Modern Theories Of Drama

A Selection Of Writings On Drama And Theatre 1840 1990

The Oxford Encyclopedia of Theatre & Performance

Modern Drama

Arguing that Brecht’s aesthetic theories are still highly relevant today, and that an appreciation of his theory and theatre is essential to an understanding of modern critical theory, this book examines the influence of Brecht’s aesthetic on the pre-eminent materialist critics of the twentieth century: Louis Althusser, Walter Benjamin, Roland Barthes, Frederic Jameson, Theodor W. Adorno and Raymond Williams. Re-reading Brecht through the lens of post-structuralism, Sean Carney asserts that there is a Lacanian Brecht and a Derridean Brecht: the result of which is a new Brecht whose vital importance for the present is located in decentered theories of subjectivity Brecht and Critical Theory maps the many ways in which Brechtian thinking pervades critical thought today, informing the critical tools and stances that make up the contemporary study of aesthetics.

The Theory of the Modern Stage

Modern Theories of Drama provides a crucial resource for students of drama and theatre studies, illustrating how much the idea of drama has altered in the last 150 years.

Modern Drama in Theory and Practice: Volume 2, Symbolism, Surrealism and the Absurd

The first book-length study of the notion of place and its implications in modern drama

Modern Theories of Performance: From Stanislavski to Boal

The Oxford Handbook of Dance and Theater
A wide-ranging set of essays that explain what theatre history is and why we need to engage with it.

**Theories of the Avant-garde Theatre**

In it, Aristotle offers an account of what he calls "poetry" (a term which in Greek literally means "making" and in this context includes drama - comedy, tragedy, and the satyr play - as well as lyric poetry and epic poetry). They are similar in the fact that they are all imitations but different in the three ways that Aristotle describes:
1. Differences in music rhythm, harmony, meter and melody. 2. Difference of goodness in the characters. 3. Difference in how the narrative is presented: telling a story or acting it out. In examining its "first principles," Aristotle finds two: 1) imitation and 2) genres and other concepts by which that of truth is applied/revealed in the poesis. His analysis of tragedy constitutes the core of the discussion. Although Aristotle's Poetics is universally acknowledged in the Western critical tradition, "almost every detail about his seminal work has aroused divergent opinions."

**Modern Theories of Drama**

This book is arguably the definitive undergraduate textbook on contemporary social theory. Written by one of the world’s most acclaimed social theorists, Anthony Elliott provides a dazzlingly accessible and comprehensive introduction to modern social theory from the Frankfurt School to globalization theories and beyond. In distilling the essentials of social theory, Elliott reviews the works of major theorists including Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan, Jacques Derrida, Anthony Giddens, Pierre Bourdieu, Julia Kristeva, Jurgen Habermas, Judith Butler, Slavoj Zizek, Manuel Castells, Ulrich Beck, Zygmunt Bauman, Giorgio Agamben and Manuel De Landa. Every social theorist discussed is contextualized in a wider political and historical context, and from which their major contributions to social theory are critically assessed. This book is essential reading for students and professionals in the fields of social theory, sociology and cultural studies, as it is both an original enquiry and a consummate introduction to social theory.

**The Poetics of Aristotle**

Playwriting theory has, from its beginning, been concerned with the search for the essential nature of dramatic writing. Early playwriting treatises (poetics) defined the essential aspects of drama as being the plot (creation of sequences of fictional events), the moral character of its heroes, the idea of enactment, or the rhetorical and lyrical qualities of the text. These categories were kept through later treatises with different emphasis being put on each category. An understanding of drama as a sequence of fictional events (plot) has been central in acting theory. Modern theories and techniques centred on Stanislavsky's ideas rely heavily on rehearsal methods that carefully establish the sequence of actions of the characters in a play as a result of psychological motivations. This method was described by Stanislavsky in An Actor's Work on a Role, published in 1938, and is known as the Method of Physical Actions. This thesis reassesses the definition of playwriting as consisting essentially in the creation of a plot populated by suitable characters. Rather than discussing playwriting theory in isolation it attempts a bridge between acting theory and playwriting theory by using the Method of Physical Actions as an equivalent to plot. Acting theory is thus considered as a theoretical justification for the centrality of plot. The method used is hermeneutic - a systematic interpretation of poetics, unveiling in almost an archaeological manner the relevance of the essential definitions of drama, such as character, source, genre, and language to the concept of plot. The chronological path of development of dramatic theories is shown to be gradual: from the strict obedience to the narrative line imposed by the mythic sources, in classical treatises; through to an interest in the lyrical expression of the predicament of specific characters, in neoclassical theory; to an awareness of specific social types in the eighteenth century; and, finally, to the conception of the plot as a product of the mental life of individual characters in modern theory.

