

methuen | drama

7

8

9

theatre & war

Natalie Alvarez

9

8

7



theatre & war

Theatre &

Series Editors: Jen Harvie and Dan Rebellato

Published

Joel Anderson: *Theatre & Photography*

Vicky Angelaki: *Theatre & Environment*

Susan Bennett: *Theatre & Museums*

Bill Blake: *Theatre & the Digital*

Marvin Carlson: *Theatre & Islam*

Colette Conroy: *Theatre & the Body*

Emma Cox: *Theatre & Migration*

Jim Davis: *Theatre & Entertainment*

Jill Dolan: *Theatre & Sexuality*

Kate Elswit: *Theatre & Dance*

Emine Fisek: *Theatre & Community*

Helen Freshwater: *Theatre & Audience*

Jen Harvie: *Theatre & the City*

Nadine Holdsworth: *Theatre & Nation*

Erin Hurley: *Theatre & Feeling*

Dominic Johnson: *Theatre & the Visual*

Joe Kelleher: *Theatre & Politics*

Ric Knowles: *Theatre & Interculturalism*

David Kornhaber: *Theatre & Knowledge*

Petra Kuppers: *Theatre & Disability*

Margherita Laera: *Theatre & Translation*

Yair Lipshitz: *Theatre & Judaism*

Brian Lobel: *Theatre & Cancer*

Patrick Lonergan: *Theatre & Social Media*

Caoimhe McAvinchey: *Theatre & Prison*

Bruce McConachie: *Theatre & Mind*

Lucy Nevitt: *Theatre & Violence*

Helen Nicholson: *Theatre & Education*

Lourdes Orozco: *Theatre & Animals*

Lionel Pilkington: *Theatre & Ireland*

Benjamin Poore: *Theatre & Empire*

Paul Rae: *Theatre & Human Rights*

Alan Read: *Theatre & Law*

Dan Rebellato: *Theatre & Globalization*

Trish Reid: *Theatre & Scotland*

Nicholas Ridout: *Theatre & Ethics*

Jo Robinson: *Theatre & The Rural*

Mark Robson: *Theatre & Death*

Juliet Rufford: *Theatre & Architecture*

Elizabeth Schafer: *Theatre & Christianity*

Rebecca Schneider: *Theatre & History*

Lara Shalson: *Theatre & Protest*

Kim Solga: *Theatre & Feminism*

Konstantinos Thomaidis: *Theatre & Voice*

Fintan Walsh: *Theatre & Therapy*

Eric Weitz: *Theatre & Laughter*

David Wiles: *Theatre & Time*

Harvey Young: *Theatre & Race*

Keren Zaiontz: *Theatre & Festivals*

Forthcoming

Stanton B. Garner, Jr.: *Theatre & Medicine*



**theatre &
war**

Natalie Álvarez

methuen | drama

LONDON • NEW YORK • OXFORD • NEW DELHI • SYDNEY

METHUEN DRAMA

Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

50 Bedford Square, London, WC1B 3DP, UK

1385 Broadway, New York, NY 10018, USA

29 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, Ireland

BLOOMSBURY, METHUEN DRAMA and the Methuen Drama logo are trademarks of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

First published in Great Britain 2023

Copyright © Natalie Álvarez, 2023

Foreword © Christian Cameron, 2023

Series Editors' Preface © Jen Harvie and Dan Rebellato, 2023

Natalie Álvarez has asserted her right under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as author of this work.

For legal purposes the Acknowledgements on p. 91 constitute an extension of this copyright page.

Cover design and image: Liron Gilenberg | www.ironicalitics.com

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publishers.

Bloomsbury Publishing Plc does not have any control over, or responsibility for, any third-party websites referred to or in this book. All internet addresses given in this book were correct at the time of going to press. The author and publisher regret any inconvenience caused if addresses have changed or sites have ceased to exist, but can accept no responsibility for any such changes.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

ISBN: PB: 978-1-1375-8425-0

ePDF: 978-1-1375-8426-7

eBook: 978-1-1375-8427-4

Series: Theatre &

Typeset by Deanta Global Publishing Services, Chennai, India

To find out more about our authors and books visit www.bloomsbury.com and sign up for our newsletters.

In loving memory of my father, Eduardo Álvarez (1929–2018)



Contents

<i>Series editors' preface</i>	ix
<i>Foreword</i>	xi
<i>Author's preface</i>	xiii
Theatres for war	1
Theatres of war	7
Rehearsals	11
Body as battlefield	23
Spectacle & spectatorship	36
Hearts & minds	50
Postmortem	62
Conclusion	70
<i>Notes</i>	73
<i>Further reading</i>	82
<i>Bibliography</i>	86

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	91
<i>Author index</i>	93
<i>Subject index</i>	96



Series editors' preface

The theatre is everywhere, from entertainment districts to the fringes, from the rituals of government to the ceremony of the courtroom, from the spectacle of the sporting arena to the theatres of war. Across these many forms stretches a theatrical continuum through which cultures both assert and question themselves.

Theatre has been around for thousands of years, and the ways we study it have changed decisively. It's no longer enough to limit our attention to the canon of Western dramatic literature. Theatre has taken its place within a broad spectrum of performance, connecting it with the wider forces of ritual and revolt that thread through so many spheres of human culture. In turn, this has helped make connections across disciplines; over the past fifty years, theatre and performance have been deployed as key metaphors and practices with which to rethink gender, economics, war, language, the fine arts, culture and one's sense of self.

Theatre & is a long series of short books which hopes to capture the restless interdisciplinary energy of theatre and performance. Each book explores connections between theatre and some aspect of the wider world, asking how the theatre might illuminate the world and how the world might illuminate the theatre. Each book is written by a leading theatre scholar and represents the cutting edge of critical thinking in the discipline.

We have been mindful, however, that the philosophical and theoretical complexity of much contemporary academic writing can act as a barrier to a wider readership. A key aim for these books is that they should all be readable in one sitting by anyone with a curiosity about the subject. The books are challenging, pugnacious, visionary sometimes and, above all, clear. We hope you enjoy them.

Jen Harvie and Dan Rebellato



Foreword

It is my great pleasure to provide a brief foreword for Professor Álvarez's brilliant monograph *Theatre & War*, the more especially as I was favoured with some of her earliest thoughts and questions on the subject. War and performance are far more closely linked than might be expected; military fashions are often more oriented to theatrical performance than killing efficiency,¹ and intentional theatrical performance has owed a surprising debt to war and the practice of war since the dawn of medieval tournaments and Arthurian 'Round Tables'² that helped spur the invention of modern commercial theatre and opera.

As Professor Álvarez thoroughly and brilliantly evokes, despite the brevity of the work, theatre and war are worth studying together; however much we may be revulsed by the association of the immorality of conflict with the magical ability of theatre to 'speak truth to power', the two have a long-shared history whose exploration can

cause us to appreciate performance in a new and surprising light and should also, perhaps, force military historians to recognize the cultural artefacts that often lie unrecognized in ‘battlefield surveys’ and ‘army lists’.

From the strong alliance of ancient Greek theatrical performance and the *hoplite ethos* through Duke Vespasiano’s stage for combats in Sabbioneta in the sixteenth century, to Yoshua Okón’s 2011 *Octopus* staged in the parking lot of a Home Depot recreating experiences in Guatemala’s civil war, Professor Álvarez takes us on a whirlwind tour of a surprisingly deep and satisfyingly complex locus in the intersectionality of history and culture that should provoke debate and inspire further study.

Christian Cameron

Toronto, 2020