

from Performance and Cultural Politics
ed. E Diamond (London and New York:
Routledge, 1996)

INTRODUCTION

In our simplest references, and in the blink of an eye, performance is always a doing and a thing done. On the one hand, performance describes certain embodied acts, in specific sites, witnessed by others (and/or the watching self). On the other hand, it is the thing done, the completed event framed in time and space and remembered, misremembered, interpreted, and passionately revisited across a pre-existing discursive field.¹ Common sense insists on a temporal separation between a doing and a thing done, but in usage and in theory, performance, even its dazzling physical immediacy, drifts between present and past, presence and absence, consciousness and memory. Every performance, if it is intelligible as such, embeds features of previous performances: gender conventions, racial histories, aesthetic traditions – political and cultural pressures that are consciously and unconsciously acknowledged. Whether the performance of one's gender on a city street, an orientalist impersonation in a Parisian salon, or a corporation-subsidized, "mediatized" Broadway show, each performance marks out a unique temporal space that nevertheless contains traces of other now-absent performances, other now-disappeared scenes.² Which is to say – and every essay in this anthology offers a compelling version of this saying – it is impossible to write the pleasurable embodiments we call performance without tangling with the cultural stories, traditions, and political contestations that comprise our sense of history.

Yet to invoke history, and to propose a "drift" between presence and absence, is not to hitch performance to an old metaphysics of presence – the notion that an absent referent or an anterior authority precedes and grounds our representations. In their very different ways the contributors to this anthology take up the postmodern assumption that there is no unmediated real and no presence that is not also traced and retraced by what it seems to exclude.³ Indeed, postmodern notions of performance embrace what Plato condemned in theatrical representation – its non-originality – and gesture toward an epistemology grounded not on the distinction between truthful models and fictional representations but on different ways of knowing and doing that are constitutively heterogeneous, contingent, and risky. Thus while

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a performance embeds traces of other performances, it also produces experiences whose interpretation only partially depends on previous experience. This creates the terminology of “re” in discussions of performance, as in *reembody*, *reinscribe*, *reconfigure*, *resignify*. “Re” acknowledges the pre-existing discursive field, the repetition – and the desire to repeat – within the performative present, while “embody,” “configure,” “inscribe,” “signify,” assert the possibility of materializing something that exceeds our knowledge, that alters the shape of sites and imagines other as yet unsuspected modes of being.

Of course, what alters the shape of sites and imagines into existence other modes of being is anathema to those who would police social borders and identities. Performance has been at the core of cultural politics since Plato sought to cleanse his republic of the contamination of histrionic display, from both performers and spectators. But contestations over censorship are just one manifestation of cultural politics. The essays in this book explore performances as cultural practices that conservatively reinscribe or passionately reinvent the ideas, symbols, and gestures that shape social life. Such reinscriptions or reinventions are, inevitably, negotiations with regimes of power, be they proscriptive conventions of gender and bodily display (see Apter, Foster, Cohen, Schneider) or racist conventions sanctioned by state power (see Robinson, Dicker/sun, Roach, McCauley, Patra). Viewing performance within a complex matrix of power, serving diverse cultural desires, encourages a permeable understanding of history and change. As Joseph Roach puts it, the “present” is how we nominate (and disguise) “the continuous reenactment of a deep cultural performance.” Critique of performance (and the performance of critique) can remind us of the unstable improvisations within our deep cultural performances; it can expose the fissures, ruptures, and revisions that have settled into continuous reenactment.

