

## Editorial

Politics holds a multiplicity of meanings in the context of theatre scholarship, much like the terms 'theatre' and 'performance'. This issue of *Platform* engages with the many ways in which understandings, appropriations, and methodological iterations of these three terms are in conversation. The political has been approached both thematically and structurally through and in relation to theatre and performance. This has manifested itself through ontological and structural questionings of representation, spectatorship, ideology, and subversion both on and off the stage. Theatre, performance, and politics have been theorised in relation to questions of visibility and structure, from power dynamics through to thematic constructions, interplays between form and content, performer and spectator, and dramaturgy and representation.

Thinking through the political provides an opportunity to consider the ways in which a discipline and set of cultural landscapes might operate in dialogue with, relationship to, and influence from political practice. The theme of this issue brought forth a variety of submissions, ranging from the connection between the arts and UK legislature, the politics that are created and exposed in rehearsal spaces, and body politics in contemporary performance practices.

We have decided to open the issue with Mathilde Pavis' article 'Is There Any-*body* on Stage? A Legal (mis)Understanding of Performances,' because of its strikingly interdisciplinary approach. Coming from the discipline of Law, Pavis highlights the lack of intellectual property rights of performers in contemporary jurisprudence. This absence is traced back to historical arguments in aesthetic philosophy, which both favoured text and saw performers as mere puppets for said text. In doing so, 'Is There Any-*body* on Stage?' is able to problematise legal discourse via the lens of Theatre

Studies.

The rehearsal room can certainly be a place for heightened interpersonal politics. Christopher O'Shaughnessy examines just this in, 'Writing *Red*: The Politics of Creativity,' a vivid description of the pressure-cooker environment of making a play in twenty-four hours. Positioned after the playtext for *Red*, this deeply personal article details how a group of strangers negotiate their practice together for the first time and the art they made because of it.

Katie Laver's contribution, 'The Political Body in New Circus and Contemporary Circus Arts: Embodied Protest, Materiality, and Active Spectatorship,' draws connections between embodied political protest from the early twentieth century through to the late 1960s, highlighting the influence on New Circus practices from the mid century up to the 1990s. Focusing on the work of Circus Oz, Philippe Petit, and Philippe Menard, Lavers aligns New Circus with practices in performance art which privilege the human body as the site of performance spectacle and interaction and that both thereby politicise individual materiality and identities.

Lastly, in 'Self-Definition, Name Calling, and the Limits of Language: Examining the Economics of Arts Council England 1996/97-1012/13,' Joe Mcloughlin explores the linguistic shift that has occurred in the Art's Council of England's Annual reviews in the 2000s. Mcloughlin argues that this shift demonstrates a change under the New Labour government of 1997-2010, which saw Arts Council England become more focused on obtaining a financial return on their investments. This last article rounds out the issue's varied approach to the political in relationship to how theatre is made and performances are mediated.

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Will Shüler and James Rowson, Editors