

of performers and performances that are both familiar and strange or eccentric.

The book is organized into six chapters, each concentrating on one artist, and spanning a range from the near beginning of the twentieth century to the present day. The performers, in their embodied voices, movements, gestures, iconography, appropriation of multiple styles, and artistic projects blur categories of music genre as well as race, gender, sexuality, and other aspects of identity. As a reader raised in the UK in the late 1970s and early 1980s, there are points where the book lost me, since so many of the references are to American popular culture, television shows, hair products, and confectionary. But like Royster, Michael Jackson's *Off the Wall* (1979) was one of the first albums I bought with my own money and while the posters adorning my bedroom walls came from *Look In* and *Smash Hits* as opposed to *Right On!* I too can attest to the ways that Jackson was and is a part of everyday life in private as well as public space. Like Royster, I have been drawn to gender-fluid performances or portrayals of self that Meshell Ndegeocello presents and been engaged by the dislocating musical landscapes of her various albums.

Chapter Four of the book frames Jackson's always becoming body in the context of shifting notions of Post-Soul black childhood and coming of age, including Royster's own. She suggests Jackson occupies an erotic third space of gender, where his vocal performances can be configured with ongoing discourses around essentialized notions of desire. Sharing multiple analyses of a variety of works including the extended versions of music videos (*Black or White*), the cartoon series *The Jackson 5*, and musical performances recorded live for television ('Ben' on *American Bandstand*), Royster is producing an account of 'off-centered' and eccentric musical performances which she positions as working against the grain of norms of black authenticity.

Chapter Six concentrates on funk musician Meshell Ndegeocello. I had ceased to keep up with this artist around 2003 after her fifth album, *Comfort Woman*. She is on to her tenth album now and the chapter sucked me back in to the ways that Ndegeocello rethinks complexities of body, voice, blackness, gender, politics, spirituality, and more. Royster analyzes specific tracks from the album *The World has Made Me the Man of My Dreams*, describing Ndegeocello's conceptualization of a radical black future as one that 'queers Post-Soul struggles for community in the context of the "precariousness" of life in a time of recurring war and state-sponsored terror'.

In the Epilogue Royster proposes a new twenty-first-century Post-Soul eccentric: Janelle Monáe. Royster tells us that Monáe rallies for imaginative freedom and shared struggle by extraordinary and truly strange means (such as her creation, a some-

times androgynous, android heroine), continuing the forward and backward thinking of the eccentrics before her, 'while keeping in mind the shared humanity of all of us'. I've got some more catching up to do.

CATHERINE MCNAMARA

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Michael Balfour, ed.

Refugee Performance: Practical Encounters

Bristol; Chicago: Intellect, 2013. 316 p. £30.65.

ISBN: 978-1-84150-637-1.

Refugee Performance is a substantial collection that brings together humanities and social sciences perspectives on refugee and asylum-seeker theatre. Ten out of seventeen contributions are republications of essays first published between 1998 and 2010; all those cited here are previously unpublished. Contributors come from refugee and non-refugee backgrounds and the pieces (organized as individual 'chapters') take various forms: essays, travel notes, creative non-fiction, play extracts. Writers attend as much to demographic facts, social and family structures, policy and funding mechanisms, access to healthcare, housing, education and so on, as to performance analysis per se. What emerges is a cumulative, global case for the provision of theatre being just as crucial to wellbeing as the provision of services.

The book begins with playwright and director Niz Jabour's evocative 'Iraqi Memories'. Following an adult lifetime crossing borders between Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, and Australia, Jabour's most recent crossings have been visits 'home' (to Iraq), since the removal of Saddam Hussein. Insistent, poetic fragments of text are laid out according to a spatial metaphor of numbered 'rooms' (inspired by the structure of *One Thousand and One Nights*) that fuse memory and imagination – or more precisely explicate memory as imaginative capacity.

