

logic cannot dominate the work, as that would remove the possibility for plurality, but it effectively reigns in the autonomous logic that grants spectators the option of individual interpretation and response. The autonomous perspective has been in ascendancy since the poststructuralist moment and Tomlin's argument that it needs to be held in check with an egalitarian perspective to be effective is explored through compelling case studies that combine these two logics in different ways.

Throughout Tomlin considers the perspective of the Other as well as our relationship to them, highlighting that subjectivity is relational and that dialogic empathy or collective responsibility for the other may be exactly what is necessary in this age of precarity. Neoliberalism erodes our ability for dialogic empathy through precarity, but collective agency becomes possible through individual agency, which political theatre can support.

This is an essential book for those making or analyzing political theatre as well as a call to reconceptualize the theoretical base for audience research, to ensure that this does not simply demonstrate the plurality of perspectives advocated by the logic of autonomy, but situates this within an appropriate context.

ASTRID BREEL

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*François Matarasso*

**A Restless Art: How Participation Won and Why it Matters**

Calouste Gulbenkian: Lisbon and London, 2019.

233 p. £10

ISBN: 978-1-903080-20-7.

François Matarasso's book joins a growing collection of work that reflects on the community arts movement of the 1970s and 1980s. With the recent re-emergence of ideas around culture and democracy the work of this period looks fresh and radical once again and questions are being asked about how and why this significant body of work and thinking around art has been neglected and overlooked. Readers will have their own responses to these questions of course but Matarasso is clear about his reactions. Making explicit connections between art and participation 'creates a new unstable form' which unsettles and makes porous the divisions between artist and 'non-artist', between the specialist and the lay person. As such, it is a challenge to traditional ideas about virtuosity, elitism and access.

The book is divided into four main sections: *Participatory Art Now; What is Participatory Art?; Where Does Participatory Art Come From?; and Participatory Art Next*. These are interspersed with

several full-page contemporary case studies based on Matarasso's research and have the advantage of being fully international with examples from Egypt, Colombia, Portugal and many other locations alongside a wealth of British examples. Matarasso's optimism may be seen as slightly surprising given threats to the continuation of so much art work that is carried out on the margins.

In his conceptualization, participation has won, as his subtitle suggests and he cites multiple examples of participatory arts projects that are now the norm, not only in arts and cultural institutions but in health settings, education, criminal justice and many other locations.

But this is not the heart of his argument and he is much more interested in the kind of art projects which place rights at their centre. Echoing the community arts workers of the 1970s (among whom he is numbered), he cites Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – that 'everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community'.

This rights-based approach is used to distinguish more radical community arts practices from the broader field of participatory arts. Scholars may be a little frustrated by the occasionally broad-brushstroke approach for which Matarasso makes no apologies, when he explains how important it is for him as a practitioner/scholar to work outside the academy.

He is not writing for an academic audience but for other practitioners with similar beliefs – that 'art is both a valid research method and a form of knowledge'. Nevertheless, this is a welcome addition to a growing field and will be very valuable to those working around questions of participation in theatre in particular, to those with an interest in cultural policy and to anyone teaching and practising around socially engaged or participatory arts more broadly.

ALISON JEFFERS

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*Petra Kupperts, ed.*

**Disability Arts and Culture: Methods and Approaches**

Intellect: Bristol, 2019. 280 p. £75

ISBN: 978-178-938000-2.

This newly released collection of essays, edited by Petra Kupperts, aims to show the different connections between disability and contemporary culture. Methodologies, the cultural forms the research addresses, as well as geographic focus, varies in the texts presented in *Disability Arts and Culture: Methods and Approaches*, although the majority of essays

discuss cultural examples from the UK or the USA. The texts that lie outside these geographic areas are particularly important contributions to the field of cultural disability studies. The essay by Dikmen Bezmez and Ergin Bulut, examining medical television programmes in Turkey, gives an insight on how neoliberalism and religious discourse affects disability representation and discourse in Turkey.

