2017

Introduction:The Impossible Modern Age

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A CULTURAL HISTORY
OF THEATRE

VOLUME 6

The term 'modern', similarly, implies a relation to past times and practices, but it functions as a historiography, a methodological move that draws a line between past and present, and often renders these ideas in critical relation one to another. This dialectic – between what we understand as modern and what we do not, or between what our culture wishes to believe is modern *about us* in relation to what came before us / is other than us – has been one of the subjects of greatest concern for artists at the theatre in the period we here call 'the modern age'. In chapter ten, Sarah Bay-Cheng tracks some of the ways in which artists investigate modern culture's preoccupation with memory and its rupture, with modernity's prized forward momentum as a function of memory's refusal or failure – even as artists, technicians, historians, and theorists remain preoccupied with the best ways to capture performance events more and more precisely on film or in digital files.[6] Questions about how cultures remember, and when and how they forget, reverberate across the century scarred by the Holocaust against the Jews, and form part of a larger artistic compulsion in the late modern period towards matters of social justice and the ethics of exploring them at the theatre. Artists interested in these issues, as Dassia Posner explains in chapter six, often deploy dialectical strategies as a tool of inquiry. Posner argues that theatre makers across the long twentieth century invested heavily in audience engagement and political activation, creating frameworks that would allow spectators to question their most revered social truths and traditions by making the binary divisions undergirding them visible on stage. The use of dialectics as a directorial strategy at the theatre was pioneered, Posner notes, in early Soviet Russia, and brought into the mainstream in Europe and the Anglosphere by Bertolt Brecht and those influenced by him. It is now standard fare for performers working in a range of traditions, from devised theatre to clown to puppetry.

The chapters in this volume all start from an understanding of modernity as culturally performed, fundamentally socially unequal, imbricated in relations of capital (and the often violent political machinations capitalism encourages), and therefore unstable, flexible, volatile, and for all this subject to powerful re-imaginings. Each chapter then looks differently at the several ways that theatre practitioners have negotiated – and helped the societies in which they take part to negotiate – the tenets of modernity. Because our authors do not begin from any other shared definition of 'the modern', the stories told in this volume are eclectic; some authors make provocative interventions into existing historical narratives about modern theatre and performance (for example, chapters one, four, and seven), while others challenge existing historiographical practices (for example, chapters five and eight). The larger picture that emerges may sometimes appear counterintuitive; this is intentional. The goal of this book is not to capture *the* story of the modern theatre, but rather to demonstrate emphatically the impossibility of such a task at this time. It aims instead to tell a wide range of stories about the way theatre (as an imagination-driven,

intensely political, highly social human art form) works alongside the paradoxes of human relations under cultural modernity, in order to illuminate and challenge but also to support and reinforce.

In light of our sometimes contrarian approach to this volume, the purpose of this introduction is to offer readers a set of coordinates, an aid to navigating our stories about the theatre of multiple ages-modern. I organize these coordinates around the following questions.

First, when and where is 'the modern age'? Modernity may be social rather than empirical, actively imagined into being rather than passively observed as an already-formed thing, but that does not mean that the modern age as we understand it does not come with a set of spatial and temporal markers. The modern, as it has been understood from Anglo-European perspectives, might begin during the continental Renaissance, or during the Enlightenment, or perhaps with the invention of the steam engine, but above all it connotes that which moves forward: it carries momentum, it is tomorrow and not yesterday. It is also spatially enactive: Anglo-European modernity, for example, organizes and grows cities but abandons rural townships; it is positioned as West and not East, North and not South. How does modern theatre and performance engage with these spatial and temporal markers, reinforce them, reframe them, or challenge them?[7]

Second, whose lives 'count' as 'modern'? Although modernity's progress narrative promises net benefit for all, in fact modernity's founding ideology is organized around a division between the human beings (philosophers, economists, robber-barons, scientists, technological innovators) understood as its practitioners, and human beings labelled pre-modern (typically because they live outside the spaces demarcated as modern, whether geographically or culturally). In Albanese's terms they are 'othered'; in the language of modern capitalism, they are not developers, but 'developing'). As the previous volume in this series demonstrates, the Age of Empire was driven by the modernizing impulse otherwise known as colonialism: the arrival of European settlers in vast numbers in North America, Australasia, and (along with brutal conquering armies) Central and South America, Vice-regal aristocrats in India, and soldiers and bounty-hunters in Africa was in each case precipitated by an understanding of the colonizer as modern and the colonized as anything but.[8] If the division of the world's humans into modern (often white, often male) and pre-modern (often black or brown, often female or not normatively gendered or queer) is modernity's pre-eminent condition of possibility, how does the theatre and performance of the late-nineteenth through early twenty-first-centuries take up, interrogate, or even entrench this division – contribute to its modernizing project, or seek to undo it entirely?

