

antecedents to the recent rise in participatory arts practices, Bishop resoundingly reframes the current trend as a *return*, rather than a *turn*, to the social.

The enthralling journey – the product of seven years' research – is made all the more convincing by Bishop's indiscrimination between canonical and obscure examples of participatory arts, and her maintenance of a 'Lacanian fidelity to the singularity of each [artistic] project' (p. 26). In each case, whether it be the well-known *serate* of the Italian Futurists, which sought to curate a symphony of poetry, painting and sculpture for some of the first mass audiences, or the actions of Milan Knížák and Alex Mlynářčik in the 1960s and 1970s in Prague and Bratislava, respectively, which presented a vital voice of dissent against a violent authoritarian regime, Bishop angles her piercing gaze with precision and insight, dissecting each work and expounding the historical and cultural forces that led to its creation.

Bishop ends by focusing her attention on the growing instrumentalization of participatory arts in contemporary UK settings, which has typically focused on disenfranchised or socially 'excluded' participants. Her critique here is typically rigorous and varied, questioning every aspect of participatory practice, from its self-determined and insular parameters of 'success' (which reject comparison with traditional art on the one hand and traditional social work on the other) to its dubious goals which desire, at worst, that participants simply make a 'transition across the boundary from excluded to included, [allowing them] to access the holy grail of self-sufficient consumerism' (p. 13). Ultimately, Bishop provides us with a rare thing: an essential counterreading of a contemporary trend that remains reasoned, eloquent and striking, resisting the urge to slip into the realm of the polemic.

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Der Affektive Schauspieler: Die Energetik des Postdramatischen Theaters. By Wolf-Dieter Ernst. Berlin: Theater der Zeit, 2012. Pp. 253 + 33 illus. €22 Pb.

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With 'energy' as its primary leitmotiv, Wolf-Dieter Ernst's study on the affective actor takes no hostages in the formulation of its central claim, and it is therefore all the more fitting that the book's main conceit is entirely encapsulated in its title. To the author, post-dramatic theatre at heart beats to the pulse of the energy it exudes via its one vital constituent: the actor. The opening chapter, entitled 'Der affektive Schauspieler als "Theatertier"' (The Affective Actor as 'Theatre Animal'), strikes a comparable discursive drive doubled by the bestial motif it develops. Indeed, to Ernst, the affective – that is, fiery, energetic, non-calculating – actor *embodies* no less than one of the most challenging epistemological problems in contemporary theatre studies on behalf of the resistance to conceptual encapsulation s/he represents.

Structurally, though, the book's energy starts to lag at quarter-distance, after the first thematic cluster of theoretically oriented chapters. This is not to say that the four following parts are uninteresting or less original in their own right, but simply that reading experiences may veer from the action-packed intellectual rigour of the

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forementioned introductory section, over two similarly innovative and conceptually taut chapters on 'Trial and Training', to a rather surprising sense of imbalance generated by detailed yet primarily descriptive case studies. Another (relative) point of criticism would concern the scarcity – again, with the exception of the first three chapters – of cross-referencing between the book's various sections, just as the absence of an overarching conclusion. On the whole, this is regrettable because it unjustly diminishes the book's heuristic reach. Just so, the concluding chapter, 'Nachwort und Ausblick' (Afterword and Outlook), offers yet another descriptive analysis before abruptly taking its leave. Make no mistake, though, the individual examples of affective acting in – high-profile, one should add – post-dramatic productions are particularly well chosen. On top of that, the decision to break up the book into two distinct parts was an admittedly conscious one, whereby Ernst urges us to bear in mind the distinction between the affective actor as concept and as concrete, biographically rooted externalization of artistic practice (p. 23). Accordingly, chapter 4 tackles the technical and moral challenges inherent to playing Adolf Hitler by focusing in particular on Bruno Ganz's performance in Bernd Eichinger's *Der Untergang* (2004) before moving on to the countless YouTube spoofs it has spawned. Next up is Thomas Tieme's impersonation of the Dirty Rich character in Luk Perceval's highly subversive Shakespeare adaptation/conflation *Ten Oorlog!* (1997), followed by an analysis of the embodied problem of scenic imagination by the actor in Jan Lauwers's *Images of Affection* (2002). Chapter 7, in turn, tackles the (re)presentation of affect via a critical take on capitalism in Katja Bürkle's scene of fury in René Pollesch's *Liebe ist Kalter als das Kapital* (2007), before the 'Nachwort und Ausblick' returns to the work of this German director to state its final claim: in post-dramatic theatre, energy-laden affective performances express the (verbally) inexpressible, and so enable a dialogue that transcends rational considerations (p. 213) – a bit like this book, then.

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***Desire and Dramatic Form in Early Modern England.* By Judith Haber.**

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. Pp. xi + 212. £49/\$90 Hb, £25/\$45 Pb.

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Haber is a superb close reader and her book consistently resists conventional readings of the plays she examines, many of which are non-Shakespearean and have only enjoyed detailed critical attention in more recent decades. Her early chapters on Christopher Marlowe's *Tamberlaine* and *Edward II* are particularly impressive in this regard, while her keen eye consistently notes the telling detail or the repeated use of a word or phrase whose cumulative effect bolsters the argument she is making. The book's overall thrust seems to be towards queering and feminizing Renaissance dramatic form; Haber claims in her introduction that 'one of the implications of [this] work is that narrative "history" necessarily partakes of the same culturally created connections to patriarchal, heteroerotic masculinity as all narratives, and needs to be radically reconceived if it