

how they are seamlessly informing each other critically and pedagogically.

The book is organized around six different overlapping and interconnected perspectives that each offers a potential frame through which to begin to interpret performance as a complex phenomenon. 'Performance' in this context may refer to a single event, a series of related artworks or experiences, a conceptual framework, or else a combination of all the above. These perspectives (or 'frames' or 'lenses'), each of which is the title of a constituent chapter that itself comprises three main sections, are: *Body, Space, Time, Technology, Interactivity, and Organization*.

Each chapter is introduced by a different editor who has invited other academics, performance-makers, or practitioner-scholars to enter into a dialogue, either through transcribed interviews or written contributions, upon which the chapter editor then reflects. The first chapter, 'Body', edited by Anna Fenemore, exemplifies how these different voices are productively able to interact, deepen, and illuminate each other, with Victor Ramírez Ladrón de Guevara's essay on absence, presence, transformation, and cultural signification used to set the scene neatly for performative writing by Wendy Houstoun, in which she reflects upon the multiple ways she has experienced and understood her own performing body as she has aged.

Of all the chapters, however, perhaps those on 'Time' and 'Organization' are most valuable and forward-facing, in that they are the elements of performance with the fewest accessible key texts (anthologized or otherwise) to which we can currently point students. We may quibble about the choice of the six perspectives, or even the perspectives used to illustrate each perspective – in particular, in the way it seems necessary to locate much of what many value in performance in the oblique spaces *between* the overarching perspectives that are offered, and that these might perhaps be rather considered as vehicles for making meaning than as the beating heart of performance itself.

Where, for instance, might we best discuss what Diana Taylor has called the 'scenario', itself reminiscent of Richard Schechner's positioning of an emotional non-textual 'drama' at the radiating centre of a performance event? With this in mind, 'interactivity' might be seen as a perspective of a different order to the others.

This, however, in no way lessens the merit of this deeply considered book, which embraces diverse outlooks and can be used to engender conversation and healthy debate. As a tool to facilitate the orientation, critical grounding, analysis, and evaluation of performance work, this should be a set text for every theatre and performance course.

ROBERTA MOCK

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Rebecca Rovit

The Jewish Kulturbund Theatre Company in Nazi Berlin

Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 2012. 287 p.

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ISBN: 978-1-60938-124-0.

In this intriguing study Rebecca Rovit charts the history of the Jewish *Kulturbund* theatre in Berlin, which the Nazis sanctioned in 1933 and closed in 1941. She convincingly works out the difficulties the *Kulturbund* faced and how this theatre operated in an increasingly oppressive climate. The Nazi regime only authorized the theatre to produce plays by Jewish dramatists, the playhouse was only open to Jews, and it was not allowed to publicize its activities. The situation was further complicated by the fact that Nazi cultural policy was constantly changing and was, therefore, unpredictable.

But even within Berlin's Jewish community there was no consensus as to what this theatre should do, and even whether it should exist at all. Zionist factions advocated a Jewish cultural separatism, whereas most of the protagonists of the *Kulturbund* theatre saw themselves as liberal assimilated Jews educated according to humanist concepts. It was largely due to their influence that the enterprise continued with a 'pre-1933 bourgeois German theatre repertoire'.

Rovit finds the right balance in this study; she avoids glorification of the *Kulturbund* theatre and its protagonists and equally abstains from over-due demonization of Hinkel and the Nazi cultural apparatus. Her matter-of-fact style serves her well in tracing the theatre's history, and by using a chronological approach she is able to work out the growing pressures on the company and the tightening grip of the Nazi authorities. Anti-Semitic laws, Gestapo interventions, lack of funds and resources, and an increasingly hostile environment made working at the *Kulturbund* theatre a continuous struggle, particularly after the start of the Second World War.

At times it would have helped to link specific points to general issues, for example concerning the business character of the theatre. The highly subsidized German theatre system is only mentioned in passing. By elaborating on the fact that the *Kulturbund* theatre was forced to run as a commercial venture, however, Rovit could have stressed even more that this undertaking was set up as an 'atypical' playhouse by the Nazis from the start. More research is needed on the interplay and negotiations between the *Kulturbund* and Nazi officials and the strategies involved on both sides – something which Rovit acknowledges, but which readers might have reasonably expected her to do herself. A discussion of the existing

literature on the topic might have been useful, too. Overall, however, this is a passionate account of an influential lost theatre, which to many of its protagonists constituted a haven of the arts amidst a brutal and inhuman dictatorship. The table at the beginning of her volume, which lists the *dramatis personae* of this book, serves as a potent reminder of how few of the *Kulturbund*'s protagonists survived the Holocaust.

