

ABSTRACTS

No.1

APPLIED THEATRE: PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES

By Judith Ackroyd (UK)

This paper first considers the difficulty of determining the perimeters of the field of applied theatre, and proposes a grid made up of two continua measuring participation and transformation. The author then investigates the implications of intentionality in theatre and calls for vigilance. Will theatre always be employed for noble, humanitarian means?

Biography

Judith Ackroyd taught drama in secondary schools before moving into drama advisory work where she supported teachers in the primary as well as secondary phase. She is currently a senior lecturer in Drama at University College Northampton, UK. She has published widely in the field of drama in education, her most recent book being the edited *Literacy Alive: Drama projects for literacy learning*.

No.2

APPLIED THEATRE AND THE POWER PLAY - AN INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT

By Bjørn Rasmussen (Norway)

While celebrating a new Centre of "Applied theatre" education and research, this viewpoint takes on some poststructuralist glasses and discusses the issue of strategical choices and power plays connected to the development of drama or theatre research. In the Western history of arts and cultural development, the institutionalisation of authoritative subjects has created difficulties for cultural phenomena "in between", for instance the "applied" arts-educational-therapeutic practices of drama and theatre. One may question if the cultural criteria or "aesthetics" of this applied field are visible or valued at all. We should ask ourselves how language and the connotations as "applied" may help us to centre the cultural practices we share and its academic scrutinies. The strategy of a new centre must be to centre the marginal. This is not done by identifying a field applied "from the Theatre", however by destabilising some old power strategies in arts and research environment. The article points at certain hierarchical beliefs in Western cultures, and suggests that we should insist on working "horizontally" and not "vertically", also when arts, research and arts-like phenomena are considered."

Biography

Professor Bjørn Rasmussen works at Department of Arts and Media Studies, The Norwegian University of Science and Technology. He teaches drama education and has been engaged in the international development of drama research for many years. He has written books and articles, and works currently with drama theory based on post-structuralist ideas of cultural production. Bjørn Rasmussen was a Visiting Fellow in Brisbane 1999-2000

NO.3

'FORMWORK': A CASE STUDY OF A RESEARCH PROCESS

By David Wright (Australia)

Through reflection on an experience of participation in a cross-cultural performance based workshop I argue that such experiences are occasions for research into considerably more than performance styles. Issues of language, culture, learning and research methodology are among those that unfold. On such occasions research can become a physical and emotional experience. This can draw the researcher to examine the relationships that unfold and the senses through which those relationships are known, (as much as any styles and technical skills that may be involved). This brings the perspective from which the researcher views the subject matter sharply into focus. Just as the research process can take many forms, the way in which the research is known and communicated can also take many forms, the languages of performance and written language forms being only two of those forms. In this article, my reflections on my own experience are central to my study. As I chart my way through my relationship to the workshop process my own learning, and subsequent insights into the learning process, emerge as important legacies. My examination of the process reveals my learning, just like that of the performers who were more obviously physically involved, as based in my body. It suggests that the body, which is so obviously an intrinsic part of performance is also intrinsic to the learning that is taken away from the performance experience.

Biography

David Wright is a lecturer in the Social Ecology group in the Faculty of Social Inquiry at the University of Western Sydney, Hawkesbury. He has a background in writing for performance. His current research is pointing him towards ways of representing embodied experience in and through writing.

No.4

DOWN THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD

By Peter O'Connor (New Zealand)

Down the Yellow Brick Road traces the development of one drama teacher's praxis. In searching for ways to make meaningful drama with young offenders in Britain or children with special needs in New Zealand the author reflects on the tensions between playing drama for social change and drama as a process for telling stories.

Biography

Peter O'Connor currently manages the national project to counter stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness for the New Zealand Mental Health Foundation. Peter previously taught drama at secondary and tertiary levels. Peter has written numerous school drama texts and is currently enrolled in a research higher degree at Griffith University.

No.5

AN INFORMAL CONVERSATION WITH MAXINE GREENE: THE POWER OF AESTHETIC PARTNERSHIPS

By Philip Taylor (Australia)

An edited text based on Professor Greene's public conversation at the School Reform through the Arts Conference, Creative Arts Team, New York University, June, 1998. Those delegates who attended this forum were interested in the nature of arts partnerships in education and concerned with how recent New York funding initiatives on school reform were promoting effective partnerships between artists and educators. How do professional artists apply their craft in educational settings? What are the issues raised through these applications? These two questions guided the forum's deliberations.

Biography

Dr Maxine Greene is the William F. Russell Professor in the Foundations of Education (Emer.) and Professor of Philosophy and Education at Teachers College, where she still teaches courses in aesthetics, multiculturalism and philosophic inquiry. From 1976, she has served as "philosopher in residence" at the Lincoln Centre Institute for the Arts in Education; and she is a founder of the Centre for Social Imagination at Teachers College. She is past president of the Philosophy of Education Society, the American Education Studies Association and the American Educational Research Association. Her books include *Existential Encounters for Teachers*, *The Public School and the Private Vision*, *Teacher as Stranger*, *Landscapes of Learning*, *The Dialectic of Freedom*, and *Releasing the Imagination*. In 1998, Teachers College Press published *A Light in Dark Times: Maxine Greene and the Unfinished Conversation*, an anthology of Maxine's influence in arts and aesthetics, literature and literacy studies, cultural studies, women's studies, civil rights, and a range of other topics. In the same year, Falmer Press published *The Passionate Mind of Maxine Greene: 'I Am ... Not Yet'* by William Pinar.