

Talkers, and THEATREclub, and is sustained by the majority of contributors.

The notion of devising with text is explored further by Noelia Ruiz's thought-provoking chapter, which offers a robust examination of Pan Pan Theatre's work through a heavily contested post-dramatic lens. Ruiz returns to the contested position of the term 'devising' as understood by a European audience and Irish artists working in the field. Associated complications from a UK perspective indicate an Irish theatrical landscape conflicted by its cultural heritage and political struggles. Ruiz develops a detailed discussion on categorization, cultural contexts, and expanded terminologies and the following interview with Gavin Quinn provides an articulate artist's response and reflections.

The final section of the book deals with approaches to Northern Ireland and its conflicts. Eleanor Owicki's investigations into the site-specific work of Kabosh illustrate the desire to move beyond a 'legacy of conflict' and create a positive response to contemporary Belfast within an international marketplace. Owicki highlights the commercial impact of a focus on more positive narratives, but firmly identifies the combined responsibility not to ignore the divisive ones. This is a valuable book for the student, academic, or practitioner interested in devised theatre and/or Irish Theatre practice. Offering as much to the field of Irish and cultural studies as it does to theatre and performance studies, it initiates a number of important conversations to develop further research in this area.

DARREN DALY

doi:10.1017/S0266464X16000336

Sabine Breitwieser, ed.

Simone Forti: Thinking with the Body

München: Hirmer Verlag, 2014. 304 p. £32.00.
ISBN 978-3-7774-2278-7.

Published to accompany a retrospective at Museum der Moderne in Salzburg, July–November 2014, this is a comprehensive catalogue of work by Simone Forti, a prominent figure within the postmodern and minimalist dance movement since the mid-1950s. Forti developed her methods and philosophy of movement alongside prominent experimental artists such as Robert Dunn, Peter Van Riper, and Charlemagne Palestine, and was influenced by leading exponents of performance in the era such as Anna Halprin, Merce Cunningham, and John Cage.

This publication provides a biographical and contextual background to an *oeuvre* that continues to have significant influence on contemporary dance, and is accompanied by numerous photographic reproductions of performance, personal photographs, sketches, movement, and scores. So

improvisation, for which she is well known, is the undertow of explorations with diverse media, from graphic (*Illuminations*, 1972) to holographic (*Angel*, 1976) to sculpting, articulating, and 'thinking with the body'.

Forti's work is distinguished by an intuitive and often humorous approach. *Dance Constructions* (1961) involves simple objects and tasks that 'interfere' with movement: two boxes from within which two people whistle a delicate 'conversation', a dialogue across a see-saw, or movement through twisting rope-swings or over bodies, as in *Huddle* (1961). By Forti's own account in an interview with the exhibition curator Sabine Breitwieser, these works are informed by profound shifts in her own personal situation as much as by abstract concepts.

One particular experience that influences her work is her family's escape from Mussolini's Italy in 1939, to which she returns in *News Animations* (mid-1980s) in homage to her father's careful attention to breaking news. Here, she researches news coverage thoroughly before embodying news topics, and global concerns as performance. Forti takes an osmotic approach to close observation which could be most inspiring for those of us teaching movement. Referring to *Jackdaw Songs* (1981), she comments, 'I'm trying to avoid definitions, to recognize the limits of my vision, to take each gesture at face value in an open space where tomorrow remains unknown.'

An easily overlooked aspect of Forti's work is her sustained innovation with sound. Collaborations with musicians are discussed here in detail by Liz Kotz and Tashi Wada. Further essays by Julia Bryan-Wilson, Fred Dewey, Robert Morris, Steve Paxton, and Yvonne Rainer reveal a prolific teacher, movement improviser, visual artist, and musician. This timely volume adds the fascinating perspective of collaborators to Forti's own accounts in *Handbook in Motion* (2000), *Oh Tongue* (2003), and numerous articles. It will be of value to students and practitioners especially of dance, movement, and physical theatre.

RICHARD TALBOT

doi:10.1017/S0266464X16000348

James Moran

The Theatre of Seán O'Casey

London: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 2013.
314 p. £16.99.
ISBN: 978-1-4081-7535-4.

At the beginning of this book, James Moran draws attention to the uneven and protean nature of Seán O'Casey's work and beliefs. He expertly navigates the inherent inconsistencies, thereby providing a coherent framework with which to assess the plays. However, his highlighting the fundamental imbalance in the playwright's