Utopic dreaming 'at full throttle' may be modernity's greatest hallmark, but it is also its most dangerous fantasy; this tangle lies at the heart of much art we

label 'modernism'. Modernist movements in painting, literature, architecture, and of course theatre variously reflect modernity's progress narrative, demonstrating its beneficence, and refract that narrative darkly, challenging in particular its founding claim to be inherently culturally progressive. Rarely, however, does any work of modernist art do only one of these things at a time. Modernism at the theatre, as in many related art practices, embodies the cognitive and aesthetic fracture into multiplicity that Freud and others[9] view as central to modern subjectivity; modern drama is often discussed in terms of paradox and contradiction, as it reflects upon the paradoxical qualities of modernity itself.[10] This kind of work trains upon modernity what performance theorist Elin Diamond provocatively calls a 'double optic'.[11]

In her ground-breaking article, 'Modern Drama/Modernity's Drama', Diamond argues for a distinction between the drama 'of' the modern period and what she labels 'modernity's drama': theatrical works that actively ostend the ideologies and assumptions (including those about time and space, about technological improvement, about capital and its use-value, and about racial, gender, and cultural difference) underpinning the modern project. We might imagine the quintessential drama 'of' the modern to be work that actively models the linear progress narrative's sense of inevitability or of universal positive outcome, whether or not it fully endorses that outcome; for example, although they are often ultimately critical of modernity's social Darwinism, stage realism and naturalism frequently come under attack for their parallel investments in a unified dramaturgical journey towards what appears, on reflection, to be an inevitable end, and in the material practices (audience cut off from the stage by lighting and set design; casting choices) they have used to reinforce this textual tendency.[12] 'Modernity's drama', by contrast, fractures this unity and exposes instead the doubled consciousness it embeds; crucially, it may do this consciously, or not. This is work that demonstrates 'modern time' to be syncopated (then *and* now, running swiftly ahead yet leaving many behind the times), and the spaces of modernity to be various and frequently in collision with one another (East *and* West, the slum adjacent to the glittering urban centre, defining its boundary lines). It is work that foregrounds modernity's central paradoxes, its reliance on bodies and experiences deliberately marginalized by its progress narrative and 'full throttle' aspirations; and it is work invested, in turn, not only in audience comfort and pleasure but also in audience challenge, debate, and even disgust.

WHEN IS MODERN?

There is no single year in which the idea of modernity took hold, nor one location that birthed it. Instead, we might more productively call the time and place of the modern age processual, in constant motion. Rebecca Solnit opens

her influential book on the first modern photographer and cinematographer, Eadweard Muybridge, by identifying the peculiar contradictions that shape modern conceptions of space and time, beginning during the industrial revolution and extending well beyond it.[13] Modern space and time, Solnit argues, are defined by how they seem to expand and contract in ways previously unimaginable to human beings: technological, scientific, and aesthetic innovations from the middle and later nineteenth-century literally appear to slow time down – photography and geology, for example, isolate and foreground events previously imperceptible to the human eye (the detail available in a still photo; the layers of time embedded in rock formations) – while the building of railways and other inventions linked to manufacture, trade, and the expansion of free market capitalism have the opposite effect, speeding time up and shrinking huge distances.[14] Innovations like railway-building enabled movement and migration on a vast scale for the first time in the middle of the nineteenth century, and changed human perceptions of time in the process; by the middle of the twentieth century, not only had time shrunk once more – from horseback-time (15 kph) through railway-time (100 kph) to jet-plane time (1,000 kph) – but ongoing innovations in cinematic technology meant that humans could do routinely, with increasing precision, and increasingly in the comforts of their own homes, what Muybridge's primary innovation, the zoopraxiscope, had allowed him to do to widespread astonishment and acclaim a century earlier: freeze time in order to observe the human and animal worlds on film in detail never previously imagined (see Figure 0.1). The result of these parallel developments in how we see and perceive the shape and pace of our world has been – and continues to be, in an historical epoch driven by lightning-fast digital innovation – extraordinary cultural as well as cognitive change. As it changes human time, modernity also *literally* leaves its imprint on human bodies: we become creatures of relativity. Solnit notes, 'Early in the twentieth century, when Albert Einstein reached for metaphors to explain his theory of relativity, he repeatedly seized upon the image of a train running across the landscape, a train whose passengers were experiencing time differently than those on the ground'.[15]

