

Book Reviews

***The Methuen Drama Book of Post-Black Plays* by Harry J. Elam Jr. and Douglas A. Jones, Jr. Eds.**

London: Methuen Drama, 2012, 635 pp. (paperback)

By Pepetual Mforbe Chiangong

The plays compiled in *The Methuen Drama Book of Post-Black Plays* handle themes that have preoccupied authors in the field of Africa and African Diaspora studies. Themes such as the transatlantic slave trade, racism, family relations, gentrification, gender and sexuality recur prominently in the works of writers like James Baldwin, Richard Wright, Lorraine Hansberry, Ama Ata Aidoo, Ntozake Shange and Michelle Cliff, to name just a few, offering readers a way to reflect on contemporary societies. The dramatists in this collection have approached these themes in innovative ways by reinventing their dramatic foci and communicating them via sophisticated, uncanny, and fragmented techniques. The editors of the volume rightly remark in the introduction that the playwrights 'strive for the unfamiliar, the unsettling, and the uncanny as a means to offer progressive renderings of black identities structured by the unfamiliar, unsettling, and uncanny nature of our contemporary moment' (xii). Consequently, the reader is not only retold history, but s/he learns about it in a new language that is framed in complex figurative expressions. This is indeed what makes this collection of eight plays, grouped under four major topics, unique. These topics are: 'The New Black Family', '(Post-) Blackness by Non-Black Playwrights', 'The Distant Present: History, Mythology, and Sexuality', and 'Re-Imagining/Re-Engaging Africa'. Judging from the choice of topics, one develops a conscious desire to investigate intercultural communication and how it contextualizes contemporary black identities, making them understandable within African, American, Korean, German, Irish and Jewish contexts.

Eisa Davis' play, *Bulrusher*, raises questions of identity and filial love through the use of jargon Boontling spoken in Boonville, California. The play recounts the life of Bulrusher, whose mother abandoned her to float away on the Navarro River, but who grows with supernatural powers that enable her to 'read people's waters'. Investing her with supernatural strength, Davis succeeds to create a *mélange* of African indigenous belief, Christianity and the intricacies of Boontling in a bid to depict an American

community that does not wish to repurpose racism as a major discourse. Not that racial segregation is completely absent in the play, but it is mildly invoked through the presence of colored characters like Vera, Logger, and Bulrusher.

Christina Anderson also addresses filial love and spirituality in *Good Goods*, but from another perspective. She uses the filial relationship between Truth and Stacey to portray the relationship between the dead and the living and the multiple facets of reincarnation, by deploying an array of indexical signs and symbols. The uncanny sequences reveal Anderson's creative genius in a character-within-character frame as they battle to communicate multi-layered thoughts and meanings.

Satellites, for its part, presents a typical (hybrid) family scenario in which a working couple grapples with careers and parenthood. Although the characters engage in complex debates about race and ethnicity, Nina the Korean American defends the black heritage to which her husband Miles and her daughter Hannah are biologically connected. She makes tough decisions to prove that racism is a vicious cycle.

Marcus Gardley (*And Jesus Moonwalks the Mississippi*) and Robert O'Hara (*Antebellum*) set their plays in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Their innovative dialogue style challenges readers to review past and present racial relationships in the history of America, which they portray using complex images of suffering and pain. Gardley uses metaphors in the title and dramatis personae to recreate scenes of survival in his nineteenth-century setting. For example, Gardley talks of 'Miss Ssippi' as a beautiful large black woman, yet this character is discussed as a body of water that carries Damascus in its hands (351). The characters engage in classical dialogue, yet become pseudo-third person narrators, displaying the playwright's technique of perhaps contemporising Christianity, oral tradition, mythology and non-Christian belief.

O'Hara engages with war in Nazi Germany. He locates his scenes in a Plantation House in a former American slave community. The characters, Sarah Roca and Oskar von Scheleicher, epitomise white supremacy and the genocide prior to World War II respectively. Although the play is set in Europe and America, the characters seem to invade each other's consciousness, lives and locations. As a result, readers could easily identify Gabriel Gift/Edna Black Rock and Oskar von Scheleicher/Ariel Roca as the same people. However the author's aim to compare Jewish and African-American history and to expose war crimes committed against vulnerable characters overrides other discourses in the play.