**Theories of Performance**

This book tells the story of modern drama through its seminal, groundbreaking plays and performances, and the artistic diversity that these represent. Exploring the new note of artistic hostility between dramatists and their audience, Shepherd-Barr draws on a range of theories and performances to reveal what makes modern drama "modern".
Radio Drama

Jarry - García Lorca - Satre - Camus - Beckett - Ritual theatre and Jean Genet - Fringe theatre in Britain

Five Modern Theories of Tragedy

Looks at post-war American drama by women, bridging the gap between theatrical theory and feminist theory

Acting Theory as Poetic of Drama

Detailed analysis of Brecht's extensive theoretical writings on the theater, including newly available works.

The Theater Event

Shakespeare and Social Theory

The Purpose of Playing provides the first in-depth introduction to modern critical acting, enabling students, teachers, and professionals to comprehend the different aesthetic possibilities available to today's actors. The book presents a comparative survey of the major approaches to Western acting since the nineteenth century, their historical evolution, and their relationship to one another. Author Robert Gordon explores six categories of acting: realistic approaches to characterization (Stanislavski, Vakhtangov, Strasberg, Chekhov); the actor as a scenographic instrument (Appia, Craig, Meyerhold); improvisation and games (Copeau, Saint-Denis, Laban, Lecoq); political theater (Brecht, Boal); exploration of the self and other (Artaud, Grotowski); and performance as cultural exchange (Brook, Barba). The synthesis of these principal theories of dramatic performance in a single text offers practitioners the knowledge they need to contextualize their own practice within the wider field of performance, while encouraging theorists and scholars to be more sensitive to the material realities of artistic practice. "This analysis of major movements and figures from the early nineteenth century to the present is clear, thorough, and penetrating, and its scope across periods, countries, and styles is impressive." --Xerxes Mehta, University of Maryland-Baltimore County Robert Gordon is Reader in Drama, Goldsmiths College, University of London.

Joseph Conrad and the Reader

English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama

"This is a collection of ten long essays arranged around the primordial subject of realism and non-realism, or anti-realism, in the drama, as this subject manifests itself in modern Europe and contemporary America from Ibsen to Shaw to the symbolists, expressionists, surrealists, dadaists, futurists, and absurdist. This book treats not only the issue of realism versus anti-realism in theater from a practical as well as a theoretical point of view. It also treats at least two subjects related to this issue: the superficial or bourgeois realism that has long crippled the theater versus the critical and sometimes poetic realism that liberates it; and the avant-garde, the rearguard, and the middle-to-advanced artistic ground in between claimed by Bertolt Brecht and Harold Pinter. Special attention is paid, moreover, to the first thoroughgoing American avant-garde dramatist, Gertrude Stein. In sum, this book treats the subject of realism and non-realism from the point of view of the theater's ability to create not only the illusion of reality onstage, but also the reality of illusion"--Publisher's description, back cover.

An Idea of the Drama

Joseph Conrad and the Reader is the first book fully devoted to Conrad's relation to the reader, visual theory and authorship. This challenging study proposes new
approaches to modern literary criticism and deftly examines the limits of deconstructionist theories, introducing groundbreaking new theoretical concepts of reading and reception.

**Literary Theory**

This comprehensive and balanced anthology offers a collection of 25 works of modern and contemporary drama from the 1870s through the early 1990s. Features twenty-five plays that often demonstrate a significant breakthrough in maturity of expression and style for each playwright — important leaders in the development of modern and contemporary drama.

**Theory of the Modern Drama**

This book provides a bridge between Shakespeare studies and classical social theory, opening up readings of Shakespeare to a new audience outside of literary studies and the humanities. Shakespeare has long been known as a “great thinker” and this book reads his plays through the lens of an anthropologist, revealing new connections between Shakespeare’s plays and the lives we now lead. Close readings of a selection of frequently studied plays—Hamlet, The Winter’s Tale, Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Julius Caesar, and King Lear—engage with the texts in detail while connecting them with some of the biggest questions we all ask ourselves, about love, friendship, ritual, language, human interactions, and the world around us. The plays are examined through various social theories including performance theory, cognitive theory, semiotics, exchange theory, and structuralism. The book concludes with a consideration of how “the new astronomy” of his day and developments in optics changed the very idea of “perspective,” and shaped Shakespeare’s approach to embedding social theory in his dramatic texts. This accessible and engaging book will appeal to those approaching Shakespeare from outside literary studies but will also be valuable to literature students approaching Shakespeare for the first time, or looking for a new angle on the plays.