The elasticity of modern spatio-temporal experience is one of the grounding logics underpinning modern art in all media. At the theatre, we see modernity's aggressive technoculture revelled in and refracted by the purposefully loud, chaotic works of the Italian Futurists early in the period, its emotional fallout in Antonin Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty, and its conflicted embrace in late twentieth-century trends towards performances enabled by WiFi technology or staged in cyberspace, such as in the work of the Builders' Association (USA), the UK's Forced Entertainment, or Germany's Rimini Protokoll. The principles of geographical, temporal, and social disorientation also lie behind the labours of some of the twentieth century's most influential experimental directors, from Edward Gordon Craig (and his mechanistic theatre of actor-marionettes), to
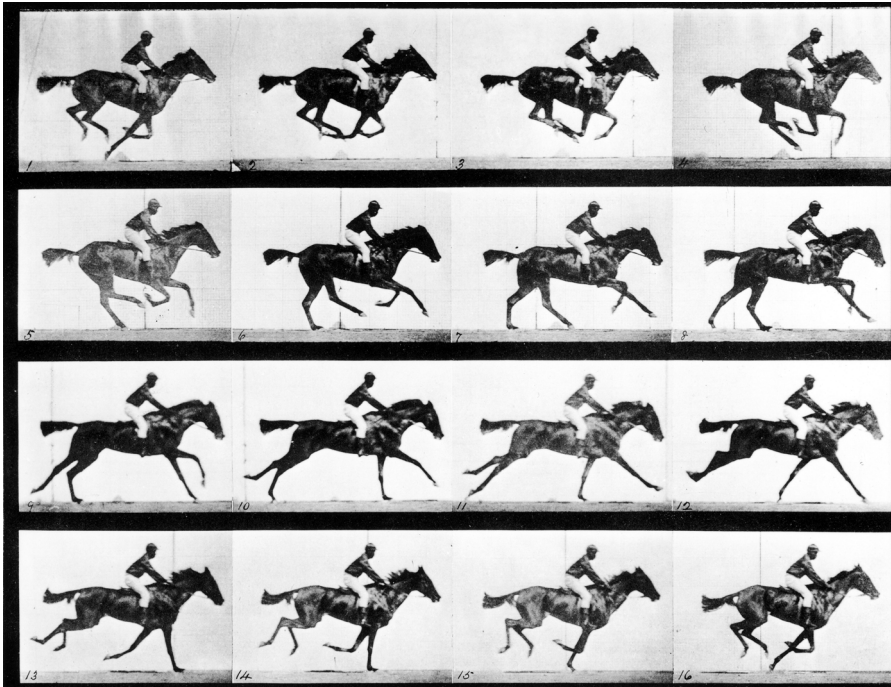
FIGURE 0.1: Study of a horse at full gallop in collotype print. Photo by Eadweard Muybridge/The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images.

Konstantin Stanislavsky (as he reconceived the actor to be an independent, creative, artist-agent whose work relied on the precise observation of his or her own subjective experiences), to Bertolt Brecht (whose 'epic theatre' grounded itself in the on-stage collision of multiple, conflicting social perspectives, held up for debate and critique). Later in the century, examples as diverse as Brazilian director Augusto Boal's spect-actors (through whose improvisational labour the structure and outcome of a play is rearranged in performance), British playwright Caryl Churchill's reorganization of her characters' temporal realities (perhaps most famously in *Top Girls* [1982], her critical response to Thatcher-era neoliberal feminism), and Canadian auteur Robert Lepage's seemingly effortless transformations of props from one object to another as his characters appear at once human, then again as the embodiment of machines (his company is called 'Ex Machina') attest to the lasting impact on the performing arts of this extraordinary cognitive shift from human-scale to machine-scale, as well as its ongoing imbrication with late capitalism and its social fallout.