Danai Gurira and Nikkole Salter's technique in *In the Continuum* is in many ways similar to O'Hara's *Antebellum*. The playwrights metaphorically title their scenes in a bid to conveniently handle sensitive topics. O'Hara's scenic captions such as 'The Good Book', 'Küssen sie Meinen arsch', 'Wo/man', and Gurira and Salter's captions 'Back in the days' and 'In the beginning', seek to unmask the physical and internal strength that their protagonists must exude in order to survive in hostile environments. Gurira and Salter explore family relations, ancestral worship and family life through what appears to be a collection of monodrama.

Similar topics about war crimes and mass genocide pervade the plot of J. Nicole Brooks's *Black Diamond: The Years the Locusts Have Eaten*. In exploring military activities in a war torn West African nation, the playwright debunks Western media's unreliable news bulletin on African affairs. However, what sustains the readers' interest is the role that women play in a war of liberation in West Africa.

The Methuen Drama Book of Post-Black Plays could not have been published at a better time, especially as persistent questions are being posed about identities, conflict, war and the role of indigenous African religions in contemporary societies. The authors do not adopt rituals and mythology to sanction believers, but rather employ them as a strategy to resolve conflicts and to bridge differences. This book informs on every aspect of contemporary American life, whether it is read for individual interest, or for academic purposes.

***West End Broadway: The Golden Age of the American Musical in London* by
Adrian Wright Woodbridge**

London: The Boydell Press, 2012, 364 pp. (hardback)

By Adam Rush

The Broadway musical, the American musical, Broadway's 'Fabulous Invalid' (Adler 363). Throughout the history of musical theatre, the form has been clearly denoted as American. Despite the prominence of British musicals on Broadway, the art form remains one of America's most glamorous exports. It is this particular relationship between New York and London musicals that fuels Adrian Wright's glossy monograph, *West End Broadway: The Golden Age of the American Musical in London*. This book

does not document the British invasion of the 1980s with globalised megamusicals, such as *Cats*, or probe our contemporary culture of theatrical exchange – think *Matilda* and *The Book of Mormon*. Instead, it details when the American musical exploded in London in the post-war decades, with a flash of Technicolor pizzazz. Wright clearly denotes the classic performances of Mary Martin in *South Pacific*, Barbara Streisand in *Funny Girl* and Topol in *Fiddler on the Roof*. However, he discusses these not in their original Broadway incarnations, but their British transfers: when the Americans came marching in.

In the twenty-first century, we have succumbed to the dominance of productions and cast members travelling beyond their original locations. Just think of Idina Menzel opening *Wicked* in London, or the Broadway revival cast of *Hair* at the Gielgud. The origins of this ‘cross the pond’ epidemic, as Wright outlines, began in the aftermath of the Second World War. The book begins with an account of the opening night of British television channel BBC2 in April 1964. This gala opening included a performance from the American cast of the London production of *Kiss Me, Kate*. With this example, Wright awakens a lost era in which musicals infiltrated popular culture, one which is arguably set to return in the approaching decades. In the UK, musical theatre on television consists of footage of Andrew Lloyd Webber casting Dorothy or the occasional West End performance on the televised charity event, *Children in Need*. Both examples are perceived as sentimental and unnecessarily elaborate, unlike the joyfully received example Wright presents. What the book, therefore, distils, is a past in which the musical sat at the centre of popular culture in order to nostalgically ‘bring back some of those faded characters’ (vii). However, more importantly, Wright details how the American musical engulfed the British stage for decades. I only have to reflect on my grandparent’s recollections of theatregoing to envisage *Oklahoma!* and *The Pajama Game* – far from a British musical insight.

Wright constructs his argument chronologically, each chapter dedicated to a particular time period and its major musical opening, for instance, 1950 – *Carousel* (65). The book acts via a patchwork of methodologies. It is part historical survey, part anecdote, part production history – detailing, for example, cast lists – as well as part personal journey through an era of the author’s theatrical past. He comments, ‘I have not demurred from offering a personal opinion. I have tried to avoid some of the blandness that stalks through so much writing about musical theatre’ (x). When critiquing, for example, ‘My Favourite Things’ from *The Sound of Music*, Wright pays

particular attention to Maria's discussion with the Mother Abbess in which she presents her favourite items, only to have the list repeated back to her: 'would the Abbess have the *same* list [...] why didn't Hammerstein see that, to make it real, he needed to supply her with a whole new list?' (5). *The Sound of Music* is a beloved musical, yet six decades after its premiere, Wright engages with material that remains untarnished within our cultural consciousness, exposing it amidst a historical survey. The book is as much about the musicals themselves as their placement within an era of transatlantic transferral. Additionally, Wright utilises a smaller sample of case studies than other 'histories of the musical' – John Kenrick's *Musical Theatre: A History*, for example – to produce a work which combines history with criticism; a 'critical survey', if you will (viii). Wright completes each chapter by detailing musicals which opened on Broadway and London only within each defined time period. The book also includes an appendix titled 'American Musicals in London, 1939-1972' (288) which comprehensively depicts each musical's authors, principle cast, major musical numbers and production history. Although these segments may reduce the book to mere fact, Wright successfully complements his criticism by rounding his arguments in a historical, as well as critical, surveillance.