**Modern Theories of Drama**

This first book-length study to trace the evolution of the comic old man in Italian and English Renaissance comedy shows how English dramatists adopted and reimagined an Italian model to reflect native concerns about and attitudes toward growing old. Anthony Ellis provides an in-depth study of the comic old man in the erudite comedy of sixteenth-century Florence; the character's parallel development in early modern Venice, including the commedia dell’arte; and, along with a consideration of Anglo-Italian intertextuality, the character's subsequent flourishing on the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage. In outlining the character's development, Ellis identifies and describes the physical and behavioral characteristics of the comic old man and situates these traits within early modern society by considering prevailing medical theories, sexual myths, and intergenerational conflict over political and economic circumstances. The plays examined include Italian dramas by Bernardo Dovizi da Bibbiena, Niccolò Machiavelli, Donato Giannotti, Lorenzino de’ Medici, Andrea Calmo, and Flaminio Scala, and English works by William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and Thomas Dekker, along with Middleton, Rowley, and Heywood’s The Old Law. Besides providing insight into stage representations of aging, this book illuminates how early modern people conceived of and responded to the experience of growing old and its social, economic, and physical challenges.

**Old Age, Masculinity, and Early Modern Drama**

The Oxford Handbook of Dance and Theater brings together genres, aesthetics, cultural practices, and historical movements that provide insight into humanist concerns at the crossroads of dance and theater, broadening the horizons of scholarship in the performing arts and moving the fields closer together.

**Shakespeare and Contemporary Theory**

The Natyasastra is the deep repository of Indian performance studies. It embodies centuries of performance knowledge developed in South Asia on a range of conceptual issues and practical methodologies of the body. The composition of the Natyasastra is attributed to Sage Bharatha, and dates back to between 200 BC and AD 200. Written in Sanskrit, the text contains 6000 verse stanzas integrated in 36 chapters discussing a wide range of issues in theatre arts, including dramatic composition; construction of the playhouse; detailed analysis of the musical scales; body movements; various types of acting; directing; division of stage space;
costumes; make-up; properties and musical instruments. As a discourse on performance, the Natyasastra is an extensive documentation of terminologies, concepts and methodologies. This book presents 14 scholarly essays exploring the Natyasastra from the multiple perspectives of Indian performance studies—epistemological, aesthetic, scientific, religious, ethnological and practical.

**Bertolt Brecht's Dramatic Theory**

In this collection of essays by avant-garde theatre's most creative practitioners—directors, playwrights, performers, and designers—these writings provide direct access to the thinking behind much of the most stimulating playwriting and performance of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

**Theories of the Theatre**

**The Purpose of Playing**

Discusses the development of theories of catharsis in the theater and looks at the philosophies of four modern drama theorists

**Theater as Problem**

This book is a brilliant analysis of the emergence and development of modern drama from the Renaissance to the present day. This concise but wide-ranging book discusses the work of Ibsen, Chekhov, Strindberg, Satre, Brecht and Wilder, among others.

**Drama and Theatre in Nigeria**

**Brecht & Critical Theory**

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**Modern Drama**

The first English-language anthology that traces the centuries-long evolution of Chinese thought on theater and performance

**Chinese Theories of Theater and Performance from Confucius to the Present**

First Published in 1988. Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an informa company.

**European Theories of the Drama, an Anthology of Dramatic Theory and Criticism from Aristotle to the Present Day, and a Series of Selected Texts; with Commentaries, Biographies, and Bibliographies**
Unlike other introductions to literary theory, this distinctive book offers a sustained discussion of a specific period of English literature. Avoiding the danger of employing theories as templates, the author uses Renaissance drama and contemporary theory to question and illuminate each other. It provides a comprehensive account of key modern literary theories and presents detailed applications of them to a wide range of Renaissance plays. It also offers a new way of thinking about the relationship of modern literary theory to its main predecessor, humanism. Finally, it writes a history, which Renaissance drama and modern theory are seen as sharing, of the antagonisms and attempted reconciliations between signs and psyche, objects and subjects, history and self, and language and the human.

