviews of the plays selected, and it is an enjoyable book through which to browse. Brantley is well aware that his choices will inspire debate, but, as he says, half of the fun of such a listing is arguing about it once it is in print.

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Performance Analysis: An Introductory Coursebook. Edited by Colin Counsell and Laurie Wolf. New York: Routledge, 2001; pp. 250. $25.95 paperback.

Re:direction: A Theoretical and Practical Guide. Edited by Rebecca Schneider and Gabrielle Cody. London: Routledge, 2002; pp. 381. $27.95 paperback.

Reviewed by Jeffrey D. Mason, University of Oregon

In order "to introduce readers to the theorized analysis of performance," Colin Counsell and Laurie Wolf have organized *Performance Analysis*, a collection of thirty excerpts (each up to nine pages in length), into eight parts. The crossover nature of many of the selections suggests an implicit bridge between performance studies and more traditional investigations of theatre.

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"Decoding the Artefact" includes de Saussure and Peirce on semiotics, Barthes on myth, Lévi-Strauss on structure, and a piece from Erving Goffman's *Frame Analysis*. "The Politics of Performance" offers Althusser, Brecht, and Lyotard, while "Performing Gender and Sexual Identity" includes Irigaray and Cixous on constructing gender, Butler on drag, Diamond on gestic criticism, and Moe Meyer on acting camp. "Performing Ethnicity" begins with Abdul Jan Mohamed and continues with Eric Lott on blackface, bell hooks on the resisting viewer, and Helen Gilbert on orality. "The Performing Body" includes Foucault, Pavis, Elizabeth Grosz, and Elizabeth Wilson, while "The Space of Performance" offers Yi-Fu Tuan, Robert Weimann, and Marvin Carlson. Wolfgang Iser, Laura Mulvey, and Raymond Williams appear in "Spectator and Audience," and "At the Borders of Performance" includes pieces by Victor Turner, Michael Bristol, Bakhtin, and Geertz.

The volume concludes with Patrice Pavis's 1985 questionnaire for analyzing performance, a thorough bibliography, and an index of names, topics, and key words. For each section, the editors offer a brief introduction and suggestions for further reading and, for each excerpt, they provide introductory comments and an exercise that engages the reader with the material and could provide an assignment if the book were used in a course. The whole could serve as a useful text for sophisticated students or as a first reference for more seasoned scholars seeking to apply theory to critical or historical treatments of performance.

Rebecca Schneider and Gabrielle Cody have assembled a provocative, nuanced mural of the development of the director—and therefore of the theatrical event—through most of the twentieth century. Organized into four parts, the volume begins with "Directors of Classical Revolt," moving from Antoine and Lugné-Pöe to Augusto Boal's own remarks on "invisible" theatre. "Auteur Theatre" treats such artists as Tadeusz Kantor, Robert Wilson, and Naoyuki Oguri. "Theatres of Community and Transculturation" begins with Theodore Shank's essay on collective creation and ends with Schneider's own piece on Critical Art Ensemble. The closing section, "Montage, Reiteration, Revision," ranges from Gerald Rabkin's discussion of authorship and interpretation, to the Wooster Group, to Richard Schechner's 1997 production of *Three Sisters* at La Mama. Along the way are interviews with Okhlopkov, Alan Schneider, Meredith Monk, Grotowski, Peter Brook, Suzan-Lori Parks and Liz Diamond, and Ariane Mnouchkine. Nontraditional contributions include excerpts from Lee Strasberg's 1934 notebook on his trip to Russia, notes on *Paradise Now!* by sixteen members of The Living Theatre, notes by Linda Montano from *Art in Everyday Life*, Roger Blin's account of *Les Cenci* including selections from Artaud's correspondence, Richard Foreman's program notes on *Pearls for Pigs*, and a brief manifesto on ridiculous theatre by Charles Ludlam. Other writers include Carl Weber on Brecht as a director, Augusto Boal on invisible theatre, Kate Davy on Foreman's *PAIN(T)*, and Sergei Eisenstein on "montage of attractions."

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Each section of *Re:direction* begins with an editor's overview that engages history and theory in order to trace broad currents, elucidate the debates embedded in critical and artistic discourse, and highlight the process of revolution. All but five of the thirty-seven entries first appeared in *TDR*, but this volume brings them into a certain perspective and, so, invites the reader to reach for a sense of the shape of the whole.

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