

In "When 'Everything Counts,'" located in the "Space" section, Shannon Jackson offers multiple readings of the Wooster Group's *House/Lights* and a performance art piece by Mierle Laderman Ukeles in a nimble analysis that repositions each work as it is refracted through the disciplinary lenses of art history and performance studies. Adducing the difficulties of employing cross-disciplinary modes of analysis that "might be more medium-specific than we realize" (256), Jackson argues that "we . . . have to situate how we situate" (242).

Other intriguing contributions include Marvin Carlson's wide-ranging, informative, and engaging discourse on scholarly treatments of theatrical space, Susan Leigh Foster's choreography of two seminal dance history narratives, and Tracy Davis's own high-wire performance uniting Crow Indian historical narrative, the genealogies at work in Roach's *Cities of the Dead* and *It*, and English-heritage tourism under a consideration of "performative time." The volume closes with a blending of old and new as Bruce McConachie revisits R. G. Collingwood's anti-positivist advocacy of empathy by way of contemporary cognitive theory to ask how empathy conditions narrative explanations.

By referencing *Interpreting the Theatrical Past* in their introduction, Canning and Postlewait invite comparison to their new volume. In 1989, *Interpreting the Theatrical Past* had clear aims: to take stock of the profession and promulgate emerging historiographical methodologies. What are Canning and Postlewait's ambitions here? Why focus on essential categories that "have nothing to do with an interpretive strategy, a definitive position, a privileged viewpoint, or model building" (8)? How is it "timely" to "take up timeless . . . ideas" (3)? What does this seemingly paradoxical aim say about the state of theatre history now? Perhaps this undertaking, to focus on what does *not* change, represents a sort of arrival—the maturation of a profession "that no longer needs to demonize positivism" (5) (not that you will find much of it here). Perhaps it heralds a profound reconceptualization of the discipline's foundational assumptions about historical production. Or, in a profession that has been pulled in so many different methodological directions, perhaps it suggests a back-to-basics retrenchment to common ground? The high-profile nature of this volume provokes these questions, but the editors do not answer them.

If, finally, the reader does not quite know what to think *about* this book, he or she can easily identify a way to think *with* it: in a graduate seminar on methodology or historiography, it would serve to stimulate thoughtful discussion. In this setting, the five organizational concepts are immanently useful (and the eclectic range of essays is good here, too—

there is simply a lot to be learned about different kinds of theatre and performance from this book). So despite the editors' stated intentions, *Representing the Past* likely will become a replacement for *Interpreting the Theatrical Past*, at least in the classroom.

For those not preparing a methodology seminar, however, the editors' strategy is less successful. While Canning and Postlewait's rigorously argued introduction fully engages the reader in the theoretical implications of the five concepts under consideration, the essays do not maintain that tight focus on these concepts as fundamental modes of comprehension. If they did, the result would be a philosophy of history; this book's contributions, however, are more pragmatic than philosophical. *Representing the Past* probably cannot repeat the impact upon the profession of *Interpreting the Theatrical Past*—that wall is down—but it is a collection of first-rate essays destined to become a standard text in theatre historiography.

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THEATER HISTORIOGRAPHY: CRITICAL INTERVENTIONS. Edited by Henry Bial and Scott Magelssen. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010; pp. x + 302.

While Thomas Postlewait and Bruce McConachie's edited volume *Interpreting the Theatrical Past: Essays in the Historiography of Performance* (1989) is still cited as a landmark study in theatre historiography, the past few years have seen a number of important additions to the field, such as Diana Taylor's *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (2003) and Charlotte Canning and Postlewait's *Representing the Past: Essays in Performance Historiography* (2010; reviewed above). By and large, these texts address defining issues facing contemporary theatre historians, such as the changing nature of the archive and its effect on the interpretation of historical evidence. In *Theatre Historiography: Critical Interventions*, editors Henry Bial and Scott Magelssen have compiled twenty-one essays from a diverse group of theatre scholars to introduce students to the field of theatre historiography, while presenting many of these same pressing issues "with an eye toward use in the classroom" (8).

The book is divided into five sections, each of which focuses on a specific topic in theatre historiography: the question of evidence; the political stakes of history; the shifting paradigms of theatre history; history as performance; and disciplinarity. Each section is composed of four or five brief essays, averaging

around ten pages. Since the brevity of these essays limits the scope of inquiry within each piece, the entire work reads as a series of very precise investigations into specific topics, providing a cursory tour of the field of contemporary theatre historiography.

