

era to restore theatre as a communal ritual with healing properties.

The epilogue discusses the internationalization of Greek tragedy within festival frameworks and its significance for the self-definition of German audiences, closing with Fabre's *Mount Olympus* (2015) and offering a comment on the state of in-betweenness characterizing identities in the contemporary world.

Fischer-Lichte considers an impressive range of intellectual material which allows her to view productions against ideological, political, and cultural tensions, while foregrounding the role of the performance medium as a dynamic process which affects audiences. The thread of argument never forgoes a high-cultural focus, validating a German identity which appears to be largely homogeneous. The question arises as to whether encounters with classical antiquity which happened on the fringes of established institutions offered space for alternative identities to emerge. The discussion of Neuenfels's 1976 *Medea* in the context of public debates on female rights and self-determination certainly points in that direction. This book will have a lasting impact, not least in prompting new research into antiquity within but also beyond high-art contexts.

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Gerald Siegmund

Jérôme Bel: Dance, Theatre, and the Subject

London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017. 286 p. £80.
ISBN 978-1-137-55271-6.

French choreographer Jérôme Bel's works operate at the same time in the centre of thinking about dance and theatre and at its very periphery, resisting *their own subjects* (as in: what they are about), and resisting *being subjected to them* (as in: being invisible as representations). Instead of following the rules of the game/theatre/dance and creating a new variation for each performance, Bel's works actually attempt to create rules anew, but in such a way that they can't ever be applied again. Watching his performances often feels like watching a utopia of ultimate emancipation (of performers, of the author, of the audience, of theatre and dance itself), on the very verge of a horrible flop.

In this monograph on Bel, which follows his career from its beginnings in 1994 until 2016, Gerald Siegmund locates Bel's central question: what does it mean to be subjected to the regime of theatre and dance and, further, how does subjectification operate within those frames? Starting and ending with *Gala* (2015), Siegmund reads Bel's works as enquiries into attempts and strategies of emancipation from the relentless logic of representation, as pieces which often walk on a

thin line in danger of canonizing new strategies of oppression.

The book is organized partly as an historical, partly as a theoretical inquiry into Bel's opus, its logic, and the background it is constituted *against*. The first exploration of how subjectification operates for Bel's works is posited in relation to the history of modern dance and to its medium specificity (and could have profited from Sally Banes' and Noël Carroll's distinction between two types of avant-garde, purist and integrationist). What follows is a questioning of the discourse of theatricality and discourse *as* theatricality.

The third chapter deals with absent subjects and absence as a critical category. The fourth focuses on concrete subjects – Véronique Doisneau, Cédric Andrieux, Lutz Förster, and Pichet Klunchun – as/in performances, professional dancers, and the regimes they were subjected to, or institutions they worked in, while always questioning how these regimes operate as systems – or (and I agree with Siegmund) failing to do so in the case of Förster, thus, regardless of Förster's fascinating performance, failing Bel's concept.

Siegmund's book is a finely nuanced, accessible, and thoughtful analysis of Bel's opus, which has marked two decades of contemporary avant-garde thinking about dance theatre. This is particularly visible in the fifth chapter, where he deals with *Disabled Theatre* (2012), perhaps Bel's most theoretically and politically fragile piece. Namely, Siegmund brilliantly deflects the discussion from the obvious question of the representation of disability on stage, and reads *Disabled Theatre* as 'an investigation into the myths and ideology of modern dance and theatre'. In Siegmund's interpretation, the book is rather 'a meta/critique of Bel's critique of dance', which reads the piece's political stance as in its 'undoing form while displaying a form', rather than in questioning identity politics.

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Vera Cantoni

New Playwriting at Shakespeare's Globe

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£75.00.
ISBN: 978-1-474-29824-7.

There are plenty of books focused on performing at Shakespeare's Globe; however, this study takes a distinctive approach which makes it largely cohesive and original. Cantoni provides a critical perspective that benefits from access to the prompt books, rehearsal drafts, and playwrights of the institution between 1999 and 2015. The book is unusual, therefore, in its close study of 27 plays. This kind of corpus analysis can be very