

support of one of the book's primary theses: contrary to the dominant metaphor employed by those who think about the city, the city is not written—it is performed.



Changing the Subject: Marvin Carlson and Theatre Studies, 1959–2009.

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Changing the Subject: Marvin Carlson and Theatre Studies, 1959–2009, edited and with an introduction by Joseph Roach, provides an engaging sample of theatre scholarship and testimony of Carlson's invaluable contributions to the field, as an educator and a scholar of astounding breadth. The book's fifteen essays by former students range from historical analysis of the staging practices of the ancient régime to linguistic analysis of the heteroglossia of Yiddish theatre, and address such diverse theatre forms as Irish Traveler Theatre and Taiping Rebellion tragedies of Republican China. Methodology is equally varied, demonstrating historicism, performance theory, and semiotics among other theoretical perspectives. The book includes close readings of playtexts, musical scores, theatrical designs, architectural plans, paintings, and photographs. *Changing the Subject* clearly fulfils Roach's promise of "a casebook on changes in the field over the last fifty years" (2) a span that stretches from the start of Carlson's graduate studies (1959) to his seventy-fifth birthday (2009). However, as the title suggests, the book's unifying theme is the expansive interests and varied approaches of its honoree. Each of the essays is an affectionate, if at times pointed, conversation with Marvin Carlson, a man who has a researched opinion (if not an article or book) on virtually every development in the theatre.

Carlson the theatre theorist and historian of theatre theory is most evident in the essays by Iris Smith Fischer, Mark Fearnow, Erin Hurley, Maurya Wickstrom, Joel Berkowitz, David Savran, Eszter Szalczer, and Gay Gibson Cima. Fischer examines the value of C. S. Pierce's vocabulary in analyzing the rehearsal process, first exploring Carlson's generative contributions to the field of theatre semiotics. Carlson's documentation of the field of performance studies helped open up additional space in the field for scholars such as Fearnow and Hurley to examine events beyond the theatre as complicated social performances. For both, performance is a means of policing boundaries. Fearnow examines racial boundaries in his study of the execution of Rainey Bethea; Hurley examines linguistic and cultural boundaries in her study of the controversy around the 1993 granting of Canada's most prestigious award for French-language fiction to a text simultaneously published in English and French by an originally Anglophone writer. Wickstrom similarly explores social cohesion and exclusion in her analysis of two plays by Irish Travelers, economic nomads

facing increased pressure from a state that would make mobility the sole preserve of capital and elites. Hurley's essay also shows a clear debt to Carlson's attention to the complexities of language, as does Berkowitz's study of the multilingualism of Yiddish theatre. Savran, Szalczner, and Cima demonstrate the wide influence and applicability of Carlson's award-winning *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine*. Taking up "haunting" as a key process by which the theatres—as well as lecture halls, press conference rooms, and other sites of performance—make meaning, they explore musical historiography and in *Lady in the Dark*, manifestations of memory in Strindberg's dramas, and genealogies of human trafficking, respectively.

As a theatre historian, Carlson invariably explored the social and political contexts of performance. The essays by Roger Herzel and Xiaomei Chen best illustrate the value of such an approach. Herzel poses a question that has confused countless undergraduates: Is *The Misanthrope* a comedy or a tragedy? Rather than providing the expected answer, Herzel examines an antecedent to the play and a history of acting suggesting that the play's openness to contradictory readings is central to its value as an enduring performance text. Xiaomei Chen examines six tragedies depicting the Taiping Rebellion written during China's War of Resistance against Japan (1937–41). Her analysis extends from the meaning of these works in their historical context to the persecution of their authors as counterrevolutionaries during the Cultural Revolution. Like Carlson, these scholars give tremendous attention to the documentary record. This attention is also evident in the essays by Barry Daniels and Judith Milhous. Daniels takes issue with Carlson's reading of Beaumarchais's use of stage space in a 1972 *Theatre Survey* article, while also noting that the article, with its pathbreaking examination of nineteenth-century promptbooks, greatly influenced his own research and writing. Milhous examines eighteenth-century London's failure to produce a monumental opera house like those becoming common on the Continent. In the process, she provides exhaustive analysis of the plans for London opera house ground, built or unbuilt, analyzing potential revenue based on the allocation of types of seating.

The first and final essays in the book provide the most personal responses to Carlson's influence. Doug Paterson recounts the turbulence of 1968, the year he started studying with Carlson, and the teaching style emphasizing questioning and dialogue that was in keeping with the time. Elinor Fuchs narrates an activity at which Marvin excels. Anyone who has read Marvin's Tip Sheet (<http://web.gc.cuny.edu/theatre/tipsheet/index.html>) knows that Marvin Carlson is an indefatigable theatregoer. Fuchs describes her challenges attending German theatre over a three-month stretch, and just as we begin to long for Carlson's confident knowledge of the German stage, he makes a brief appearance only to leave at intermission to race to another production. These essays are in turn bookended with a foreword by Paula Vogel and an afterword by Joseph Roach. Vogel takes us back to the trauma of misidentifying a slide during Carlson's famous oral exam—a trauma that transforms into a shared laugh and an invitation to stand in all the great theatres of the world. Roach returns to the oral exam, identifying in that misidentified slide (and in the slide he "whiffed")

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many of the themes developed in the volume, from the importance of empirical theatre history and social and cultural contextualization of performance to an appreciation of the semiotic density of stage pictures and an awareness of the ghostly doubles that haunt performance (331). He concludes with a night at the theatre with Marvin. If we share Roach's regret at parting after the play, it demonstrates the book's success at invoking the warm intelligence of one of theatre studies' greatest scholars.