The first of these sections, "Unearthing the Past," includes Odai Johnson's "Unspeakable Histories," Robert Shimko's "The Spark of Strangeness," and Heather Nathans's "Is There Too Much 'History' in My Theater History?" each of which explores questions of evidence with reference to a particular case study. The section concludes with Ellen Mackay's "Against Plausibility," which addresses "the illusion of empirical factuality" (29). Mackay argues that, in light of the unrecoverable nature of performance, researchers should use available evidence not to assert an unassailable account of the past, but "to simulate the experience" (25) of it for their readers.

The second section, titled "The Stakes of Historiography," explores the political costs and effects of collecting and interpreting archival material and of narrating theatre history. Perhaps the most cohesive of the five sections, the essays include Branislav Jakovljević's "The Theater of the Absurd and the Historization [sic] of the Present," E. J. Westlake's "No Hint as to the Author Is Anywhere Found," Alan Sikes's "Sodomitical Politics," Erin Mee's "But Is It Theater?" and John Fletcher's "Sympathy for the Devil." Fletcher's essay is particularly insightful, drawing from his own research on gay activist performance to offer a candid examination of the "assumed or obligatory consonance between progressive scholars and progressive artists" (112). Analyzing the rhetoric of both pro- and anti-gay responses to these performances, Fletcher acknowledges that both sides of the debate feel an intense attachment to the ideals of liberty and democracy, albeit with vastly different conceptions of what those terms necessarily mean. Through this examination, Fletcher cautions the reader to avoid allowing one's personal (and at times, institutional) viewpoints to overshadow the objectivity of one's historical analysis.

"Historiography for a New Millennium," the third section, addresses the shifting definitions of theatre history in the twenty-first century. It includes Harvey Young's "Working with Paint," Wendy Arons's "Beyond the Nature/Culture Divide," Jonathan Chambers's "Or I'll Die," and Sarah Bay-Cheng's "Theater History and Digital Historiography." In her piece, Bay-Cheng explores how digital technology allows for a wider dissemination of archival materials as well as "a fuller understanding and a clearer articulation of . . . performance" by providing researchers with "a diversity of knowledges and perspectives that may extend our sense of being there" (134).

Section 4, "Performance as Historiography," investigates performance not only as an historical event, but also as "an ideal venue for critical reflexivity with regard to the remembrance and retelling of past experience" (6). The four essays in this section—Mechele Leon's "Corpsing Molière," Nicholas Ridout's "The Ice," Suk-Young Kim's "Finding History from the Living Archives," and Magelssen's "Performance as Learner-Driven Historiography"—map the intersection between performance and history in a variety of ways. Leon's essay, for instance, explores how inaccurate depictions of Molière's death open up opportunities for disrupting received knowledge. She writes that these representations "derive value from their own undoing" (179), suggesting that the same events that trigger the dramatic imagination often drive the historian's interest, and that the similarities between these practices should be embraced rather than rejected.

The final section, "Theater History's Discipline," explores institutional pressures placed on theatre historians and offers a number of suggestions for negotiating these demands. The essays in this section include Margaret Werry's "Interdisciplinary Objects, Oceanic Insights," James Peck's "Intradisciplinarity in Theater History," Patricia Ybarra's "History Takes Time," Judith Sebesta and Jessica Sternfeld's "I'll Cover You," and Bial's "PS: Can We Talk About Something Else?" Speaking to an institutional situation that "quantifies our products but does not value intellectual process as labor" (258), Ybarra's essay is especially insightful. As she observes, graduate students and junior faculty members are pressured to publish as soon as possible, running counter to the methodical nature of historical research. The result of this temporal pressure has been a sharp increase in historical work focusing on theatre of recent US history. Ybarra concludes by encouraging readers to push back against this institutional system and to embrace fully the labor of writing history.

Some essays are less successful than others. Robert Shimko's essay on William Davenant reads less as historiography than as a well-written work of theatre history. Similarly, Magelssen's entry presents an interesting perspective for teaching theatre history through performance, yet his conversational tone tends at times toward condescension. Occasionally, an essay feels out of place. Young's essay, for instance, would have been more at home in the first section, since it focuses less specifically on twenty-first-century issues than the evidentiary use of images in the absence of texts.

