TDR

New York University
Brown University
Shanghai Theatre Academy
Stanford University
Yale University

Student Essay Contest Winner
Sophie Capobianco

Honorable Mentions
Jenny Henderson
Lele Han



articles by
Adin Walker
Dror Harari
Michael Stablein Jr.
Ilana Khanin
Neil Greenberg
Mark Pizzato
Elisabeth Motley
Maryam Dadkhah Tehrani & Neda Parsa
Judith G. Miller & Rachel M. Watson

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1054045425000140 Published online by Cambridge University Press

TDR

TDR is scholarly, accessible, and dynamic. TDR is inclusive and interdisciplinary. Each article is tightly focused—but taken as a whole TDR is global. With its broad range of topics, TDR is at the cutting edge of performance studies. Its writers and editors support progressive political and social movements, art and ideas. Written by and for scholars and artists—and their students—TDR is where leaders and future leaders in the field of performance studies go for performance texts, performative writing, editorials, reviews, interviews, and research articles about the performing arts, performance in everyday life, popular entertainments, sports, business, and politics—the broad spectrum of performance.

Editorial Office: TDR, Center for Research & Study, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University, 721 Broadway, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10003, email: tdr@nyu.edu.

Instructions for Contributors: Information about manuscript submissions can be found at https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/the-drama-review/information/instructions-contributors.

Abstracting and Indexing Information: Please visit https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/the-drama-review.

Subscription Information: TDR (ISSN 1054-2043 E-ISSN 1531-4715) is published quarterly (Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter) by Cambridge University Press, 1 Liberty Plaza, New York, NY 10006, USA on behalf of the Tisch School of the Arts, New York University. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to TDR, Cambridge University Press, 1 Liberty Plaza, New York, NY 10006, USA.

The institutional subscription price for Volume 69 (2025), including delivery by air where appropriate (but excluding VAT), is $337.00 (£279.00) for print and electronic or $294.00 (£242.00) for electronic only. Orders, which must be accompanied by payment, may be sent to a bookseller, subscription agent or direct to the publisher: Cambridge University Press, Journals Fulfillment Department, 1 Liberty Plaza, New York, NY, 10006, USA; or Cambridge University Press, UPH, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8RU, England. For single back issues, please contact subscriptions_newyork@cambridge.org. More information about subscription rates, including individual and student subscription prices, can be found at: https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/the-drama-review/subscribe.

Advertising: For information on display ad sizes, rates, and deadlines for copy, please contact USAdSales@cambridge.org.

© New York University/Tisch School of the Arts 2025. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, in any form or by any means, electronic, photocopying, or otherwise, without permission in writing from Cambridge University Press. Policies, request forms, and contacts are available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/the-drama-review/information/request-permissions.

Permission to copy (for users in the USA) is available from Copyright Clearance Center: www.copyright.com; email: info@copyright.com.

This publication is made possible, in part, with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1054204325000140 Published online by Cambridge University Press

TDR

the journal of performance studies

Editor
Richard Schechner

Associate Editor
Mariellen R. Sandford

Consortium Editors
Rebecca Schneider
Brown University

William Huizhu Sun
Shanghai Theatre Academy

Diana Looser
Stanford University

Tavia Nyong'o
Elise Morrison
Kimberly Jannarone
Yale University

Managing Editor
Sara Brady

Assistant Editor
Sarah Lucie

Editorial Assistant
Sage Friedman

Concerning Books Editor
Dominika Laster

Provocation Editor
Julie Tolentino

Contributing Editors
Fawzia Afzal-Khan
Sharon Aronson-Lehavi
Gelsey Bell
Catie Cuan
Tracy C. Davis
Guillermo Gómez-Peña
Branislav Jakovljević
Amelia Jones
Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett
André Lepecki
Carol Martin
Fred Moten
Rabih Mroué
Ong Keng Sen
Anna Deavere Smith
Diana Taylor
Uchino Tadashi



Above: Mothers: A Song for Wartime*, directed and conceived by Marta Górnicka. Cours d'Honneur du Palais des Papes, 11 July 2024. See "Un théâtre populaire: The 78th Avignon Theatre Festival" by Judith G. Miller and Rachel M. Watson. (Photo by Christophe Raynaud de Lage – Festival d'Avignon)*

Front Cover: *Writing on the body of Shengnan Pan in* Dear San Francisco. *See "Letters for a Remembered City: Les 7 Doigts de la Main's* Dear San Francisco *" by Adin Walker. (Photo courtesy of David Dower / Club Fugazi)*

Back Cover: *From Student Essay Contest winner "Utopia in D Yard: Prefigurative Politics and the Attica Prison Uprising of 1971" by Sophie Capobianco (image courtesy of Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, DC 20540); SEC honorable mention "'In Pieces': Nina Simone's Critical Geographies and Listening as Incommensurable Practice" by Jenny Henderson (photo © John Rudoff); and SEC honorable mention "Young China: Musical Theatre Reperformances by Chinese Generation Z Fans" by Lele Han (photo courtesy of Li Pan).*

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1054204325000140 Published online by Cambridge University Press

TDR

Student Essay Contest Winner

Utopia in D Yard: Prefigurative Politics and the Attica Prison Uprising of 1971 5

Sophie Capobianco

The Attica Prison Uprising has come to emblematize militant political organization inside prisons, influencing carceral rhetoric and policy throughout the contentious War on Crime. Despite its stigma as a short-lived rebellion that ended in a massacre, the Attica uprising is best understood as a site of prefigurative politics—political organization that aims to produce new social and political relations through their embodiment in the present. Political actors at Attica achieved remarkable success by experimenting with social roles beyond the purview of carceral surveillance and control.

