

worst ravages of Thatcher's spending cuts in the 1980s and had to raise spending ten-fold.

What is equally fascinating about these little books (and they are small in format, designed to fit easily into a bag or even back pocket at a stretch) are the micro-essays by Swale and Johnston about their approaches to devising and their methodologies. Swale charts a path through the work of Max Stafford-Clark and Mike Leigh (both of whom she has worked with) via the company Shunt before neatly laying out her games and exercises into five categories to correlate with the five stages of the devising process that she has identified through her own practice.

Johnston's highly engaging and entertaining writing takes the reader through a number of questions and challenges for anyone who wants to do drama 'with those who are unproductively at odds with society', and then sets out his exercises in six very useful categories. All the books in the series carry handy themed indexes as well as alphabetical ones. Scholars involved in any level of practice will find this series extremely helpful, and partly what is so interesting about these titles is the ways that they would be as beneficial in the rehearsal rooms of a professional theatre company as they would in a drama session at a prison or pupil referral unit.

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Patrick Duggan

Trauma-Tragedy:

Symptoms of Contemporary Performance

Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2012. 214 p. £60.00.

ISBN: 978-0-7190-8542-0.

This is an engaging and thought-provoking exploration of trauma and performance, asking pertinent questions surrounding the notion of the 'unrepresentable' and considering the performativity of trauma in a 'traumatized' world. Duggan does not propose the term 'trauma-tragedy' as a genre, but rather as a theoretical means of analysis and performance mode in the context of a need for 'authenticity' in the contemporary moment within a 'dramatized society' that is constantly saturated with 'social dramas' (from economic recession to terrorist attacks) through the media. Utilizing Raymond Williams's theory of the 'structure of feeling', Duggan suggests that performance can ultimately bring about a feeling of being present in trauma.

He explains key points in trauma theory throughout, drawing upon theorists including LaCapra and Caruth, in the context of trauma's performative genealogy, presenting an absorbing argument into the links between trauma studies

and performance. As well as challenging assumptions surrounding the (non-)representation of trauma throughout, his definitive chapters about trauma's performative genealogy and 'mimetic shimmering' are particularly stimulating in the ideas that they present.

Duggan interrogates the issues surrounding concepts such as kinaesthetics, witnessing, and ethics, drawing upon both theatre and performance art for his case studies, including works by Sarah Kane, Harold Pinter, Forced Entertainment, Kira O'Reilly, and Franko B. His use of 'thick description' offers engrossing and sometimes unsettling insights into the events discussed, especially when describing Franco B's performance art piece *Still Life*. And examples are not solely confined to 'performance', as Duggan provides thought-provoking readings of the September 11 attacks and a special issue of *Theatre Journal* on trauma, as well as the performativity of the photographs from Abu Ghraib prison in 2004, and even an exploration of 'theatre as trauma' in the context of corpsing and drying.

While the writing is generally clear and perspicuous throughout, there are occasions when it becomes somewhat complex – the beginning of the chapter detailing mimetic shimmering is a primary example – and the arguments can be a little hard to grasp, although this does not remain the case for long and there is no difficulty in ultimately understanding the book's purport. It will be ideally suited for (advanced) undergraduate students, postgraduates, and scholars of theatre and performance, trauma studies, cultural studies, and those engaged with questions of trauma, ethics, and witnessing.

SAMANTHA MITSCHKE

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Susan C. Haedicke

Contemporary Street Arts in Europe: Aesthetics and Politics

Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2012. 256 p.
£50.00.

ISBN: 978-0-230-22026-3.

Susan Haedicke analyzes the phenomenon of contemporary street arts which, after reading her book, I would rename 'arts of dissensus'. Although the term 'street arts' covers different performance practices ranging across 'stilt-walking, puppetry, aerial acrobatics, inflatable floating sculptures, musical ensembles, urban dance, living statues', the ones Haedicke is really interested in are those connected with different types of theatre. In her view 'street theatre does more than offer outdoor entertainment; it *frames* the public space and the everyday with art'.