Much musical theatre scholarship tends to be problematic due to its interdisciplinary nature and position within discourses of capitalism and the entertainment industry. Many scholars have engaged with this notion by constructing a unique methodology which applies singularly to their work. Wright explores productions as a scholar and, perhaps more significantly, as a theatre goer. It is not clear whether Wright himself saw these musicals; however, this research combines a variety of audience responses with textual analysis in order to fully frame it. Without critiquing the nature of musical fandom, Wright engages with anecdotes that highlight the nature of musical theatre-going. Although Wright's research model is in no way conclusive, using responses from several undefined sources positions this research within a vortex of nostalgia. For instance, Wright details a woman occupying two seats during *My Fair Lady*: 'I would have brought a friend [...] but they are all at my husband's funeral' (137). Wright utilises the comic implications of this absurd anecdote to both entertain the reader but also to encapsulate the enthusiasm the public had for the American musical.

Wright does not pass judgment on whether the epidemic he details was good or bad, focusing instead on its palpable impact on the theatrical landscape. The author retracts a public scrutiny, or ‘bitchiness’ (Clive ix), which often fills musical scholarship, due to the stereotyped, non-intellectual nature of the form. He produces an original work that combines various existing methodologies with an original subject matter. Although much scholarship may exist on *Oklahoma!* or *Kiss Me, Kate*, Wright’s work is production-specific and moves beyond historical surveillance. Consequently, Wright produces an appropriate intervention into an era which both mirrors and defers from the current state of the musical whilst fashioning a text of originality and timeliness.

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***The Plays of Samuel Beckett* by Katherine Weiss**

London: Methuen Drama, 2012, 286 pp. (softback)

By Macarena Andrews Barraza

The Plays of Samuel Beckett is Katherine Weiss’s first book on the Irish playwright’s productions after editing, alongside Seán Kennedy, *Samuel Beckett: History, Memory, Archive*, published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2009.

In this more personal journey approaching Beckett’s more characteristic and cutting-edge plays – for theatre, radio and television – Weiss goes one step forward towards her main research interests: archive and memory. She develops a compelling reading through the scrutiny of Beckett’s characters where she finds that mechanical and technological processes involved in the construction of intimate archives are a compulsive reaction to obtaining a sense of self, even when this repetitive action leaves both characters and audience without a definitive meaning.

In the introduction Weiss declares: ‘Taking Beckett’s lead, this book will not bring together his vast collection of plays under the umbrella of absurdism or

existentialism. Rather the unifying element that will be discussed is Beckett's uses of and references to technology' (9). This methodological statement serves to organize and reference Beckett's plays under the scope of technological gadgets and mechanisation in Modernist sensitivity. The author links her research findings with actual performance experiences of Maryland Stage Company's actors who have successfully toured *Not I*, *Ohio Impromptu*, *Play* and *That Time*, directed by Xerxes Mehta, as well as her own experiences directing some of Beckett's short plays performed by undergraduate students at East Tennessee University. Four additional critical essays inform her exploration alongside peer studies regarding ghosts, fidelity, love and memory in Beckett's creations.

As clear as the methodological frame is, it fails to articulate in a satisfactory way what the main focus is in this reading of Beckett's plays through the lens of technology. Navigating from one medium to another, the reader realises Weiss's aims gravitate towards key concepts: order, authority, authorship, memory, time, identity, past and trauma, timidly building up her argument just before the end of the third chapter. 'Beckett suggests that the production of politics is a narrative production that must be interrogated' (134). In Weiss's opinion, Beckett chooses to interrogate the production of politics and therefore the production of private narratives through the disarticulation of core aspects of media.

