

Schlemmer, das Triadische Ballett und die Bauhaus (1988)). Trimingham's investigation is deeply rooted in phenomenological thinking, which has a number of limitations; but given the fact that a considerable body of studies (some quoted by Trimingham, and quite a few missing in her bibliography) have focused on exploring the history of the stage workshop, its personnel and its performances, it is indeed appropriate to examine the institution from a more systematic rather than historiographical viewpoint.

Trimingham outlines the origins of her interest in the topic and the purpose of her study and she is convinced that Schlemmer 'can still act as our model and our guide' (p. 173). The main chapters of this volume ('Space, Light and Scenery'; 'Body and Motion'; 'Body and Objects'; 'Sound'; 'Time') have a certain kaleidoscopic quality. Occasionally, this entails repetitions that should have been avoided, but more often it produces insights that have considerable relevance to contemporary theatre practices. In fact, throughout the book she cuts pathways to postmodern theatre and dance and seeks to establish Schlemmer as a precursor of many performance practices of today.

Leaving some organizational flaws aside, this is an insightful and penetrating study of Schlemmer's work at the Bauhaus which can be highly recommended to students of the modernist and postmodern stage. It does not devote much space to the design and performance work of other Bauhaus members, which means that its main title is rather misleading. But as far as Schlemmer is concerned this is one of the best books one can read on his theatrical *oeuvre*. Trimingham clearly demonstrates that Schlemmer was not at all trapped in any narrow concepts of functionality and rationality (supposedly 'typical' Bauhaus traits) but must be interpreted in the context of the romantic tradition. She places great emphasis on German gestalt philosophy and builds useful links with the wider cultural landscape of the expressionist era and the Weimar Republic. This German focus means that she misses out on some parallels to other European developments (e.g. amongst Italian Futurists and East European constructivists who explored some similar terrain). But Trimingham certainly succeeds in introducing the reader to the complex fusion of heterogeneous influences in the art school, to the burgeoning creativity amongst its personnel and to the intimate connection between stage work and lived human experience. Thus she is able to peel away some of the erroneous accretions and popular beliefs that have long distorted our view of the Bauhaus.

Theatre Research International, 36.3 doi:10.1017/S030788311000332

Mapping Intermediality in Performance. By Sarah Bay-Cheng, Chiel Kattenbelt, Andy Lavender and Robin Nelson. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010. Pp. 304. £29/€32.50 Pb.

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Beyond its original presentation that mimics the dynamic entries of digital clouds in its textual body and thus weaves a vivid conceptual network between the different articles, this major publication on new media performance gives a thorough analysis and immensely useful hermeneutic tools to approach intermediality. Indeed, what transpires is that new media theatre unveils an idiosyncratic theatre thinking, close to a kind of

practical phenomenology which it seems, however, to exceed. What is asserted here is a fully fledged teatrology going beyond phenomenology. Intermediality revitalizes perception and, most of all, through this complex process of 'resensibilization', reaffirms the power of touch, an often forgotten sense when we discuss theatre. The haptic quality of new media performance, beyond the visual feat, puts the intersubjective body at the centre of the show. The actors or spectators can no longer be conceived as separate subjectivities; they have to be approached in the serendipitous shock of the encounter: a social big bang. This performative dimension of the show is lost in conventional theatre, which only enacts outdated cultural constructs, implying the social locus of a theatre building, but also the darkness in which the spectators are immersed when the show starts, or even the falling curtain of the necessary fourth-wall distance. New media performance conceives immersion as an almost erotic experience which does not leave the participant unscathed: the audience necessarily engages in the show as their body seems empowered by it. This anti-intellectual approach to theatre revives the ultimately pedagogical and political sense of performance. Indeed, the visceral involvement of both actors and spectators places emotions at the centre of the exercise of theatrical judgement. This does not mean cheap sensational shows but, on the contrary, it often translates as a moral conflict of emotions and therefore helps one to understand where ethical choices stem from. This also presupposes that emotions are not simple and that they convey an underpinning dark meaning as yet inaccessible to verbal expression. Intermedial performance advocates the openness of all our senses to emotions which tell us another story than that of our solipsistic intellect; paradoxically, when technology is mediated through theatre arts, it tells us what flesh is and what it is to be human. Indirectly, it sketches a critique of the Western conceptualization of man, of humanity, and as a consequence of a certain kind of egocentric humanism. In that respect, it can be dubbed 'posthuman'. By extending our representations of time and space into digitime and digispace, intermediality reveals the mutability of human experience, the instability of our concepts and perceptions and the consequent vanity of our species' pride. The book is definitely both an aesthetic and an ethical statement.

Theatre Research International, 36.3 doi:10.1017/S0307883311000344

Contemporary European Theatre Directors. Edited by **Maria M. Delgado and Dan Rebellato.** Abingdon: Routledge, 2010. Pp. xx + 428 + 17 illus. £20.99/\$35.95 Pb; £70/\$110 Hb.

Making Contemporary Theatre: International Rehearsal Processes. Edited by **Jen Harvie and Andy Lavender.** Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010. Pp. xx + 252 + 87 illus. £15.99 Pb; £50 Hb.

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'Katie Mitchell is too European for some British tastes', writes Dan Rebellato, co-editor of *Contemporary European Theatre Directors* (p. 319). The concept of a theatre director as an auteur who leaves her/his hallmark on a production is anathema to British theatre, where playwrights rather than directors are sovereign. The art of *mise*