

Yerima – a play which deals with the tragedy of violence and alienation of young people in oil-rich southern Nigeria. While Osita Ezenwanebe offers a reading which sees the work as a moderate piece focusing on human cost, Adebisi Ademakinwa claims that much of the script is lifted directly from speeches and goes on to claim that the villain is a representation of Ken Saro Wiwa, the Ogoni playwright and activist murdered by the regime of Sani Abacha in 1997. Since I write from Nigeria I have been asking numerous theatre academics about these readings. The latter is universally seen as perverse, and a government-promoted distortion. What is interesting is what these opposing views tell us about how politicized theatre remains in Nigeria.

Elsewhere, articles of particular interest are Ngozi Udengwu's study of the commercial superstar of Nigerian playwrights, Stella Oyedepo; and Ola Johansson's thoughtful and challenging paper on community-based AIDS theatre in Tanzania. I also note a growing focus on dance across the continent with three papers on dance theatre from Nigeria.

JANE PLASTOW

doi:10.1017/S0266464X12000322

Shulamith Lev-Aladgem

**Theatre in Co-Communities:
Articulating Power**

Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, 200 p.
£50.00.

ISBN: 978-0-230-55519-8.

The notion of a 'co-community' is the unifying concept which brings together the range of case studies of theatre practices discussed in Lev-Aladgem's book. The idea is derived from the communication theorist Mark Orbe's (1998) work on 'co-cultures' and is intended to promote a politics in which no single culture is considered to be superior or the norm within a given society (the US in Orbe's case, Israel in Lev-Aladgem's). This political stance has led the author of this book to work with the elderly, young, or sick and to study the work of others with marginalized ethnic groups, principally Mizrahi community groups (Jewish Israelis of Middle-Eastern or North African origin) and young people of Jewish Ethiopian origin.

The nine main chapters in the book each presents an account of theatre practices, sometimes her own and sometimes those of others, involving one particular 'co-community' group, and develop an analysis of their politics and aesthetics. The case studies are drawn from a period within which she traces a development of community-based theatre practice in Israel from the early 1970s into the 2000s. Whilst not setting out to provide a history as such, the book therefore

provides some useful resources for students and scholars attempting to fill in the gaps in Israeli theatre histories, or indeed of histories and geographies of applied/community theatre. Chapter 5 in particular focuses overtly on a history of community-based theatre in Israel, associating its origins predominantly with work by, with, and for the Mizrahi 'co-community'.

The author's mode of analysis shifts with the case studies. This is understandable given the difference in contexts and the different levels of access the author might have had available, although it does sometimes make the overall thread of the argument elusive. However, this does not detract from the interest of the chapters individually. Perhaps inevitably, it is the earlier chapters, which seem to be most closely based on the author's own sustained practice in a geriatric day-care centre, that provide the most vividly drawn descriptions of key moments and therefore produce the most convincing illustrations of the way she regards theatre as a means of 'making do' (in De Certeau's terms).

In Chapter 3 there is a detailed and memorable account of a series of interactions between the author and three elderly men. Lev-Aladgem describes rather poignantly how these interactions shifted subtly between ritual, play, and what might loosely be characterized as drama. It is here, in her account of Sadik, Jacob, and Abudy's mix of jokes, transient role-playing, and mild flirtation, where the book seems to come closest to identifying the dynamics and limitations of the transformational potential of community-based theatre.

SIMON PARRY

doi:10.1017/S0266464X12000335

Ian Brown, ed.

The Edinburgh Companion to Scottish Drama.

Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011.

256 p. £61.75.

ISBN: 978-0-7486-4107-9.

Any reader possessing the preconception that Scottish drama is a site of sporadic and uneven activity will be corrected by this comprehensive and welcome collection of essays. Covering the range of Scottish drama in all its forms, including theatrical translation and non-theatrical drama, the collection's reach extends from the nation's earliest dramatic activity to the most recent publications and performances.

Taking a chronological approach, the *Companion* begins with Sarah Carpenter's excellent essay on Scottish drama until 1650, which analyses both 'theatrical and quasi-theatrical performance' in the contexts of religion and Reformation, town and city life, the court, and political conviction. Following this is the editor's survey of both

public and private performance from 1650 to 1800, Michael Newton's short but informative account of folk drama in Gaelic Scotland, and Barbara Bell's in-depth and useful examination of the national drama in the nineteenth century.

