Eva Urban-Devereux and Drew Milne

Editorial

New Theatre Quarterly celebrates the richness of the intercultural, multilingual and intertextual hybridity of contemporary theatre practice and theatre history. A strong and unique emphasis on these aspects has always been at the heart of NTQ. The previous Editors Maria Shevtsova and Simon Trussler (and recently, Assistant Editor Philippa Burt), cultivated an exceptional commitment to British and international theatre, theatre makers, and scholars. They thus created a rare and precious environment where rigorous and original critical thought can flourish. As new editors of NTQ, we wish to honour their mission and continue to tend to this.

Maria Shevtsova's theatrical and intellectual community is truly global. Her brilliant, highly influential scholarship, research publications and keynotes, as well as her extraordinarily wide attendance at and minutely sharp analytical knowledge of international theatre productions have shaped her visionary commitment to *New Theatre Quarterly* for 25 years. Maria Shevtsova's generous mentorship of younger scholars has also been at the core of all her tireless work. Her critical originality, humorous zeal, and her warm, inimitable esprit, illuminated the current editors' Cambridge Conference for a Critical Poetics of Political Theatre in Europe (a British Academy event), which we co-organized with our colleague John Kerrigan at St John's College in Cambridge in 2014, and which brought together a lively community of scholars, theorists, and theatre makers, much like *NTQ*. Her In Memoriam for acclaimed director Yury Butusov in this issue is characteristic of Maria's deep community spirit.

Read in conjunction, the first two research articles of this issue, 'Cultural Erasure in British Theatre Criticism: *Home X* and Chinese Literary Criticism' by Yingnan Chu and 'Theatre as Nature Writing' by Julie Hudson both reveal intriguing connections between contemporary theatre, mythology, and literature. They also share eco-critical concerns about human interactions with the natural world. In their precise cultural specificities and theatrical staging choices, rooted respectively in historical and modern Chinese literature in the first case (notably 'the fourth-century *Soushen Ji* (搜神記) [In Search of the Supernatural], a fourth-century Chinese compilation of stories about gods, ghosts, and supernatural phenomena', the fable 'The Peach Blossom Spring' by Tao Yuanming, the contemporary novella *The King of Trees* by Ah Cheng, a number of Cantonese poems), and in the Shakespearean tradition of English literature in the second case (most prominently *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*), both articles unearth deep layers of intertextuality and meta-theatricality applied to contemporary theatre design and complex technology. Intriguingly, both articles also share an emphasis on the mythological and spiritual power of trees as well as the human destruction of trees: tree spirits represented by avatars in *Home X* (2023) by An-Ting Chang and Kakilang, and the moving forest in *Macbeth*, alluded to with representations of wood and witchcraft in the RSC/Good Chance 2024 climate change production, *Kyoto*.

In 'Performing *A Taste of Millefeuille: Puppetry, Performativity and Cross-Cultural Adaptation*', Yun Geng discusses poetic intertextuality and abstract visual meta-theatricality in the context of a Chinese adaptation of French theatre director Eric de Sarria's *A Taste of Millefeuille*. The tradition of a different, but equally neglected, style of physical, shapeshifting performance in theatre history is investigated in Bernard Ince's 'Origins, Influences and Developments in Quick Change and Protean Acting in British Popular Entertainment, 1800-1930',

NTQ 41:1 (FEBRUARY 2025) © The Author(s), 2026. Published by Cambridge University Press
doi:10.1017/S0266464X26100840

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266464X26100840 Published online by Cambridge University Press

which 'foregrounds previously unknown or neglected performers, especially (though not exclusively) from Britain, whose respective contributions to these genres have seldom been recognized' and the influence of notable Italian actors on this genre. Yet another kind of hybridity is explored in 'Dialogic Interplay between Film and Theatre: Flaherty's Docu-film *Man of Aran* in Martin McDonagh's *The Cripple of Inishmaan*' by Jing Wang and Junwu Tian, which investigates intermediality and meta-theatricality in Irish dramatist Martin McDonagh's play. Finally, Mark Brown offers a whirlwind tour of international key productions staged at Portugal's Almada Theatre Festival 'Born of Revolution: A Short History of Festival de Almada' and its political history.

We wish to express our sincere gratitude to Editor Emerita, Maria Shevtsova, and to NTQ's excellent copy-editor, Nick de Somogyi.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266464X26100840 Published online by Cambridge University Press