PERFORMANCE/THEATER

Because performance discourse, and its new theoretical partner, “performativity,” are dominating critical discussion almost to the point of stupefaction, it might be helpful to historicize the term (and this book) in relation to debates with clearly defined ideological investments. Since the 1960s performance has floated free of theater precincts to describe an enormous range of cultural activity. “Performance” can refer to popular entertainments, speech acts, folklore, political demonstrations, conference behavior, rituals, medical and religious healing, and aspects of everyday life. This terminological expansion has been produced and abetted by a variety of theorists whose critique of the Enlightenment cogito as fully self-present cause them to view their own critical acts as performative – as indeterminate signifying “play” or as self-reflexive, non-referential “scenes” of writing. Moreover, because it appears to cut across and renegotiate institutional boundaries, as well as those of race,

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gender, class, and national identity, performance has become a convenient concept for postmodernism. It has also become a way for skeptics of postmodernism to excoriate what Raymond Williams has called our “dramatized” society, in which the world, via electronics, is recreated as a seamlessly produced performance.

This focus on performance has produced provocative debates among theater theorists about the political status of theater in relation to performance.⁴ Among early experimental groups like Beck and Malina’s Living Theater, Joseph Chaikin’s The Open Theater, Ed Bullins’s and Robert Macbeth’s New Lafayette Theater, Richard Schechner’s The Performing Garage, Richard Foreman’s Ontological-Hysteric Theater, Barbara Ann Teer’s National Black Theater; in journals like *TDR* (*The Drama Review*, formerly *Tulane Drama Review*) and *Performing Arts Journal*; and in mid-1960s poststructuralist theorizing (Barthes on Brecht, Derrida on Artaud), performance came to be defined in opposition to theater structures and conventions. In brief, theater was charged with obeisance to the playwright’s authority, with actors disciplined to the referential task of representing fictional entities. In this narrative, spectators are similarly disciplined, duped into identifying with the psychological problems of individual egos and ensnared in a unique temporal-spatial world whose suspense, reversals, and deferrals they can more or less comfortably decode. Performance, on the other hand, has been honored with dismantling textual authority, illusionism, and the canonical actor in favor of the polymorphous body of the performer. Refusing the conventions of role-playing, the performer presents herself/himself as a sexual, permeable, tactile body, scourging audience narrativity along with the barrier between stage and spectator.⁵ Theater collectives of the 1960s were greatly influenced by Artaud and by experimentation across the arts. They and their enthusiastic theorists believed that in freeing the actor’s body and eliminating aesthetic distance, they could raise political consciousness among spectators and even produce new communal structures. In performance theory of the late 1970s, the group affirmation of “being there” tends to celebrate the self-sufficient performing instant. In performance theory of the 1980s, consciousness-raising drops away (totalizing definitions of consciousness are, after all, suspect).⁶ In line with poststructuralist claims of the death of the author, the focus in performance today has shifted from authority to effect, from text to body, to the spectator’s freedom to make and transform meanings.

Feminist performance criticism has been vitally sensitive to both sides of this debate. Feminists have wondered whether performance can forget its links to theater traditions, any more than, say, deconstruction can forget logocentrism. As Brecht understood, theater’s representation apparatus – with its curtains, trapdoors, perspectives, exits and entrances, its disciplined bodies, its illusorily coherent subjects, its lures to identification – might offer the best “laboratory” for political disruption, for refunctioning the tools of class and gender oppression.⁷ But feminists also know that highly personal, theory-

sensitive performance art, with its focus on embodiment (the body's social text), promotes a heightened awareness of cultural difference, of historical specificity, of sexual preference, of racial and gender boundaries and transgressions. This dialectic has been a focusing element for performers and theorists who want both political consciousness-raising and "erotic agency," the pleasure of transgressive desire.⁸ Without resolving this dialectic, we might observe that if contemporary versions of performance make it the repressed of conventional theater, theater is also the repressed of performance. Certainly powerful questions posed by theater representation – questions of subjectivity (who is speaking/acting?), location (in what sites/spaces?), audience (who is watching?), commodification (who is in control?), conventionality (how are meanings produced?), politics (what ideological or social positions are being reinforced or contested?) – are embedded in the bodies and acts of performers. To study performance is not to focus on completed forms, but to become aware of performance as itself a contested space, where meanings and desires are generated, occluded, and of course multiply interpreted. Such discussion helps situate this anthology's relation to "performativity" and to cultural studies.