ANSELM HEINRICH

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Phil Smith

Counter-Tourism: the Handbook

Axminster: Triarchy Press, 2012. 224 p. £17.50.
ISBN: 978-1-908009-86-9.

'When visiting a historic building ignore everything except the corners – now what do you understand?' Of the overflowing stream of tactics for the counter-tourist presented in this handbook, this may be one of the less awkward to enact. It neatly captures, however, the intention and intonation of Phil Smith's (alias Crab Man's) provocations. Designed to add a little more discussion, even theory, to the shorter *Counter-Tourism: the Pocketbook* (it is billed as the 'proper book' of the two), the *Handbook* offers a rhetorical as much as a practical attack on heritage's claim over the past.

Heritage is already a much-pinioned cultural practice, with performance studies scholars and followers for some time taking a lead in undoing its 'authorized discourses', revealing 'hidden histories' and destabilizing what Kershaw elsewhere has called its 'established knowledge'. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998) in particular raised the alarm by implicating the audience in what she defined as 'a new mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past'. Here, Crab Man takes the argument a stage further. Employing the subversive techniques of live art and practice-as-research, the *Handbook* asks visitors to 'take back the power' and force open the contradictions constituted by heritage's packaging of the historical landscape.

Here, the visitor must resist playing the part that any given heritage situation ascribes them. The counter-tourist performs their own script on the heritage scene – even making their own heritage scene from scratch – improvising meaning rather than receiving messages as a passive audience. Crucially, Crab Man provokes visitors to engage all their faculties, smelling, touching, moving, and listening to what heritage presents so as to identify with its gaps, errors, and impossibilities and transgressing the false objectivity of place and space.

Perhaps by displacing any radical possibility within heritage on to the tourist, Smith is over-

looking much contemporary practice as well as thought within the museum and heritage world that nurtures and deliberately exploits 'how odd, surreal, dreamy, horrific, elusive, ruined, and apocalyptic it all is', often to political ends. However, the emphasis on embodied knowledge is a cogent reminder of alternative modes of understanding that begin with action and end in new thought. Indeed, Smith takes too politically correct a title, associating as he does with counter-terrorism. This is heritage insurgency.

In one of the YouTube clips that further extend the counter-tourist project (throughout the book readers are encouraged to add to the website), Smith talks about his interventions as 'a kind of walking all the time with more than one association'. As a theatre-maker, this double consciousness, invoking what Emigh called the 'ontological acrobatics' of performance, comes to him instinctively as a radical resource.

In its amusing and anarchic style, the book might, with some luck, touch the imagination of other disaffected visitors and reach beyond the invited audience of Tourist Studies scholars and site-specific performance artists, perhaps entering into the backpacks of heritage insurgents with no scholastic ambition. In any case, if you want to know if the book has come off the shelf next time you are visiting, look for random chalk markings, the lock of hair left by a statue, or members of the public dusting the furniture in Buckingham Palace.

JOEL CHALFEN

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Graham Ley and Sarah Dadswell, ed.

British South Asian Theatres: a Documented History

Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2011. 265 p.
£19.00.

ISBN: 978-0-85989-833-1.

British South Asian Theatres: a Documented History offers the most comprehensive and substantial overview of the genealogy of British South Asian theatre. It is complemented by an anthology, *Critical Essays on British South Asian Theatre*, also published by University of Exeter Press. It is needless to say that British Asian theatre is an emerging yet largely understudied and under-documented area and that the significance and the contributions made in this book need to be appreciated in this context. Painstaking efforts on the part of the editors Graham Ley and Sarah Dadswell (and Chandrika Patel) offer a very rare insight into the genesis and growth of Diaspora Asian theatre in Britain. What makes this book really interesting is its extensive historical survey, traced through deeply personal accounts of various British Asian practitioners, mainly unveiled through interviews, as well as a surprisingly wide variety of support-