

Shakespeare's play rather than the two forms mutually influencing each other" (150). Furthermore, *Your Own Thing* inspired Joseph Papp with new possibilities for musicalizing Shakespeare, leading to the racially mixed, musical adaptation of *Two Gentleman of Verona*, another landmark production in American musical theatre history.

Although Dash does not engage much with secondary material and does not anchor her exploration in musical theatre scholarship, her expertise in Shakespeare and her passion for the material generate a thorough literary analysis. Furthermore, she is painstaking in her comparative study of Shakespeare's texts and the books, lyrics, and choreography of the respective musicals, demonstrating where they align and where adaptors take liberties to reshape the stories. Dramaturges and directors will appreciate Dash's detailed textual analyses, her extensive research, and her reliance on primary source material, including detailed descriptions of the original productions, all of which would be useful for anyone staging a revival of any of these gems of the American musical theatre.

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Albee in Performance. By Rakesh H. Solomon. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010; pp. 303, 22 illustrations. \$26 paper.

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Reviewed by Jeanmarie Higgins, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Rakesh H. Solomon's *Albee in Performance* is an extensive archive of observations of Edward Albee as a director, based on the fifteen years Solomon spent conducting interviews, collecting and synthesizing critical responses, and attending rehearsals of Albee-directed productions of his own plays. From the multiplay tour of *Albee Directs Albee* in 1978 to the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Three Tall Women* in 1994, the book covers fifteen productions. Solomon records Albee's in-the-moment rehearsal decisions, including articulations of his characters' motivations and on-the-fly changes to scripts and production designs. The author shows Albee to be adept at directing actors, adaptable to changes in venue and budget, and highly capable of interpreting his own work.

Solomon notes that the considerable body of scholarship interpreting Albee's written texts provides a contrast to the general lack of scholarship about Albee in production; his book attempts to fill that gap. Solomon's major critical contribution is his articulation of Albee's "dramaturgy of contrasts" and of how this idea translates into actual rehearsal practices. He describes Albee encouraging actors to explore a full range of possibilities for rapidly shifting qualities of voice, and to embrace a naturalistic style of acting despite the often abstract, almost musically scored dialogue of his scripts. These contrasts are not paradoxes, argues Solomon; rather—in addition to Albee's preference for stillness and minimalism—they are the hallmarks of Albee's aesthetic. Solomon's premise is that critics have heretofore neglected to identify key points of Albee's dramaturgy, and that

this neglect has led to critical responses that oppose the playwright's original intentions. In the playwright's words, *Albee Directs Albee's* purpose was "to give [audiences] some idea of how I think my plays should look" (25). Indeed, Solomon reports that one of Albee's goals in restaging any of his plays is to correct misinterpretations by directors, actors, and especially critics.

This book will be useful to directors tackling their own productions of Albee's work, as each chapter addresses Albee's restaging of a particular play or set of plays, illustrating how he approached the challenges of each script. Chapters 3–6 detail rehearsals of some of his earliest works—*The American Dream* and *The Zoo Story*, *Fam and Yam*, *The Sandbox*, and *Box and Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung*—that toured collectively and internationally as *Albee Directs Albee*. Chapters 7 and 8 cover revivals of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and *Marriage Play*, respectively. Chapter 9 covers the rehearsal process for the world premiere of Albee's 1991 production of *Three Tall Women* at the English Theatre of Vienna. Whether describing Albee working with a cast and designers, or writing the play's second act while rehearsing its first, Solomon's account of *Three Tall Women* rehearsals reveals Albee at his most activated: engaged with his actors in developing their roles, and innovative in his collaborations with designers.

This book will also be useful to actors seeking insight into Albee's characters, as Solomon describes Albee coaching cast members to find alternatives to typical interpretations of some of his plays' key roles. Stephen Rowe's portrayal of Jerry in *The Zoo Story*, for example, grew from Albee's explanations that Jerry is more of a teacher than a psychopath. In rehearsals for the revival of *Virginia Woolf*, Albee guided actress Carol Jenkins to embrace Martha's creativity, compassion, and love of games, despite critics' usual collective characterization of Martha as a "detestable shrew" (126).