PERFORMATIVITY/PERFORMANCE

Poststructuralist conceptions of the human subject as decentered by language and unconscious desire, and postmodern rejections of foundational discourses (especially totalizing conceptions of gender, race, or national identity) have all made performance and performativity crucial critical tropes, whose relatedness I want briefly to explore. In a runner-up article to her ground-breaking *Gender Trouble*, Judith Butler uses performance to underscore the fictionality of an ontologically stable and coherent gender identity. Gender is rather a "stylized repetition of acts . . . which are internally discontinuous . . . [so that] the appearance of substance is precisely that, a constructed identity, a performative accomplishment which the mundane social audience, including the actors themselves, come to believe and to perform in the mode of belief."⁹ Butler's point is not that gender is just an act, but that gender is materially "performative": it "is real only to the extent that it is performed."¹⁰ Performativity derives from J.L. Austin's concept of the performative utterance which does not refer to an extra-linguistic reality but rather enacts or produces that to which it refers. This anti-essentialism pushes past constructionism. It's not just that gender is culturally determined and historically contingent, but rather that "it" doesn't exist unless it's being done. And yet the intractable existence of the cultural ideologies of gender is marked by Butler in the word "repetition"; gender is the "stylized repetition of acts . . ." Or, put another way, the "act that one does, the act that one performs is, in a sense, an act that has been going on before one arrived on the scene."¹¹ Gender, then, is both a doing – a performance that puts a conventional gender attributes into

possibly disruptive play – and a thing done – a pre-existing oppressive category. It is a cultural apparatus that coerces certain social acts and excludes others across what Butler calls "culturally intelligible grids of an idealized and compulsory heterosexuality."¹²

When being is de-essentialized, when gender and even race are understood as fictional ontologies, modes of expression without true substance, the idea of performance comes to the fore. But performance both *affirms and denies this evacuation of substance*. In the sense that the "I" has no interior secure ego or core identity, "I" must always enunciate itself: there is only performance of a self, not an external representation of an interior truth. But in the sense that I do my performance in public, for spectators who are interpreting and/or performing with me, there are real effects, meanings solicited or imposed that produce relations in the real. Can performance make a difference? A performance, whether it inspires love or loathing, often consolidates cultural or subcultural affiliations, and these affiliations might be as regressive as they are progressive. The point is, as soon as performativity comes to rest on a performance, questions of embodiment, of social relations, of ideological interpellations, of emotional and political effects, all become discussable.

Interestingly, in Butler's more recent *Bodies That Matter*, performativity moves closer to Derridean citationality, operating within a matrix of discursive norms, and further from discrete performances that *enact* those norms in particular sites with particular effects. For Butler, "cultural norms" materialize sex, not the body of a given performer, even though she wishes at the outset to pose the problematic of agency. Noting that performativity in *Gender Trouble* seemed to instantiate a humanist subject who could choose her gender and then perform it, Butler is careful here not to personify norms, discourse, language, or the social as new subjects of the body's sentencing. Rather she deconstructively elaborates a temporality of reiteration as that which instantiates gender, sex, and even the body's material presence. "There is no power that acts, but only a reiterated acting that is power in its persistence and instability,"¹³ and again, "performativity is thus not a singular 'act,' for it is always a reiteration of a norm or set of norms, and to the extent that it acquires an act-like status in the present, it conceals or dissimulates the conventions of which it is a repetition."¹⁴ Performance, as I have tried to suggest, is precisely the site in which concealed or dissimulated conventions might be investigated. When performativity materializes as performance in that risky and dangerous negotiation between a doing (a reiteration of norms) and a thing done (discursive conventions that frame our interpretations), between someone's body and the conventions of embodiment, we have access to cultural meanings and critique. Performativity, I would suggest, must be rooted in the materiality and historical density of performance.