Solnit calls the nineteenth-century renovation of human perception 'the annihilation of time and space': the destruction of the pre-modern notion that either of these concepts is fixed rather than framed by the perspective of

individuals and groups on the move. Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht makes a similar argument for modernity as an experience of spatio-temporal re-ordering in his 1998 book, *In 1926: Living on the Edge of Time*. Ironically, that volume pivots the modern tear in space/time around a specific year, though not around any specific location, and the book is organized by key cultural innovations, 'codes', and concepts in order to encourage readers to sample, travel, move around, and experience the moment coalescing around 1926 from any number of perspectives. Taken together, Solnit's and Gumbrecht's works present an emerging modern world in a swirl of motion, a phenomenon that touches down in key places at crystallizing moments (Sarajevo in 1914; Berlin in 1936; Memphis in 1968; Beijing in 1989)[16] but otherwise takes *movement itself* as its defining characteristic, the railway station or airport as its most cherished locale.

Just as Gumbrecht uses 1926 as exemplary of the modern 'moment' rather than as a point of origin, for the authors of this volume 1920 – the year our modern age is to begin – is a fulcrum. Each chapter broadly construes the here-and-now of the modern age as a function of intersecting cultural trends and artistic practices that begin long before 1920 and extend well into the new century in which we now live. In its tether to the events of the First World War (1914–1918), however, 1920 points us all at an essential aspect of modern habitation and art-making: the experience of living constantly in the shadow of international warfare and the human and cultural crises it brings. Human beings have always experienced war as normative, but in the twentieth century modern innovations – from aeroplanes to nuclear armaments to international alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact – meant that violence could never again be isolated as 'abroad', simply 'over there'. Through this lens, 1920 lets us look not only back at 1914 (and at 1917, the year of Russia's October Revolution), but also ahead to 1939 (the beginning of the European conflict that became the Second World War), to 1950 (the beginning of the Cold War), to 1955 (the beginning of the conflict known in Anglo-America as the Vietnam War), to 1990 and 2003 (the first and second American-led wars against Iraq), to 1994 (the genocide against the Tutsi people in Rwanda), to 2011 (Syria, ISIS . . . and beyond). If previous moments in human history might be characterized by frequent, isolated conflicts taking place simultaneously *around* the globe, the modern age features *global* conflict: the *same* conflict, waged on multiple fronts over prolonged periods of time, and impacting large numbers of nations or supra-national groups.[17] These kinds of conflicts not only shape modern human perceptions of location, dividing the globe into safe and unsafe spaces, 'haven' versus 'war zone', but throughout the twentieth century they have spawned waves of human displacement that in turn have impacted dramatically on senses of self and community.

As the definition, scope, and spheres of human-made violence shifted under modernity – from local to global, but also from Cold Wars to drone warfare to

a fresh, popular interest in post-traumatic stress disorders and other social aftermaths of war – the impact of such events embedded themselves deeply in the fabric of modern cultural production. At the theatre, the idea of 'total war' appears again and again not only as a byproduct of modernity, but as central to its self-fashioning via the myth of unrelenting human progress. War works as a trope for theatre makers to explore the circumstances under which human beings are permitted to inhabit the time and space designated as modern, and to think about how modernity's boundaries are policed by institutions that often find themselves in thrall to the political and economic power conflict brings. British feminist Churchill packs the decades-long conflict between Israel and Palestine into less than 10 minutes in her controversial *Seven Jewish Children* (2009), ironically compacting the seeming endlessness of that fight in a dark mirror of modernity's bulldozing, accelerating impulses; in *Far Away* (2000), she imagines a world at war with plants, animals, trees – everything – at the centre of which lies a gruesome, enabling co-dependence of commodity fetishism and cultural genocide. Churchill's influences include Brecht, whose interrogation of war's imbrication with market capitalism is the main topic of debate in his *Mother Courage and Her Children* (1941), written in exile from Hitler's Germany, but Churchill's later work, as Elaine Aston has recently argued,[18] owes much to Samuel Beckett, whose own writing for the stage imagines the very idea of 'being human' to be under siege from a modernity shaped by the division of life into those who wait (Vladimir and Estragon), those who bring a blend of debilitating violence and diverting entertainment to the waiting (Lucky and Pozzo), and those who can afford never to arrive (Godot).

SO *WHERE*, THEN?

If modern time is untethered by the railroad, then sped up by the jumbo jet, fighter jet, and the internet, the essential fluidity of modern space ironically locates its origin in the hoped-for stability embodied by late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century European conceptions of home. As I argue with Joanne Tomkins in chapter four, 'homeliness' and its unmooring (what Freud, in 1918, described as the 'uncanny') has been central to both modern drama and scholarly investigations of it. The rapid urbanization and technological innovation characteristic of the later nineteenth-century provoked a need to distinguish firmly between one's private and public lives, with the former vested in the home kept by one's wife and servants as a refuge from the chaos of modernity at full throttle. Home-as-refuge is no less an imagined ideal than modernity itself, of course, and in practice the modern home reflected the very divisions – between capital and labour, work time and leisure time, spaces of violence and spaces of safety, humans who count and those who count for less – on which modernity at large was constructed.[19] For this reason, the fantasies shaping the

modern home, and the fantasy of *escaping from* the modern home and into the wider world, now more accessible than ever, have been of intense interest to modern artists.