Some front and end material is useful to those who are not familiar with Albee's oeuvre. Chapter 1, "Albee in the Theatre," is an introduction to Solomon's project, material that is largely restated in Chapter 10, "Albee's Double Authoring." Chapter 2, "Casting Practices and Director's Preparation," details Albee's preproduction processes, including casting and prerehearsal preparation. Chapter 11, "Albee and His Collaborators on Staging Albee," is a collection of transcripts from the interviews Solomon conducted with Albee and his key collaborators, including directors Alan Schneider, Lawrence Sacharow, and David Esbjornson; actors Wyman Pendelton and Kathleen Butler; and lighting designer Robert Hill and stage manager Mark Wright. In addition, sixteen photographs taken by Solomon capture candid rehearsal moments.

Although he avoids delving deeply into literary criticism, Solomon does draw on a large sampling of daily newspaper reviews. His point—that it is unfortunate that these contribute little to the conversation about Albee's work—is well taken; however, the author misses an opportunity to introduce and historicize these reviews, an endeavor that might have put them into the perspective he desires. Moreover, a study of Albee's production work could be enhanced by further commentary on literary issues in relation to production practices, such as those included in the 2005 *Cambridge Companion to Edward Albee*, in particular

Gerry McCarthy's work on *Box* and *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung*, and Brenda Murphy's thoughtful work on *The Lady from Dubuque*.

Solomon gets his point across: Albee is an able director of his own work, and this aligns him with other such author-directors, including Bernard Shaw, Bertolt Brecht, and Samuel Beckett. The author frequently compares Albee to these artists as well as to other directors such as Brook and Stanislavsky, parallels that might resonate more fully were they taken as the subject of a separate chapter. Overall, *Albee in Performance* is an impressive documentation of Albee's rehearsal practices that, along the way, reveals countless insights into the characters and play worlds of one of our most celebrated living playwrights.

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Staging Age: The Performance of Age in Theatre, Dance, and Film. Edited by Valerie Barnes Lipscomb and Leni Marshall. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010; pp. xii + 238, 6 illustrations. \$84 cloth.

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Reviewed by Deborah Kochman, University of South Florida

Inspired by Margaret Morganroth Gullette's appeal, "About age as a performance, we need to start the arguments" (quoted on 1), Valerie Lipscomb and Leni Marshall present a collection of essays that offers insightful analysis of the performance of age from an interdisciplinary perspective. Taking the position that age is both "performance and performative" (1), Lipscomb and Marshall propose a theoretical approach that considers traditional aspects of performance while taking into account that the performance of age is also affected by biology and society (2). Relying on Judith Butler's insights in *Gender Trouble*, the editors establish that, like gender, age is, in part, socially constructed; however, they also remind us that the physicality of aging (i.e., the constantly changing body) cannot be separated from issues of power and Western cultural anxiety about growing older. In their effort to move age studies from the margins to the mainstream, Lipscomb and Marshall seek to expand interest in the field by engaging scholars and encouraging further development of theories that consider the biological, sociocultural, political, and psychological components of age, aging, and ageism. This inclusive approach is credited to Gullette, who extended the limited scope of previous studies of "aging" to include "all aspects of the age spectrum" (3). To that end, the essays in this text consider the perception and performance of age from the perspectives of both sexes, and from childhood through middle to older age (3). Since performance and the performative are Lipscomb and Marshall's primary focus, their book's selected essays center on analyzing the performance arts—*theatre, film, and dance*—through an exploration both of the biological and social effects of performance, and of perceptions of the performance of age (2).

The book contains three parts presenting essays—on theatre scripts, film plots, and dance choreography—by an array of international scholars from