PERFORMANCE AND CULTURAL STUDIES

Performance as rite, ritual, specialized play has always been a privileged locus of anthropological investigation. In this discourse, culture complexly enunciates itself in performance, reiterates values, reaffirms community, and creates, in Victor Turner's words, sites of "liminality" with which to broach and resolve crises.¹⁵ In Turner's concept of the "social drama" (encompassing breach—crisis—redress—outcome) and in Richard Schechner's performance models, liminality both interrupts and sustains cultural networks, tending to reaffirm an organic model for the understanding of culture.¹⁶ Postmodern skepticism about all totalizing metanarratives challenges such descriptions. In the words of contemporary ethnographer James Clifford: "Twentieth-century identities no longer presuppose continuous cultures or traditions. Everywhere individuals and groups improvise local performances from (re)collected pasts, drawing on foreign media, symbols, and languages"; and again, "'culture' is not an object to be described, neither is it a unified corpus of symbols and meanings that can be definitively interpreted. Culture is contested, temporal, and emergent."¹⁷ Performance as I have been developing it in this introduction — performance with its representational and ideological traces remembered — is an important component of culture so defined. In performance, and in the developing field of Performance Studies (see Roach for an excellent discussion), signifying (meaning-ful) acts may enable new subject positions and new perspectives to emerge, even as the performative present contests the conventions and assumptions of oppressive cultural habits. As Stuart Hall puts it, cultural practices (such as performance) are "interwoven with all social practices; and those practices, in turn, [with] sensuous human praxis, the activity through which men and women make their own history."

In British cultural studies (from its emergence at the University of Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Culture in 1964), the analysis of cultural texts, was conceived as both historically specific and interventionist. Taking culture as the struggle for meaning in class-bound industrial societies, the work of Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall, John Fiske, and Angela McRobbie was, in its Marxian negotiations, avowedly political.¹⁸ Cultural analysis might not only read "general causes" and "broad social trends" behind the practices of everyday life, it could *produce* consciousness, make meanings, provoke contestation. "Social relations," notes Stuart Hall, "require meanings and frameworks [cultural arrangements] which underpin them and hold them in place."¹⁹ Cultural studies seeks to link the humanities, social sciences, arts, and political economy. It ranges from early study of working-class culture and popular traditions, through work on subcultures and media studies, to work on racism, hegemony, and feminist revisioning of earlier subcultural work, and on to (on both sides of the Atlantic), work on representation, postcolonial identity, difference, "othering," and the AIDS crisis. As Renato Rosaldo puts it, "Whether speaking about shopping in a super-

market, the aftermath of nuclear war, Elizabethan self-fashioning, or ritual among the Ndembu of central Africa, work in cultural studies sees human worlds as constructed through historical and political processes, and not as brute timeless facts of nature."²⁰

In the United States, where academics on the left have long been divorced from public traditions of progressive social practice, cultural-studies battles have recently been waged around the question of interdisciplinarity in universities. Cultural studies has come to mean not just the reading of popular culture texts and practices in relation to structures of power, but a resistance to institutional boundaries and hierarchies. (Charges of "political correctness" reflect the wish to prohibit this putative politicization of — and the exposure of political processes at work in — academic departments and institutions.) Cultural studies is at the heart of such contestations (at the time of this writing, such *losing* contestations), not only because it questions traditional canons and disciplinary formations, but because it causes scholars on the left to evaluate what they are doing and why. As bell hooks reminds us, cultural studies in U.S. universities might become a crucial site of vigilance against the vagueness of "multiculturalism." The attempted shifts in curricular direction (for example, literature syllabi including works by people of color) will, she notes, "transform the academy only if they are informed by non-racist perspectives, only if these subjects are approached from a standpoint that interrogates issues of domination and power."²¹ This underscoring of relations between pedagogy and cultural politics was a motivation in the making of this book.