Props and the emotional relationships characters establish with them, stage directions and repetition, monotonous choreographic patterns, camera movements often focusing in zooms and close-ups, authoritarian lighting tendencies, or sharp transitions between sound and silence, interact in a particular time and space. This reveals what Vivian Carol Sobchack calls 'phenomenological inquiry': '[l]ocating the "subject," "consciousness," and "meaning" in actual and embodied existential praxis indicate[s] how the forms of specific existence are not an essential given' (147). As a result, the disarticulation of traditional aesthetics in media allows – in Beckett's playwriting and *mise en scène* – to acknowledge 'what is often forgotten in [...] abstract and "objective" theories of spectatorship [...] the particular human lived-body specifically lived as "my body" is an excess of the historical and analytic systems available to codify, contain, and even negate it' (147).

Precisely under this gaze Weiss's last premise embraces further meaning. For her, Beckett's characters, reduced to embodied ghosts and shadows, become his

resistance to a politics of inscription. As Maddy in *All That Fall* paradoxically declares: ‘Don’t mind me. Don’t take any notice of me. I do not exist. The fact is well known’ (72). Beckett’s characters refuse to expose themselves as a certain given to the audience; rather, they unveil the historical and analytic systems contained in their use of and relationship with technology as a coercive method to codify and contain memory, at the same time experiencing how it finally negates their identity.

Technological readings in Beckett’s extensive production have been increasingly emerging over recent years. Katherine Weiss’s book adds to this sensitivity using technology as a thriving excuse to discuss the political implications of questioning authority and, in consequence, the invention of particular systems holding what we tend to see as an undeniable truth within society.

Her research naturally dialogues with David Albright’s *Beckett and Aesthetics*, in which he argues that ‘[...] Beckett’s whole canon is intimately engaged with technological problems’, as he discloses: ‘Beckett in some sense wanted to be uneasy about technology’ (i). A connection can also be found with Ulrika Maude’s book *Beckett, Technology and the Body*. The focus of Maude’s study is in the physical and sensory experiences the body incorporates while performing Beckett’s plays. In her view ‘[...] Beckett explores wider themes of subjectivity and experience [...]’ (i), eventually showing a hyper-present (my)self.

The Plays of Samuel Beckett works better as an introductory journey for students and theatre practitioners approaching the playwright’s work for the first time. Its reinterpretation of previous scholarship often becomes predictable and does not engage with contemporary research in media, spectatorship, or dramaturgy. Nevertheless, what becomes more interesting in Weiss’s analysis is her profound and informed selection of Beckett’s writings in his journals and letters uncovering possible explanations for what might be considered an eccentric and ironically authoritarian approach towards the production of his texts.

Since the main issue under discussion – for Weiss – is the use, or the relationship, characters establish with technological gadgets, she devotes special attention to Beckett’s theatre and television practice where mechanical props such as Pozzo’s clock in *Waiting for Godot* and the tape recorder in *Krapp’s Last Tape*, or camera movements such as dolly and close-ups in *Eh Joe*, or the duplicity of screens in *Nacht und Träume*, permanently challenge the audience to see how they force the appearance of meaning. At the same time, the audience is pushed to realise how

accountable they are for this inscription. For Weiss, this process is articulated in the same way Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari explain how meaning is read through the white wall/black holes metaphor. It is because I recognize the black holes in the white wall; the white wall becomes something inextricably linked to me, the one perceiving it.

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***Movement Training for Actors* by Jackie Snow**

London: Methuen Drama, 2012, 192 pp. (softback with DVD)

By Bryan Brown

Movement Training for Actors, a compendium of methods and exercises adapted and created by renowned teacher Jackie Snow, is a workbook in the tradition of Litz Pisk's *The Actor and his Body*, Jean Newlove's *Laban for Actors and Dancers* and Lorna Marshall's *The Body Speaks*. Primarily geared towards early-career teachers of movement training for actors, the publication can also be used by performers as a training guide.

Thorough in its scope and accessible in style, *Movement Training for Actors* is, however, little more than detailed recipes for group and individual games, sensorial explorations, isolation techniques, dynamic sequences, mask work, dances and imaginative transformation. While there is much practical use to such a collection, *Movement Training for Actors* exemplifies the tension inherent in the discipline of movement training: namely, that between the written word and direct contact with an experienced teacher capable of guiding an actor's learning, and application of, movement training.

Organised around three headings (the universal state, observation and transformation) that are intended to overlap in practice, the majority of the book focuses on the first heading, or what Snow terms 'the universal state'. The universal state has

potential to be a noteworthy addition to the pedagogical terminology of movement training; however, Snow does not expand upon how her use shifts practitioners' perception away from the 'blank slate or *tabula rasa*' (Evans 176) association of neutral state.