Student Essay Contest Honorable Mention

"In Pieces": Nina Simone's Critical Geographies and Listening as Incommensurable Practice 25

Jenny Henderson

Nina Simone's songs are maps that critique racial-sexual violence in the US, while opening up space for "redress" by seizing back sonic excess. Simone's critical geographic performance practice is part of the tradition of enslaved Africans' songs as fugitive maps. Throughout her performances Simone insists that geographies of domination, and especially sexual violation, be read in relation to one another, encouraging a new method of spectatorship: "listening as incommensurable practice."

Young China: Musical Theatre Reperformances by Chinese Generation Z Fans 47

Lele Han

For Chinese Generation Z fans, the reperformances of musical theatre have empowered them to realize self-transformation while performing in public—without the constraints of formal physical training or special creative ability. By reperforming musicals with the themes of idealism and revolution, these youth re-create song-and-dance gestures as a rite of passage in everyday life, striving for individual idealized identities while playing disciplined social roles under the control of official ideology.

Articles

Deconstructing "October 7": *Mekhrav Numag* by the Ruth Kanner Theatre Group 64

Dror Harari

Mekhrav Numag by the Israeli Ruth Kanner Theatre Group was created in response to the Hamas terrorist attack on 7 October 2023. This documentary theatre piece compiles diverse verbal reactions to the horrendous event and the subsequent war in Gaza. The work's postdramatic kaleidoscopic texture and dramaturgy of excess emphasize the complexity of experiences following the attack, resisting confinement to a single voice or a unified perspective.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1054204325000140 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Theatre and the Empowerment of Women's Voices in Early Modern Iran 75

Maryam Dadkhah Tehrani and Neda Parsa

The rise of theatre in Iran during the Constitutional Revolution (1905–1911) coincided with significant shifts in Iranian society, particularly in the areas of women's rights, the push for gender equality, and the emergence of nationalism. Theatre served as a platform for, and actively contributed to, these transformative movements. The role of women's issues in Iran was distinct from their representation in Western perspectives on so-called third world societies.

An Inconsummate Man: The Violent Dramaturgy of Elliot Rodger 101

Michael Stablein Jr.

Unable to perform the perceived demands of his gender—unable to have sex—in 2014 the incel Elliot Rodger devised a performance of ruthless cruelty. His mass murder, a now habituated performance of US American masculinity, was preceded by an autobiographical text. Recounting his pursuit of a consummate manhood, Rodger's manifesto reveals the consequential movement from narrative to performance, from genre to gender, from a discourse of discontent to a violent dramaturgy of masculinity.

Digital Antitheatricality. 116

Ilana Khanin

Non-fungible tokens (NFTs) are not only blockchain-based digital assets; they are theatrical practices taking shape between social bodies. Understanding the theatricality of NFTs provides a way to account for the criticism directed at them. NFT critiques often purport to focus on underlying politico-economic ideologies but, in actuality, reveal deep-seated antitheatrical anxieties recontextualized for the digital realm.

Queer Thoughts on Merce Cunningham. 131

Neil Greenberg

A "figure in the carpet" (as in the Henry James novella) within the choreography and biography of Merce Cunningham can be found in the relationship of his queerness to his choreographic innovations. Cunningham's philosophies and practices can be seen to reflect multiple responses to homophobia and sexism—defensive maneuvers, circumventions, and interventions.

Un théâtre populaire: The 78th Avignon Theatre Festival 153

Judith G. Miller and Rachel M. Watson

Despite the turn to the right of many national governments, including France, the 2024 theatre festival in Avignon programmed by a new director, Tiago Rodrigues, delivered feminist, internationalist, antiracist, and progressive works. The lineup showed both his courage to defend what he believes in and his support of exceptional artists who share his political passions (Caroline Guiela Nguyen, Mohamed El Khatib, Lola Arias, Marta Górnicka, Séverine Chavrier, Baro d'evel, among others).

Letters for a Remembered City: Les 7 Doigts de la Main's *Dear San Francisco* 162

Adin Walker

Dear San Francisco by the Montréal-based company Les 7 Doigts de la Main takes up mythological symbols surrounding California, particularly through tracing modes of communication—from letters and mail to iPhones. Yet, as a performance ultimately centering on epistolary form, *Dear San Francisco* finds inspiration in dedication as a uniquely political act of performance address.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1054204325000140 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Animal-Human Drives in Prehistoric Art, Egyptian Temples, and Christian Melodramas 172

Mark Pizzato

Research findings in cognitive and affective neuroscience, along with psychology and anthropology, can be used to explore the theatrical benefits and dangers of church/temple performances. They involve animal-human drives as primary and social emotions, expressed through patriarchal, maternal, memorial, and supportive/trickster networks in the brain's staging of self and Other consciousness. Thus, "inner/outer theatre" (brain and social) networks are reflected in the apparent spirits and divine figures of earlier cultures, which relate to Christian images and performance ideals.

Concerning Books

Care Ethics and Aesthetics in Post-Rehabilitation Disability Performance 194

Elisabeth Motley

Recent books on disability performance offer an opportunity to explore past and present disability performance labor, which has the potential to rupture the ableisms and hegemonies of conventional theatre.



A group of female entertainers with some dressed as men (undated). See "Theatre and the Empowerment of Women's Voices in Early Modern Iran" by Maryam Dadkhah Tehrani and Neda Parsa. (Photo courtesy of the Institute for Iranian Contemporary Historical Studies; www.qajarwomen.org)

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1054204325000140 Published online by Cambridge University Press