PERFORMANCE AND CULTURAL POLITICS

It is no coincidence that debates about cultural studies arise at about the same time that "performance" gains critical currency; indeed performance in all its hybridity would seem to make the best case for interdisciplinary thinking.²² And yet, while Michel Benamou named "performance" the "unifying mode of the postmodern," the early texts of cultural studies have focused more on mass media's invasion of the cultural, and, as a political response, on resistant styles, subcultures or rituals that introduce "noise" in the hegemonic status quo. The recent *Cultural Studies* (Routledge 1992) and *The Cultural Studies Reader* (Routledge 1993) generally blindside performance as a slightly less significant cultural practice.

In planning this book, I wanted performance critics and artists to move beyond explicit theater contexts and confront performance issues within structures of power. In other words, I sought to stage a dialogue between performance and cultural studies. Despite differences in subject matter and style, and with varying degrees of intensity, these essays exemplify what I understand to be basic to a cultural-studies (or indeed a performance-studies) project. One, a concern with the historical, cultural, and political specificity of the object of study. Two, a corollary concern with authorial performance — what

Rebecca Schneider calls the subject/writer's *complicity* with her object: an engagement with her own embodied specificity, her habits of seeing and desiring. Here the critique of performance merges with the performance of critique as a deliberate project of self-reflexiveness, projection, and fantasy (see especially Dicker/sun, Schneider, Foster, Phelan, and Blau). Three, a reflection on identity and difference as politically inflected but mobile terms that make space for, rather than close off, new critical territories.

In Part I, "Re-sexing Culture: Stereotype, Pose, and Dildo," Emily Apter and Ed Cohen each take issue with Butler's concept of performativity, not by returning to the "truth-regime[s]" of sex and gender, but by exploring the interplay between subjectivity, artifice, and cultural history. In Apter's "Acting Out Orientalism: Sapphic Theatricality in Turn-of-the-Century Paris," the stereotype not only functions as a form of outing in specific lesbian sub-cultures, it labors theoretically as "the Achilles heel of performativity . . . a kind of psychic ossification that reassimilates subjective novelties into the doxa." In Cohen's "Posing the Question: Wilde, Wit, and the Ways of Man," posing is "an embodied question" that dangerously disturbs late-Victorian doxa on masculinity while allowing Wilde to live out, and temporarily market, the social contradictions of his sexuality. In Lynda Hart's "Doing It Anyway: Lesbian Sado-Masochism and Performance," the dildo not only poses a question to gender ontology, it introduces and eroticizes a "representational crisis" in the lesbian imaginary, for the phallus (and the symbolic order it maintains) is, Hart notes, "never where it appears." Cited by Apter, but threading through all three essays, is the late Craig Owen's important formulation on posing: "the subject poses as an object in order to be a subject." In transgressive sexualities, acts of self-objectification may be one complex yet pleasurable way of "pretending an identity into existence."

I noted at the outset that performance, as a doing and a thing done, drifts between past and present, presence and absence, consciousness and memory. In Part II, "Grave Performances: The Cultural Politics of Memory," Peggy Phelan, Vivian Patraaka, and Glenda Dicker/sun, show us that memory performed is an occasion for national and cultural mythmaking. In Phelan's "Playing Dead in Stone, or, When is a Rose not a Rose?," more is dug up than the remains of the Rose Theatre at a commercial site on London's South Bank. In her "psychoanalysis of excavation," Phelan performatively reads the signs of cultural homophobia in parliamentary posturing. Stalking the Rose are the ghosts not only of Oscar Wilde and Christopher Marlowe, but of gay men dying of AIDS. Dennis Hollier's notion (paraphrased by Phelan) that "the invention of architecture was motivated by a desire to forestall and forget death" might serve as an epigraph to Patraaka's "Spectacles of Suffering: Performing Presence, Absence, and Traumatic History at U.S. Holocaust Museums." The Washington and Los Angeles museums, in their fundraising, in their appeal to democratic institutions, in their very design, attempt to re-member the dead by stimulating or constraining acts of memory in their