Rand T. Hazou's 'Encounters in the Aida Refugee Camp in Palestine', a series of reflections on an initiative to develop theatre links between Palestine and Australia, offers heartfelt and compelling insights into life and creative resistance under Israeli occupation. A concern with representing, listening, and responding in the midst of monolithic conceptions of refugeeness and overworn tropes – trauma, victimhood, loss – is wrestled with in several chapters, notably Michael Balfour and Nina Woodrow's introduction, 'On Stitches', which negotiates discursive disputes and paradoxes with regard to refugee resettlement and creativity; and Alison Jeffers's 'Hospitable Stages and Civil Listening', which rejects simplistic summations of audiences and emphasizes what audiences *do* (with particular reference to participatory theatre in Manchester). The striking capitalization of the word 'refugee' on

the front cover of *Refugee Performance* seems to crystallize its predicament as an important book about refugees that is also cognizant of the need for many tagged with that label to extricate themselves from its assumptions and limitations. The primary readership will be students, academics, and practitioners of community or applied theatre.

EMMA COX

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Christopher Innes and Maria Shevtsova

The Cambridge Introduction to Theatre Directing

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

295 p. £15.99

ISBN: 978-0-521-60622-6.

The Cambridge Introduction to Theatre Directing is a recent addition to the established 'Cambridge Introductions to Literature' series, although authors Innes and Shevtsova ensure that their readers will ably distinguish theatre from literature. This is a theoretical introduction to the emergence and scope of the theatre director rather than a practical handbook, and was conceived in tandem with the same authors' 2009 publication *Directors/Directing: Conversations on Theatre* (also published by Cambridge University Press). While the earlier book draws on extended interviews with a number of important contemporary directors (including Eugenio Barba, Lev Dodin, Elizabeth LeCompte, Robert LePage, Simon McBurney and Peter Sellars), this *Introduction* expands contextual understanding of the place of these and more within wider networks of thought and practice across the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

Following a short 'pre-history' of the theatre director – which charts the evolution of prototypes from the choreographer of the classical Greek chorus to the actor-manager of the nineteenth century – the book is structured around a series of distinct directorial approaches, each associated with a familiar innovator from the first half of the twentieth century (Stanislavsky and psychological realism; Meyerhold and theatricality; Brecht and epic theatre; Gordon Craig and total theatre). However, what distinguishes this book from others covering similar territory is an emphasis on the adaptation and development of these methods across Europe and North America and into the present-day.

Further chapters consider the director as *auteur* (incorporating the work of Peter Brook and Robert Wilson among others), the director of ensemble theatre (including Peter Stein, Katie Mitchell, and Declan Donnellan), and the director's role within a collectively devised production (from Grotowski to Grzegorz Bral, and Jaroslaw Fret). Through

tracing artistic genealogies, Innes and Shevtsova demonstrate vital interconnections between directors separated by time and space but allied in creative principles. These form useful stimuli for researchers to identify areas of related interest for personal exploration, and this is encouraged by well-placed information boxes, web links, and suggestions for further reading.

Consideration is also given to the directors' relationship with key collaborators, and some insight is offered into particular rehearsal processes and methods of actor training. Discussion of specific productions and – in one instance – alternative treatments of the same text, substantiate understanding of varied processes. Overall, the scope of this *Introduction* is considerable; there is no doubt of the authors' mastery of their subject and the detail of their treatment is impressive for such a compact volume.

A. BARTLETT

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Deidre Heddon and Jennie Klein, ed.

Histories and Practices of Live Art

Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. 248 p.

£17.99.

ISBN: 978-0-230-22974-7.

Histories and Practices of Live Art appears to dodge the impossible task of attempting to catalogue a definitive and linear history of the practice; and the omission of 'the' within the title acts as an indicator that the publication is intended to act more as a series of field notes from informed and experienced voices that have practised and continue to make work within the genre.

The book seeks to open an introductory holistic discourse to key areas that form the makeup of a somewhat elusive form, with seven essays packing in a wide spectrum of politic, anecdotal, and critical information. The history being discussed is in places knowingly centred upon the live art produced within the UK, with special attention being paid to the vital and reciprocal enrichment that home-grown artists and administrative bodies have exchanged between international practitioners. Historically significant events such as the *Destruction in Art Symposium* and *Eight Yugoslav Artists* are cited as being key to the nurturing of the live art community (*Developing Live Art* by Jennie Klein and *The Art of Action in Great Britain* by Roddy Hunter and Judit Bodor), with this discourse sitting alongside a closer study of individual artists' practice and their use of visceral and blunt-force work to push the medium forward (*Intimacy and Risk in Live Art* by Dominic Johnson).

Collaboration is presented as a vital aspect to the practice of live art, on both an administrative and creative level; not only within several of the