Although the short length of each chapter limits its value to more advanced scholars who may wish for discussion of further implications, the book is—as its editors intended—well-suited as

an introduction to the field. Comprised of widely varying and exceedingly readable essays, *Theatre Historiography* should serve as a valuable resource in the undergraduate classroom and as a brief snapshot of issues currently defining the field of theatre historiography today.

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CRATINUS AND THE ART OF COMEDY.

By Emmanuela Bakola. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010; pp. 380.

Emmanuela Bakola's work *Cratinus and the Art of Comedy* is an invaluable resource for every theatre historian discomfited by the need to base assumptions about the playwriting style and staging techniques of fifth-century Athenian comedy solely upon the works of Aristophanes, the era's only comic playwright for whom we have complete play texts. Bakola's book joins a growing body of scholarship that explores the extant fragments by artists like Eupolis and Cratinus, Aristophanes' comic playwriting contemporaries and rivals. Bakola's work is written primarily for fellow classicists, in that she assumes a reading audience well-versed in both classical Greek literature and language. However, theatre historians will glean much insight from *Cratinus and the Art of Comedy* concerning the breadth and depth of non-Aristophanic comedy.

Considered to be one of the finest comic playwrights of old comedy, Cratinus preceded Aristophanes on the ancient stage. Thus, Bakola argues, Aristophanes' old comic style should be understood to have emerged, at least in part, out of certain comic precedents established by Cratinus, such as his engagement with contemporary topics, development of comic playwriting structure, and use of theatricality for comic effect. Exploring the complex creativity of Cratinus through an examination of his fragmentary texts, Bakola demonstrates the vibrant place he holds within the evolution of old comedy. Acknowledging that much previous scholarship on fragmentary comic playwrights has depended upon the works of Aristophanes as the only available comparative framework, Bakola pointedly lays claim to an analytical approach that is not "Aristophanocentric." Her study, by contrast, strives to establish a new framework that allows for a more nuanced, open engagement of Cratinus's art, one not solely dependent on the standards of his rival and successor, but that uses Aristophanes "in a disciplined manner" (8). Bakola does not approach Cratinus's work chronologically, nor does she dis-

cuss every available fragment of every work or narratively reconstruct any of his plays; rather, she explores his work "thematically." Each chapter of her book examines a different creative facet of Cratinus's process, such as his exploration of ancient tragedy and comedy's use of satyr motifs, discussing key plays from different points of inquiry across multiple chapters.

One of the recurring themes of Bakola's study is Cratinus's intertextual and cross-generic engagement with other literary artists and genres, as demonstrated in chapter 1, "Poetic Persona and Poetic Voice," in which she discusses how he takes up the nondramatic literary forms of epic and poetry. In chapter 2, "Cratinus and the Satyr Play," she examines how the themes and structures of his plays—particularly *Dionysalexandros*—echo those of satyr plays. This particular discussion is especially valuable to theatre scholars in that not only does it offer a fascinating analysis of Cratinus's cross-generic technique (that is, comedy infused with satyr-play elements), but it also fosters a greater appreciation of the genre of the satyr play.

For the theatre scholar, chapter 3, "Cratinus and Tragedy," offers some of Bakola's most thought-provoking analyses. Acknowledging that old comedy's fascination with tragedy is not a new idea (Aristophanes' engagement with Euripides being well established), Bakola argues that Cratinus's use of tragedy is more nuanced. His "interaction with tragedy was a less dominant feature of his poetics," as he relied on a "far broader spectrum of literary intertexts" (178), often engaging multiple tragedies and comedies at one time in a single play. Comparing and contrasting the intertextual relationship between Aristophanic comedy and Euripidean tragedy and that between Cratinus's comedy and Aeschylean tragedy, Bakola notes that both comic playwrights self-consciously engaged the works of the popular tragedians of their particular generation, concluding that there was a palpable alliance of old comedy with the staged tragedy of its era. Of particular note in this chapter is her discussion of the recurring motif of the suppliant in the comic and tragic works of numerous playwrights and her close analysis of the debt Cratinus's *Drapetides* owes to Aeschylus's *Hiketides* (*The Suppliants*).

Perhaps the most fascinating contribution this chapter makes to theatre scholarship is Bakola's closely argued analysis of the nuanced relationship between old comedy and Athenian politics. Aristophanocentric studies of old comedy make great note of its politically satiric thematic content. However, as Bakola demonstrates, *Drapetides* offers yet another perspective on the relationship between old comedy and the politics of its world. Through her analysis of