visitors. Patraaka's essay deploys a series of fascinating contrasts – between, for example, de Certeau's concept of space and place, between a room of disintegrating shoes taken from concentration-camp victims and a room of computer-synchronized exhibits that attempt to "manage" mass annihilation. In Glenda Dicker/sun's "Festivities and Jubilations on the Graves of the Dead: Sanctifying Sullied Space," unmarked graves are again disturbed, but this writer's "hovering" ghosts are the defiled and forgotten drylongso (ordinary) citizens of cultural memory, the lost black communities she summons and re-embodies in three performances crafted from oral histories: a "live oak drama" on St. Simons Island, a "living portrait" in Setauket, N.Y., and a "play scrap" in Newark, N.J. Seeking space for the "uppity Black woman," Dicker/sun is a self-conscious secular charismatic, sanctifying what racism has sullied. Yet to sanctify is to lose nothing of the history that has dirtied her ancestors. Rather she re-inhabits that history, walking with Langston Hughes on the northbound road, making legible and visible a cultural imaginary that is still effaced in official discourse.

Part III, "Moving/Seeing: Bodies and Technologies," explores the viscera of performance, its corporeal and visual pleasures. Foster's "Pygmalion's No-Body and the Body of Dance" treats the three ballet versions of the Pygmalion story and finds in the reigning corporeal conventions a subterranean narrative of pre- and post-Revolutionary subjectivity. This narrative includes the signifying of interiority, of gender idealizations, and culminates, in the nineteenth century, in stereotypic marketed displays, in which the body was divorced from emotional expressivity. In the original performance of this piece, at an MLA panel in 1992, Foster danced her essay; here italics dance with conventional typeface as the critic seeks to embody her long-dead choreographers without "fixing a body of facts like Milton's immovable Galathea." In "After Us the Savage Goddess: Feminist Performance Art of the Explicit Body Staged, Uneasily, Across Modernist Dreamscapes" Rebecca Schneider finds herself in the eye of the hurricane and imagines new feminist configurations of Yeats's millennial modernist prophecy (upon seeing Jarry's excretory surrealist *Ubu Roi*): "after us the savage god." For Schneider, feminist performance art, from Carolee Schneeman's vaginal scrolls to Annie Sprinkle's cervical peep-show, presents a cultural politics that refigures modernism's traditional whore/objects. Writing herself into community with these performers, Schneider revises the end of Bataille's *Eye/Body* as "perspectivalism on the flip." While photography is Herbert Blau's technology of choice, "Flat-Out Vision" works dialectically with Schneider's essay in its eulogy to modernist seeing: the flat-out vision that, like Ibsen's "devastating realism," eludes the mediations of political captioning or, as Blau puts it, the "vanities of critique." Where Schneider finds in the explicit body a means of reversing the dissecting modernist gaze, Blau argues that the image, far from framing and occluding the body (or object), can be neither fixed nor read; its details constantly recede in the "viscissitudes of light." Philip Auslander's "Liveness: Performance

and the Anxiety of Simulation” reminds us that in our technoculture, performance’s corporeality, like the difference between seeing and not-seeing or “perspectivalism on the flip,” may just be as an effect of “mediatization.” Using Milli Vanilli and Eric Clapton on MTV’s “Unplugged” as studies in the political operations of capital and simulation, Auslander dissects and extends Baudrillard’s theories, showing that “liveness,” performance’s most precious commodity, need have nothing to do with the living.