Eduardo Ledesma's essay on blindness in film not only highlights the work of Brazilian disabled filmmaker, João Júlio Antunes, but also demonstrates the limits of analyzing pop culture stereotypes and how analyzing the strategies and aesthetics disabled artists develop in their work can be a more generative way forward.

When it comes to the analysis of UK or US mainstream culture, some of the research in the collection finds new ways to expand existing discourse. An example is Katie Ellis's work on disability in television crime drama, which demonstrates convincingly how important it is to address how disabled audiences feel about representations of disability and why disabled audiences seek out certain forms of culture, and to acknowledge that both of these issues are deeply intertwined with considerations about access. Indeed, access to and power over representations of disability are themes that run as a common thread through the volume.

The variety of cultural contexts, methodologies and forms of culture that are analyzed, make this a useful contribution to the field, though the different terminologies and expressions of *Disability Arts and Culture* sometimes feel jarring, when terminologies are used that can be deemed problematic (such as 'wheelchair-bound'), or when definitions of disability within chapters are at odds with each other.

The final contribution in the volume by Petra Kuppers, about the Salamander project, contains in itself fragments of writing by various voices and thus beautifully echoes the different perspectives present in the volume, as well as the different perspectives that the category of disability must contain.

NINA MÜHLEMANN

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Grzegorz Niziołek, trans. Ursula Phillips

**The Polish Theatre of the Holocaust**

London and New York: Methuen Drama, 2019.

306 p. £75

ISBN: 978-1-350039-67-4.

Writing about this subject was never going to be an easy task, especially given the contemporary political climate in Poland. Grzegorz Niziołek's book does not make reading about it particularly

easy either; there are long stretches of dense theory that, at times, begin to frustrate the reader. Coupled with highly engaging discussions of plays and important considerations of Polish social and cultural attitudes towards the Holocaust, this is a challenging read.

The emphasis is on 'social and artistic conditions that have given rise to particular affects'; Niziołek examines a variety of perspectives, from directors and writers to reviewers and spectators. He interrogates a range of concepts in both historical and theatrical terms; for example, passive witnesses casting themselves as 'powerless spectators,' unable to prevent the interaction between the performers of Jewish victim and Nazi perpetrator – and the role that this view has played in post-war Polish culture.

He explores the Polish cultural extremities of 'acts of sympathy' for another's suffering and 'the experience of the Holocaust from . . . the position of the victims'. Niziołek's discussion of Jerzy Grotowski's 1964 production of *Studium o Hamlecie* (*Hamlet Study*) interestingly examines how depicting Hamlet as a Jew allowed Grotowski to strike 'at the heart of anti-Judaic prejudices' in the midst of a socio-political 'minefield', but takes some theoretical untangling.

The final two chapters are the most stimulating. Niziołek's analysis of Andrzej Wajda's 1977 production of *Conversations with an Executioner* offers accounts by reviewers, a detailed description of the production, and an outline of political challenges (namely, state censorship). In the last, he offers a provocative discussion of two plays: Słobodzianek's *Our Class*, in the context of 'working through' and catharsis, Polish collective memory of the Jedwabne massacre, Victor Turner's model of 'social drama', and Polish anti-Semitism and participation in the Holocaust; and Krzysztof Warlikowski's (*A*)*pollonia*, in the context of 'the institution of the Righteous [Among The Nations] and the way it has been abused in Poland for propagandist purposes', and 'the disarray in the practice of making moral judgements about the past.'

At times, assertions are made without explanation: Niziołek laments the 'marginalization of theatre in research on memory of the Holocaust [sic]', yet does not refer extensively to international scholarship on Holocaust theatre by scholars such as Robert Skloot, Lisa Peschel, Rochelle Saidel, Gene A. Plunka, and so on. (To do so would also provide greater contrast in terms of the perceived lack of Polish scholarship.) He frequently refers to 'empathy', but uses limited sources for definition and does not specify in what context(s) he is using the term. The book has been translated from Polish to