Accompanying the text is an hour-long DVD as well as copious illustrative photographs, both of which aim to take the exercises off the page in order to allow young teachers, or student-actors, to more accurately execute them. Compared to earlier text-only publications, such an approach is extremely useful and takes the publication some way towards utilising modern technology. However, all of the actors appear in full-length, form-fitting blacks against a black background. This odd choice renders the bodies presented for scrutiny almost completely obscured.

The DVD is organised according to the book, a structure that makes it illustrative of the exercises described in the text. Such an organizing principle means that the DVD is not easily used as its own medium. Some of the essential stretching and warm-up exercises appear after more dynamic ones that require alert bodies. This is disappointing, as a more strategic video might have allowed for teachers or practitioners to benefit from a sequential experience of movement training guided by Snow. What the DVD does show is movement regimented and controlled by the voice of the instructor. Although elements of play and actor-oriented leading are evident, the majority of the video shows very isolated and highly structured movement that leaves little room for imaginative exploration. It may be argued that such work is inevitably personal and therefore its representation on a DVD misleads young actors towards emulation rather than experience. Yet, Cieslak's playful leading of two young Odin Teatret actors through the Polish Teatr Laboratorium's *plastiques* is a classic example of film's ability to assist depiction of how the relationship between structured and improvisational movement work is provoked by the individual actor's imagination (Wethal). Such an imaginatively engaged approach is clearly what Snow intends, so it is a pity that it is not captured more readily for the video.

Unfortunately, *Movement Training for Actors* does little to advance the current practice of movement training, besides offering a breadth of exercises and some teaching reminders. Unlike Evans's *Movement Training for the Modern Actor*, Snow's publication lacks a critical perspective. The book contains no citations and no Bibliography. Thus, claims about Copeau, Lecoq, or Meyerhold go unsupported. Moreover, the publication suffers from numerous spelling errors, with the name of

seminal practitioner Kurt Jooss misspelled throughout. Most importantly, the book does not interrogate its own practices. As mentioned, Snow, following common drama school practice, requires all participants to wear blacks. She states: 'It is very important that actors are dressed neutrally (in black) and learn to let go of any judgement or self-consciousness about body size and shape' (3). Yet, such a practice contains a whole set of issues about authority, gaze and self-consciousness. As Evans remarked: 'The 'uniform' of black leotard or black T-shirt and leggings [...] operates as a frame in which the students' bodies are 'presented' for scrutiny, submitted to the teacher's gaze, and to that of other students' (126). The process by which students 'learn to let go of any judgement or self-consciousness' is much more complex than Snow lets on and requires the young actor to navigate the act of being seen, preferably with the guidance of trained pedagogues. Similarly, the book does not interrogate the term 'habit', which is seen as something to be 'discarded' (26). A more complex view of movement training might represent itself as a set of habits being (re)inscribed in an actor in order to allow for more expressive choice.

Overall, through her consistent reinforcement of the integrated nature of the book, Snow gives an excellent understanding of how movement training operates in a British professional drama school: those institutions which, as Evans states, 'represent an important area in which movement training is sustained, intensive and systematic' (3). Thus, *Movement Training for Actors* acts as a window onto the accumulated knowledge of British movement training, as well as its application within twenty-first century industry-accredited programmes. And yet, the book would greatly benefit from a more sustained weaving of how specific exercises assist the comprehensive experience of acting. Given Snow's wealth of experience, *Movement Training for Actors* could be a more significant achievement, offering as much insight into the author's process and guidance for application as the exercises detailed within.

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***Theatres of Immanence: Deleuze and the Ethics of Performance* by Laura Cull**

London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, 291 pp. (hardback)

By Nik Wakefield

An instrumental figure in the growing field of performance philosophy, Laura Cull has written a book that is both a timely intervention and a practical guide to exploring how performance thinks, through the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze. Cull aims broadly to ‘rethink performance *itself* as a kind of philosophy’ (3, original emphasis).

Theatres of Immanence sets out to ‘explore the implications of the concept of immanence for theatre and performance [...] to conceive what we might call a “theatre of immanence”’ (1). Cull provides an introduction to Deleuze’s thought by comparing immanence and transcendence and going on to explore how various practices emerge as more or less immanent and transcendent. To gloss the difference here, while transcendence involves an outside eye, immanence presumes thinking from the inside. In addition to Deleuze and his work with Guattari, Cull also draws on the philosophies of Henri Bergson, Friedrich Nietzsche and Baruch Spinoza. Bergson’s relevance appears in Cull’s chapter on duration, Nietzsche figures into her conclusion on ethics, while Spinoza (and the others to a lesser degree) are used to contextualise the school of thought out of which Deleuze emerges.