In Part IV, “Identity Politics: Law and Performance,” performance abets the making of racist traditions and legal history. Joseph Roach’s “Kinship, Intelligence, and Memory as Improvisation: Culture and Performance in New Orleans” offers a rich genealogy of performance studies linked to an investigation of the Mardi Gras krewes of late-nineteenth-century New Orleans. Roach demonstrates how the krewes’ rites of passage produced a ludicrous but deadly serious performance of identity. In hybrid societies like that of New Orleans, performance becomes the “principle mode whereby cultures produce themselves in the face of those whose exclusion defines by contrast the status of the elect.” Roach cites and Amy Robinson focuses on *Plessy versus Ferguson*, the case in which a performance of deliberate passing intended to challenge Louisiana’s Jim Crow accommodations law allowed the Supreme Court, in 1896, to make “separate but equal” official U.S. law. In her “Forms of the Appearance of Value: Homer Plessy and the Politics of Privacy,” Robinson argues that when Plessy’s lawyer claimed that Plessy’s “whiteness” was his property, and thus constitutionally protected, he misunderstood “the performative logic of the pass” – the Justices decided that Plessy was stealing. From this she suggests that the right-to-privacy concept in gay-rights advocacy commits a besieged community to the same flawed Lockean notion of identity as property. The natural rights of a self-owning subject, Robinson argues, have never protected those whom dominant culture has deemed “unnatural.”

Placing the reflections of a “real” performance artist at the end of the book gives Robbie McCauley, in “Thoughts on My Career, *The Other Weapon*, and Other Projects,” the elect and lonely status of sharing the rubric, “Performer/Performance,” with no one. It’s not that McCauley’s brilliant work on stage makes her unique, but that her own selective oral history helps recapitulate the ways in which performance, as one crucial practice in the making of culture, is inseparable from politics and history. As narrator of her “performance-theater” career, McCauley is both actor and director, doer and namer, a performer of personal tales in self-consciously politicized spaces.

Always a master of the “talkback,” McCauley helps me close with some reflections on intratextual talkback in this anthology, beyond the connections I have indicated above. Not only are racist and homophobic logics deconstructed through most of these essays, there are quieter echoings. The artifacts of veneration in Dicker/sun’s Setauket piece, the “photographs, paintings, family Bibles . . .” seem to redeem the artifacts of mourning, the “photographs,

eyeglasses, shoes” in the Holocaust museum (Patraka), and the “coins, jewelry, shoes, and hazelnut shells” in the ruins of the Rose (Phelan). Similarly, survivor testimony in Patraka’s essay speaks to Dicker/sun’s gathering of communal voices and to McCauley’s after-show discussions. Affixing a caption in Blau resonates with “fixing” the pose in Cohen and “the real” in Hart; and Auslander’s discussion of mediatized performance glosses Patraka’s analysis of simulated histories. Apter joins Foster, Schneider, Roach, and Robinson in providing a cultural panorama for performances of identity and difference. Dicker/sun and McCauley give two versions of making performances, McCauley and Auslander offer different perspectives on post-1960s acting, and McCauley guides us back to Apter: “Rather than avoid stereotypes, I study them.”

Intratextual dialogue is of course one of the pleasures of reading a text of many voices. It is my hope the reader will carry on making these connections, in which case *Performance and Cultural Politics* will be both a doing and a thing done.

NOTES

- 1 See *The American Heritage Dictionary* definition for performance: “1. The act of performing . . . and 5. Something performed: an accomplishment; a deed.”
- 2 The notion that historical memory is embedded in the performative present is a constant theme in Herbert Blau’s work. See, for example, “Universals of Performance,” in *The Eye of Prey* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987): “So long . . . as there is performance to be referred to *as such* it occurs within a circumference of representation with its tangential, ecliptic, and encyclical lines of power. What blurs in the immanence of seeing are the features of that power. . . .”
- 3 See Henry Sayre’s discussion of “presentness” in *The Object of Performance: The American Avant-Garde since 1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p.9 ff. For a different perspective, see Peggy Phelan’s “The Ontology of Performance,” in *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 146–66.
- 4 The performance/theater inquiry has been a thematic in Blau’s writing since *Blooded Thought: Occasions of Theater* (Performing Acts Journal Publications, 1982). For a recent look at these issues in the academy, see Jill Dolan, “Geographies of Learning: Theater Studies, Performance, and the ‘Performative,’” *Theater Journal*, 45. 4 (Dec. 1993): 417–41. Much of what Dolan envisions for a reconfigured “Theater Studies” is compatible with my sense of a performance criticism that attends to the specificity of theater. For an earlier brief discussion of theater as a discipline in the postmodern academy, see Sue-Ellen Case’s introduction to *Performing Feminisms* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), pp.1–13.
- 5 Consider the early work of performance artists Carolee Schneemann, Valie Export, Linda Montano, Eleanor Antin, Chris Burden, Vito Acconci, among others. For an influential articulation of the postmodern body in performance, see Josette Féral, “Performance and Theatricality: The Subject Demystified,” *Modern Drama* 25.1 (1982): 170–81. See David Roman’s recent discussion of Féral’s piece in “Performing All Our Lives: AIDS, Performance, Community,”