Architecture's twin obsessions through the twentieth century were the large-scale public building, with the sky-scraper as its apotheosis, and the modern house for which the most celebrated architects of the modern period (van der Rohe; Le Corbusier; Frank Lloyd Wright) earned their fame (see Figures 0.2 and 0.3).[20] As Michel De Certeau demonstrates in his landmark essay, 'Walking in the City', the division between the view from on high – the god's eye view typically occupied by those privileged enough to make it to the top of modern capitalism's food chain – and the street-level view of modern urban denizens, as they trace the city's contours with their hurrying bodies, symbolizes the two poles of modern spatial practice.[21] At the theatre, European and American realists and naturalists interested in dissecting the minutiae of bourgeois private life set their plays in well-dressed rooms in modern houses; impresarios such as André Antoine built small-scale, intimate playhouses to mirror the stage work of the theatrical naturalists and create a feeling of privacy in public. But as tenacious as they have been across the long modern age, because realism and naturalism literally embody modernity's compulsion towards the private home and its

FIGURE 0.2: The Woolworth Building, once the tallest building in the world and completed in 1913, is seen on 28 May, 2016 in New York City. Photo by Gary Hershorn/Getty Images.

FIGURE 0.3: Exterior view of Fallingwater, in Bear Run, Pennsylvania designed by architect Frank Lloyd Wright for Edgar Kaufmann. Bettman/Getty Images.

assumptions about coherence, stability, and singularity of world-view, they have also come repeatedly under fire from theatre-makers determined to explore modern space's expansive, and coercive, dimensions.

Early stage realism and naturalism were quickly and often vociferously challenged by alternative avant-garde practices (Dadaism, Expressionism, Surrealism, among others) wishing to blow up the comforts of home and provoke critical thinking about war, trauma, human displacement, and other experiences thought to be quintessentially modern; by mid-century theatre makers were increasingly leaving theatre buildings themselves behind, working in found spaces and creating performance on the street, in site-specific locations, or, later, on the web. This was an aesthetic decision – a break with the theatre building as representative of the mainstream (home as stifling) – but also a pragmatic one (theatrical homes, as Michael McKinnie notes in chapter one, are very expensive to build and maintain in the modern period). Yet abandoning the physical space of 'home' at the theatre did not mean disposing of its politics entirely: the hierarchies and divisions that organize quotidian space under modernity into public and private, local and global, financially valuable and

taken-for-granted, extend beyond it and are – as in all things modern – far more complicated than any binary can adequately represent.

State investment in theatre as a public and social good anchored many theatre artists across Europe, the Americas, and Australasia through the mid-twentieth century, but has now been for some time in decline, most acutely in North America; this leaves artists subject to the vicissitudes of finance capital and its vested interests, and in turn influences where and how theatrical homes may be found, made, or negotiated (and what kinds of work may be created there). Meanwhile, targeted investment by both public and private stakeholders in theatrical products and practitioners deemed culturally valuable permitted the development of global festival networks beginning in the later twentieth-century; today, the most celebrated artists' works travel worldwide on a much-expanded touring circuit geared towards affluent tourist audiences, and earn immense cultural capital for a privileged substrate of (mostly) white, male auteurs like Peter Sellars, Robert Lepage, Simon McBurney, and Julie Taymor (one of the few women amongst this company). In an era of cuts to state art budgets, large state-funded companies with permanent physical homes (such as England's National Theatre) increasingly shore up their revenues with 'live' viewings of their productions beamed to massive global audiences via transnational cinema networks (such as Cineplex Odeon); by contrast, most smaller theatre companies work without an anchor auditorium (or even rehearsal space), not out of a vestigial counter-cultural desire to resist the modern logic of home, but because fiscal and other material constraints mean they simply cannot afford one.