**Performance Theory**

Using examples ranging from nineteenth-century Viennese comedy to Friedrich Dürrenmatt's atomic-age theater, Benjamin Bennett explores what is at stake in the theory of drama; what sort of questioning makes up that theory; and in what direction such questioning leads. Bennett takes as his starting point the inescapably literary nature of theater in the European tradition, theater in its most concrete dimensions: as an institution, as a tradition of ritual or stylized behavior, as a particular type of physical space, as an economic venture. He maintains that, precisely because of its radical categorical disjunction from the domain of the literary, theater in the European tradition has been appropriated as the principal vehicle by which literature repeatedly problematizes itself. Theater, he says, is "the church of literature." Although he is concerned with drama as a literary type, therefore, Bennett does not treat the theory of drama as part of the theory of literature. For the special relation of drama to literature calls into question the whole idea of literary theory as a stable discourse divisible into parts. Bennett considers plays by Nestroy, Schnitzler, Ibsen, Strindberg, Brecht, Ionesco, Genet, Pirandello, Artaud, and Dürrenmatt. He focuses on such theoretical issues as the idea of generic boundaries; the relation between drama and the culture of reading; the relevance between drama and the culture of reading; the relevance of hermeneutic and semiotic views of literature to drama; and the operation of fascism as a literary phenomenon. In conclusion, he frames a problem that his readings have brought to light: at least two separate historical accounts of modern drama are necessary—those that imply each other, yet remain irreconcilable.

**Renaissance Drama and Contemporary Literary Theory**

Theories of Performance invites students to explore the possibilities of performance for creating, knowing, and staking claims to the world. Each chapter surveys, explains, and illustrates classic, modern, and postmodern theories that answer the questions, "What is performance?" "Why do people perform?" and "How does performance constitute our social and political worlds?" The chapters feature performance as the entry point for understanding texts, drama, culture, social roles, identity, resistance, and technologies.

**Staging Place**

**The Cambridge Companion to Theatre History**

Radio Drama brings together the practical skills needed for radio dramas, such as directing, writing and sound design, with media history and communication theory. Challenging the belief that sound drama is a 'blind medium', Radio Drama shows how experimentation in radio narrative has blurred the dividing line between fiction and reality in modern media. Using extracts from scripts and analysing radio broadcasts from America, Britain, Canada and Australia, the book explores the practicalities of producing drama for radio. Tim Crook illustrates how far radio drama has developed since the first 'audiophonic production' and evaluates the future of radio drama in the age of live phone-ins and immediate access to programmes on the Internet.

**Imagining the Real**

The current education climate has brought the development of classroom drama as an art form to a standstill. Practitioners need to make a qualitative leap forward in both theory and practice in order to respond to the cultural demands of the times. By linking the best of the ground-breaking work of Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton with the pioneering developments in theatre form by the playwright Edward Bond, David Davis identifies a possible way forward. In part one he critiques present drama in education - Mantle of the Expert approaches, conventions drama forms and post-dramatic theatre. In part two he restates and develops the best
practice of the last fifty years, centring on the key importance of 'living through' drama. In part three he applies the new drama/theatre form of Edward Bond to begin building a new theory of drama in education and so transform classroom practice. Imagining the Real will be essential reading for drama students at first and higher degree level, students on initial courses of teacher education, drama teachers, lecturers in higher and further education and theatre workers generally.

**Contemporary Social Theory**

In *The Theory of the Modern Stage*, leading drama critic, Eric Bentley, brings together landmark writings by dramatists, directors and thinkers who have had a profound effect on the theatre since the mid nineteenth century, from Adolphe Appia to Émile Zola. Here, Antonin Artaud sets out a manifesto for a Theatre of Cruelty, Bertolt Brecht discusses the tension between entertainment and instruction in experimental drama and Bernard Shaw defends himself as a realist, while W. B. Yeats describes the creation of a People’s Theatre. The ideas of theatre’s great makers are revealed by their best expositors, as Eric Bentley writes about Stanislavsky belief in the importance of emotional memory when creating a dramatic role and Arthur Symons considers Richard Wagner and the relationship between genius, art and nature.

**Feminist Theories for Dramatic Criticism**

A complete critical introduction to New Historicist and Cultural Materialist approaches that have dominated contemporary Shakespeare theory, as well as alternative new directions.