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- in Janelle G. Reinelt and Joseph R. Roach, *Critical Theory and Performance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), pp. 208–21.
- 6 See Bonnie Marranca on “being there” in *Theatre of Images* (New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1977), p. xii.
 - 7 See Sue-Ellen Case, *Feminism and Theatre* (London: Routledge, 1988), p.132. See also my “Brechtian Theory/Feminist Theory: Toward a Gestic Feminist Criticism,” *The Drama Review (TDR)*(Spring 1988): 82–94.
 - 8 Jeannie Forté’s phrase in “Focus on the Body: Pain, Praxis, and Pleasure in Feminist Performance,” in Roach and Reinelt’s *Critical Theory and Performance*, pp. 248–62. Consider the work since the 1980s of Karen Finley, Holly Hughes, Split Britches (Lois Weaver, Peggy Shaw, Deb Marolin), among others.
 - 9 Judith Butler, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory,” in Case, *Performing Feminisms*, pp. 270–1.
 - 10 *Ibid.*, p. 278.
 - 11 *Ibid.*, pp. 270, 277.
 - 12 Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 135.
 - 13 Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 9.
 - 14 Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, p. 12.
 - 15 See Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play* (Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982).
 - 16 See Richard Schechner, “Towards a Poetics of Performance,” in *Essays on Performance Theory* (New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1977), pp. 120 ff., and in *The End of Humanism: Writings on Performance* (PAJ, 1982). For a good discussion of Schechner’s anthropological convergences, see Susan Bennett, *Theatre Audiences* (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 133 ff.
 - 17 James Clifford and George E. Marcus, eds., *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), p. 19. See the important work on performance written in the context of postmodernism and the new ethnography, under the rubric “Cultural Studies,” in Roach and Reinelt, *Critical Theory and Performance*, including Roach’s introduction. See especially Sandra Richards’s “Under the ‘Trickster’s’ Sign: Toward a Reading of Ntozake Shange and Femi Osofisan,” in which she theorizes a “diaspora literacy” (66) in our reception of Shange’s appropriation of Yoruba traditions of divination.
 - 18 For his initial ambivalence about marxism, see Stuart Hall, “Cultural Studies and its Theoretical Legacies,” in Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, Paula Treichler, *Cultural Studies* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 279 ff.
 - 19 Cited in Dick Hebdige, *Subculture* (London: Methuen, 1979), p. 7.
 - 20 Renato Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth: the Remaking of Social Analysis* (Bosron: Beacon Press, 1989).
 - 21 bell hooks, “Culture to Culture: Ethnography and Cultural Studies as Critical Intervention,” in *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (Boston: South End Press, 1990), p. 131.
 - 22 Martin Barker and Anne Beezer’s *Reading Into Cultural Studies* (London: Routledge, 1992) expresses dissatisfaction with current cultural-studies projects based on ethnographic studies of audience, and the concomitant move away from text-based ideology and class critique of the Williams and Hall variety. This coincides with the terminological expansion of performance, and its drift away from theater. The political inflections of this volume come from queries into representation as well as demonstrations of performativity. See, for example, Emily Apter’s discussion of the stereotype in Chapter 2.