Such an approach enables Haedicke to ask not what street art is but what it does. In her view

street art is a democratic performative that challenges performers and audience to become active citizens. Street performances are to be seen as first of all ways of 'doing' democracy and awakening critical awareness of existing social constructions.

The theoretical framework for her research is provided by the works of Jacques Rancière, from whom Haedicke takes the idea of the inseparability of the aesthetic and politic dimensions of art and applies it to street arts. Another important source is Gilles Deleuze's work and his concept of art as a revolutionary force representing the power of 'becoming' – not through a transformation of existing elements but by the creation of something new. This political approach, aimed at creating democratic values, makes this book a very important contribution not only to street arts studies but also to cultural and social studies, as it actually seeks to analyze the contemporary world through the means of street performances. As an example, Haedicke convincingly presents even such events, purely entertaining at first sight, as *The Sultan's Elephant* by Royal de Luxe, as performing democracy on a grand scale.

Subsequent chapters present different street performances as examples of actions that deal with current issues of contemporary urban studies (e.g., reclaiming the right to the cities – 'trespassing in urban places'), or social issues ('subversive imaginary: performing the other', 'community performances, community performatives'). My only disappointment about this book is its title, which offers more than it actually gives. The book presents street arts not 'in Europe', but in Western Europe (mostly in France, to be precise), which can be explained by Haedicke's decision to write only about performances she has seen and experienced directly. However, this caveat does not change the overall impression of a very competent book and of clearly expressed conclusions.

JOANNA OSTROWSKA

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Maurya Wickstrom

Performance in the Blockades of Neoliberalism: Thinking the Political Anew

Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. 224 p. £50.00.

ISBN: 978-0-230-24721-5.

This book provides a critical analysis of theatre within the context and confines of international politics. The author engages in a detailed application of 'radical philosophy' to performances by Palestinians, Irish travellers, development organizations, and an exhibition of plastinated bodies.

Wickstrom's overriding suggestion is that some theatrical performances can provide glimpses of new and radical political possibilities that outstrip global patterns of dominance and dependence. In pursuit of this suggestion she seeks recent examples of theatre that disrupt the limiting frames of neoliberal humanitarianism – which she rightly indicts for its frequent reinforcement of Western-dominated values at the expense of genuine political agency and emancipation.

The Introduction provides a historical overview of neoliberal humanitarianism – a sound basis for a prescription for theatre that can undo politics-as-is; but it suffers from a rather selective discussion that elides the historical diversity of rights-based discourses and philosophies, and so risks reinforcing the dominant hierarchy of 'human rights' that Wickstrom otherwise seeks to redress. The Introduction also delivers a useful summary of Alain Badiou's philosophy, alongside salient points from Jacques Rancière and Giorgio Agamben. All this provides a highly original and compelling framework for the analytical chapters to follow.

The four main chapters present globally diverse but interconnected case studies. Chapter Two discusses political theatre in Palestine that aims to resist the reinforcement of inequality common to many development projects. Chapter Three offers a complementary analysis of theatre for development, highlighting the need to avoid hierarchical divisions between the producers and subjects of development. Chapter Four discusses theatre by Irish travellers, with emphasis on the potential of nomadism – and theatrical representations of nomadism – for subverting neoliberal ties to sedentarism. Chapter Five provides a fascinating account of plastinated body exhibitions, referring to Agamben's biopolitics and connecting this to the use of spectacle to disturb notions of humanity and inhumanity.

In lieu of a concluding chapter, the author offers a brief two-page 'coda', which reiterates her assertion that theatre has the power to disrupt the dominant neoliberal ordering of the world. Overall, Wickstrom offers a vibrant and innovative application of critical philosophy to sophisticated notions of theatre efficacy in the context of globalized politics. She willingly embraces potentially controversial but well-defined philosophical positions, and creates an honest and enlightening account that invites complementary investigations. This book will be of great interest to scholars of political performance, applied theatre, and theatre philosophy, and also more broadly to those concerned with the fields of politics and international development.

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