



Acts and apparitions: Discourses on the real in performance practice and theory, 1990-2010

Liz Tomlin

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Acts and apparitions examines how new performance practices from the 1990s to the present day have been driven by questions of the real and the ensuing political implications of the concept's rapidly disintegrating authority. This book departs significantly from much existing scholarship on contemporary performance in its rejection of the dramatic/postdramatic binary and its interrogation of previous applications of Derridean poststructuralism to theatrical representation and notions of the real. It seeks to highlight how trends in performance analysis can impact on the production and promotion of new work in the theatre industry.

The book offers a detailed analysis of performance theory and its contribution to discourses on the real. It challenges the orthodox narrative of radicalism commonly applied to postdramatic/postmodern/poststructuralist practice, to argue that an alternative reading of poststructuralist theory would suggest that there are critical ideological distinctions between different models that co-exist under this broad umbrella. Drawing on theorists from Baudrillard to Lacan, it offers new perspectives on the political analysis of contemporary theatre and performance across a wide range of models from Forced Entertainment and the Wooster Group to Roland Schimmelpfennig and Howard Barker; from verbatim theatre to audio tours and the interactive performances of Ontroerend Goed.

Acts and apparitions delivers an innovative blend of philosophical, political and performance theory. Written from the dual perspective of a practitioner/scholar, it will be of interest to students, scholars and practitioners of contemporary theatre and performance.

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