Theatres of Immanence applies a methodology consisting in exploring theatre practice between opposite poles that Cull identifies as intertwined – immanence and transcendence. The book makes no argument that one is more valuable than the other in order to both analyse the transformative nature of performance and the interdependency of the two terms. Indeed, Cull asserts that most performance practice will lean more towards one or the other at different times. This crucial non-binary is immanent thinking itself, which is to presume ‘Being as becoming’, or rather to affirm the multiplicity of theatre, which can be both immanent and transcendent in different ways (8). Because Cull is thinking immanence, she thinks immanently herself, which means to appreciate the difference and multiplicity affirmed by Deleuze’s philosophy. For

Cull, theatre is a multiplicity not only because it relies upon the labour of more than one discipline, but also because it changes over time.

The continuum approach is applied throughout *Theatres of Immanence* on smaller scales to support Cull's main argument, positing that performance itself thinks and does so in its own specific kind of thinking. Throughout the five chapters, each focusing respectively on authorship, language, imitation, participation and duration, Cull explores a diverse range of eleven practitioners. *Theatres of Immanence* carries its main argument with potency throughout the book, focusing in each chapter and subchapter on varying themes and identifying practices that feed knowledge back to philosophy.

What makes this approach work so well is that Cull has chosen specific practitioners whose work has clear relevance to each theme. She also utilises certain elements of practitioners' work that have received less analysis. For example, rather than focusing on the visuality of Robert Wilson's performance, Cull focuses on his use of language. Cull has also chosen to think through well-known and unfamiliar practitioners, which allows the reader to find new aspects of works they may know already and be introduced to theatres of immanence that may be new for some. Cull approaches this juxtaposition by moving between familiarity and novelty in order to reveal and open immanence rather than identify and limit it. In addition to the practitioners mentioned in the next paragraph, Cull also explores the work of Antonin Artaud, Carmelo Bene, Robert Wilson, Georges Lavaudant, Hijikata Tatsumi, Marcus Coates, Allan Kaprow and Lygia Clark.

Instead of rehearsing the secondary arguments Cull uses to think immanent performance, or performatic immanence, I would like to focus here on one particular example. In the first chapter on how John Cage, *The Living Theatre* and *Goat Island* compose performance, Cull identifies processes that navigate these two poles. Her underlying point is that a mix of 'top-down' or 'bottom-up' authoring work may be operating at different times in these creative processes (22). Just because *The Living Theatre* espoused a method of collective creation, or that John Cage imposed chance, does not guarantee immanence; at certain points in the process directors took over to shape the works. This is to say that their modes of devising followed different stages throughout the process. Indeed, that director Lin Hixson of *Goat Island* is always outside the performance does not secure transcendence. Instead of telling her actors

what to do, Hixson might ask questions and facilitate responses. Therefore Hixson's 'approach to directing' (43, original emphasis) is more reciprocal than pre-emptive, so 'because *theatres are processes*' (42, original emphasis), the outside, top-down transcendent mode of authorship is rarely seen in Goat Island's work without a balance of inside, bottom-up immanent creative modes.

To categorize a performance in one mode or the other 'would be a kind of transcendence in itself' and thus against the project to go beyond illustrating immanence by actually thinking immanently (55). Rather than a polemic, Cull offers a series of concepts and practices that are useful for performance practice and analysis as well as philosophy. One example of these concepts and practices is that Deleuzian thought indicates that crucial to immanence is the idea of becoming, where the passage of time is the process of continuous difference. If Cull were to think in terms of fixed ontologies, with binary dualisms and this-or-that logic, she would be thinking transcendence. Immanence acknowledges multiplicity. *Theatres of Immanence* is therefore interested in the interpenetrative nature of 'both/and' over 'either/or'.

Theatres of Immanence should appeal to a wide range of readers. It reveals new potentials for scholarly work in both performance and philosophy by offering new insights on practice and theory. Cull proves that theory and practice are different in degree, not different in kind. Practitioners might read this book in order to realise the philosophies immanent in their work. Students of theatre will gain an advanced understanding of how to conduct interdisciplinary research, as this book is a successful model of an exchange between two fields. Perhaps *Theatres of Immanence* could have appealed more to, and championed the methodology of, the growing number of practice-as-researchers by including some of Cull's own performance work, as well as thinking more creatively with how to display practice within the book. But *Theatres of Immanence* nonetheless opens the doors to the field of performance philosophy in an important piece of scholarship that will be a model for many researchers working to bring together complex practice and theory.