The collection then moves on to its obvious strength, an engagement with twentieth- and twenty-first-century theatre in Scotland. Paul Maloney's well-researched account of twentieth-century popular theatre links Scottish music hall with post-war working-class drama and the Scottish theatre groups of the later twentieth century. Randall Stevenson's chapter on 'Drama, Language and Late Twentieth-Century Literary Revival' is an excellent follow-up, arguing that drama's representation of the diversities of Scottish speech 'contribute[s] to national self-understanding and literary imagination'. Following a related theme, David Archibald's study of the portrayal of history in contemporary Scottish theatre from the 1970s examines the political and literary motivations behind playwrights' choices.

John Corbett's assessment of translated drama in Scotland argues that, in recent years, 'the Scottish stage has at long last made ample space for encounters with world drama' in order to reflect on native concerns, but also 'the *mores* of exotic others'. The collection continues with studies of individual playwrights, groups of authors, and specific texts. R. D. S. Jack's account of J. M. Barrie's drama is astute and knowledgeable, while Gerard Carruthers's insightful account of James Bridie asks for a more meaningful engagement with this significant but often neglected playwright and theatrical figure. Donald Smith's study of mid-century Scottish dramatists is complemented by Anne Varty's thoughtful account of poets working in the theatre and Tom Macguire's exploration of the work of female playwrights in the 1970s and 1980s.

Steve Cramer's study of Glasgow's Traverse Theatre covers two generations of activity, arguing that this institution 'contributed significantly to ideological debate and theatrical vitality' in Scotland. Ksenija Horvat's study of Liz Lochhead's work for the theatre illuminates the playwright's ability to convey a 'sense of constant surprise, combining familiar language with magical linguistic legerdemain', and her work's justified popularity.

The collection ends by bringing the reader into the theatrical present with Trish Reid's account of post-devolutionary drama and David Hutchison's exploration of Scottish drama's contexts. While the reader interested in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Scottish drama may wish for more comprehensive treatment, this collection nevertheless offers an important and refreshing response to existing criticism. Emphasizing continuities in theatrical concerns from the medieval period until the twenty-first century, it demon-

strates that Scottish theatre's journey has been smoother and less jagged than previously allowed. Brown's wish is to 'help cure the cultural amnesia that has afflicted knowledge about, recognition of, and pleasure in Scottish theatre'. This volume will certainly go some way towards making the reader remember its vitality, verve, and excellence.

RHONA BROWN

doi:10.1017/S0266464X12000346

Shannon Jackson

Social Works: Performing Art, Supporting Publics

London; New York: Routledge, 2011. 320 p. £66.50.

ISBN: 978-0-415-48601-9.

This book offers an original and timely provocation that usefully extends current debates about socially engaged art and performance. Jackson presents an informed and critical exploration of the 'social turn' in contemporary art, and overall, what is offered here is a thorough re-visioning of how the social phenomena of theatre and performance might be thought about and understood. Throughout, the focus is on the artistry of the social and the sociality of art: there is a welcome insistence that the 'social' is not extra to but implicit in art and performance.

A thought-provoking first chapter critically presents a series of propositions about the relationship between performance, aesthetics, and support in contemporary socially engaged art. This is followed by chapters offering discussions of a diverse array of examples of contemporary art and performance, all drawn from late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century European or American contexts, and all contributing to the book's re-imagining of art and performance practice as interdependent with the creation of social institutions and relationships. Each example represents a site where 'aesthetic and social provocations coincide' and provides a rich terrain for considering how social systems are interdependent with the processes of art-making.

What is especially welcome here is the opportunity to read about examples of European and American art and performance side by side, as well as examples of art and performance that blur the imagined and institutional borders between visual arts, theatre, and performance. Chapters 2 to 4 explore connections between performance and the vocabularies of visual art, mostly focusing on the work of visual artists that extend into the arena of performance – for example, Shannon Flattery's Touchable Stories community arts group, visual artist Santiago Sierra, and Mierle Laderman Ukeles's 'maintenance art' (amongst others). Chapters 5 to 7 mainly focus on the sites of theatre