

across different eras, while Julius Green's chapter focuses on the apparently contagious phenomenon of fainting in the horror theatre of Paris's Grand-Guignol. In the final section, chapters by Ana Pais, Mark Pizzato, and Liam Jarvis examine processes of emotional or affective contagion.

Theatre's relationship with contagion has clearly transformed somewhat since the publication of this book. In 2020–21, infectious disease has had a profound and probably long-lasting impact on the practices of theatre and performance. Popular conceptions of contagion have also been reshaped by individual and collective experience in this time. The uneven social impact of the pandemic belies the popular political trope that 'we are all in this together'. In this book, the chapters by Molly McPhee and Lynne McCarthy offer particularly critical and relevant political insights into theatre and performance as a response to contagion and its traversals of the social and the biomedical. Molly McPhee's chapter shows how work by Clean Break theatre company critically engages with social contagion within and without the criminal justice system. She identifies the way 'contagion, as a necropolitical metaphor, creates conditions of social and physical death for the others of white heteropatriarchy'. She poses questions as to how theatre might respond.

For McPhee, Clean Break's pieces *Dream Pill* and *Little on the inside* examine broader public complicity in the perpetuation of social inequality through criminalization and its entanglement with contagion. For her, the pieces also constitute small acts of resistance. In a similar vein, Lynne McCarthy's contribution examines how fear of contagion underpins attempts to contain and constrain nomadic communities. She points to the 'performative and biological affects of an obstructive infrastructure' whereby Traveller communities are confined to polluted land. Often literally fenced in, through theatrical and performative operations, Travellers are marked and constrained by this coerced association with pollution.

All twelve chapters in this volume now provide prescient foundations for more work on the theme anticipated in future. The politics and aesthetics of contagion, as understood socially and biomedically, are both areas in pressing need of further research.

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Lisa Stead

Reframing Vivien Leigh: Stardom, Gender, and the Archive

New York: Oxford University Press, 2021. 250 p. £25.99. ISBN 978-0-19-00651-1.

As one of the most written-about actresses of the twentieth century, you may wonder why we need

to 'reframe' Vivien Leigh at all. However, a quick scan of the myriad extant works about her soon reveal the pressing need to do so. Like many professional women of her era, Leigh was required to 'perform' her femininity in ways that perhaps undermined her capabilities as a working actress who understood the terms of her labour and understood her marketability. In most existing works on Leigh, the analysis of her career has, like those of so many other actresses of her time, been almost entirely overshadowed by either assessments of her personal life and relationships – whom she slept with, her mental health – or obscured through an emphasis on the links between her 'real' life and the characters she played: she wasn't acting or engaged in a process of conscious skilled labour, but rather she was 'mad' and beautiful, and so was ultimately just being herself on stage and screen.

Any process of 'reframing' Leigh also reveals not so much her extraordinariness, but her strong and enduring connections to the ordinary women of her era – and not simply through her struggles between familial duties and professional life. Lisa Stead's book, originating from her work on the Vivien Leigh archive at the V&A, as well as findings in other archives and local museum settings, attempts to re-position Leigh in part through an analysis of her wide-ranging fan base. The archive demonstrates the existence of a huge fan base of ordinary women who identified with Leigh, for various reasons, and were often dedicated, life-long fans. She also draws our attention to archives and collections where women have worked hard to secure the legacy of other women's labour as being of central importance. Using celebrity studies and historiographic approaches familiar to those working in women's history and film history, Stead's book opens up, and works across, the archives as a means of understanding the construction of Leigh as a celebrity, and her role in that formation, as well as the centrality of the wide demographic of fans who felt their lives to resonate with her own.

An educated woman – albeit in the haphazard manner in which young women bred for upper-middle-class marriage were educated in the first half of the twentieth century – Leigh spoke a number of languages, was well-read, a discerning art collector, activist, and businesswoman. There are some odd moments in the book – where Stead suggests, for example, that 'assessments of Leigh's performance skills are open to debate', which somewhat undermines her mission to reframe her. There are in fact few layered assessments of Leigh's acting untainted by the prejudice of critics who were challenged by the fact that Leigh's celebrity status often had a higher profile than her husband's. In what was in fact a relatively short career, she won two Oscars and a Tony.

Leigh fought to play the roles she played, famously Scarlett O'Hara of course, but pretty much

every role after that. She challenged the studios and questioned the terms of her contracts. She tried to find roles on stage and screen in which she could play against type, roles which challenged her as an actress, and roles which could stretch public perception of her abilities as a working actor. There are more recent analyses of her film and stage acting from such scholars as John Stokes or Lucy Bolton, though these don't always cross over the media. One of the issues with Stead's approach is that her study is less located in current studies on women, performance, and labour than it is in making an intervention into 'star studies' by foregrounding the varied use of material archives at the local, national, and international level. Such omissions notwithstanding, this is an important book that both scholars of stage and screen histories will find useful.

MAGGIE B. GALE

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Tracy C. Davis and Peter W. Marx, eds.

The Routledge Companion to Theatre and Performance Historiography

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ISBN 978-1-138-57551-6.

This volume in the Routledge Companion series offers a much-needed and major intervention into theatre and performance historiography, both in terms of coverage and methodology. Meticulously edited by Davis and Marx, the volume is a generous and imaginative collection of twenty-three chapters authored by both established and new-generation international scholars. With its hefty cover price, it is a great shame that the predominant destination for the collection will be university libraries: it is a volume which students and scholars, but also many practitioners in the field, will find useful.

The volume is unique in its underpinning intellectual construction, as well as offering a useful division of chapters into five themed parts: 'Theatre History is Performance History'; 'Materiality and the Sensorium'; 'Locating'; 'Historicizing'; and 'Scaling'. In terms of construction, the commissioned

contributors, from diverse geographical and perspectival backgrounds, were also invited to participate in generative discussions focused on work in draft, and on the direction and development of the book as a whole. Stemming from the annual conference of the International Federation for Theatre Research, the book embraces more authentically global approaches to theatre and performance historiography than any other similar volumes on the market: the chapters engage in genuine dialogue with and across the book as a whole.

Noting the propensity of theatre and performance to become separated in academic endeavour and critical analysis, the editors have intentionally and successfully worked to bring together a volume that offers the productive opportunity, as they note in their introduction, to 'think anew about the factors that gave rise to this separation and to offer a compelling alternative'. The authors included share a concern to shift 'emphasis to the practices, mediums, and modes of generating and absorbing theatre/performance', the 'values attached to it', and the 'interpretive schema of historical thought.' So we have chapters on the archive; on South Korea and the performance of memory; German radio drama; decolonizing histories; indigenous critiques of performance studies; and translation and the Peking Opera; alongside methodologically driven chapters such as Davis's own on 'Setasidedness'.

As a whole, *The Routledge Companion to Theatre and Performance Historiography* is built around what the editors call a 'polyphonic approach', offering a critical revisionist approach to Western historiographical norms in terms of attitudes to historical narrative and coverage in the field. Prohibitive pricing aside – especially as authors have little control over this – the editors are to be admired for bringing this volume together. Its offer of the in-depth investigation of the 'processes of circulation and re-use, waxing and waning, transformation and recombination' in theatre and performance historiography will be invaluable to students and scholars alike, and for some time to come.

MAGGIE B. GALE