Modernity's spatial parameters rest on the myth of home and hearth in other ways, too. Imagining the globe to be infinitely accessible and yet safely anchored and shaped by Western worldviews, the Anglo-European modern takes itself as the norm and understands its base as the global North and West, pulling inspiration from and exporting influence to the global South and East. Modern theatre is in no way immune from this resolutely colonial spatial practice – as examples ranging from Artaud's interest in Balinese dance to Peter Brook's controversial South Asian productions demonstrate – but as the twentieth century progressed theatre practitioners increasingly recognized, and became attuned to the critical possibilities extended by, the fact that modern performance happens in places beyond the so-called 'global North'.

With this recognition comes a fresh understanding of modern space as not just unfixed, expansive, as wide as the globe or as small as the bourgeois sitting room, but also as *layered* – as a series of spaces built one on top of the other, a palimpsest derived from the mass physical and cultural violence modernity's othering actions produce. In chapter five, Jill Carter, Heather Davis-Fisch, and Ric Knowles remind us that the nations known today as modern Canada, the modern United States, and modern Mexico are also – in fact always already were – Turtle Island,

the most common English term for the homelands of thousands of Indigenous nations on whose cultural genocide modern North America and its own cultural heritage has been crafted. Chapter five's story of theatrical circulation begins from *that* space, and ends with the revelation that one of modern America's founding theatrical mythologies is, in fact, located inside 'Indian' space and 'Indian' time.[22] As Tracy C. Davis argues in a related context, 'this is mythos expressed as history', a deliberate upending of the modern telos that is both forward-driving as well as anxious about its receding pasts.[23]

WHO COUNTS AS MODERN?

As they crack open the space and time of the modern to reveal the Indigenous folkways and worldviews it buries, Carter, Davis-Fisch, and Knowles also return Indigenous peoples to the modern-age stage as subjects rather than objects of modernity (as developers, not simply developing). They turn our attention to the ways in which modernity's founding mythos has relied for its self-fashioning upon both the labour and the invisibility of a host of bodies deemed 'other', and they ask questions about theatre's power to return agency to those dust-binned creators. Here, they are in good company throughout our volume. In chapter two, Nicholas Ridout explores the difference between a 'theatre of consumers' and a 'theatre of producers', working through the social and economic structures that shape modern theatre made *by* some people *for* others, in contrast to an alternate modern theatre made by and for the same individuals who seek in that theatre a way to render their everyday lives more economically stable, politically efficacious, and socially just. In chapter seven, Christin Essin and Marlis Schweitzer consider constituencies of service workers – including backstage labourers, retail personnel, and paratheatrical labourers in some of the biggest theatre markets in the modern, urban world – as central to modern theatre's 'communities of production'; these are the labourers conventionally sidelined by popular (and, indeed, academic) interest in actors, directors, and designers as the only producers whose work is worth marking. In chapters three and nine, Kirsten Pullen, Ashley Ferro-Murray, and Timothy Murray each bring women's bodies differently into focus as central to modern theatrical making, dwelling on the ways in which those bodies have both shaped and been shaped by popular narratives of theatrical modernism as simultaneously central and marginal, desirable to and abject for the modern project. In chapter eight, Michelle Liu Carriger and Aoife Monks explicitly address – as do Carter, Davis-Fisch, and Knowles – the Eurocentrism of much modern theatre scholarship, cathecting Japanese and Irish performance repertoires as they complicate our understanding of orientalism in practice – as well as our understanding of what counts as modern repertoire.

The question of whose bodies and experiences count, how, and to what ends has become increasingly urgent in later twentieth-century theatre and performance practices, as the uneven representation of women, queer, and visible minority artists on English, American, European, and Australasian stages has become a matter of significant industry, academic, and even popular debate. At the same time, the shift from a glut of work made *about* those without power and agency *by* those with both, toward a critical mass of work made *by and about* those seeking cultural and economic power, agency, and recognition for themselves, has framed one of the most remarkable trajectories of the later modern period. To be sure, early twenty-first-century theatre remains unevenly weighted towards the experiences of white, straight, privileged men, but increasingly access to the means of theatrical production for non-male, non-white, and queer subjects has allowed the theatre to become a site for the active exploration of this ongoing misrepresentation in modernity's cultures beyond.

Artists use a variety of techniques to interrogate who counts on (and behind) the stage, but (as the chapters ahead also demonstrate) two stand out as key trends in the re-orienting of human representation in late modern-age theatre and performance. First among these is metatheatre, a practice that reflects actively upon the relationship between theatre and the everyday, and that often includes an awareness of the history, context, and processes of its own making.[24] Metatheatrical practices are inherently political, and, as Dassia Posner notes in chapter six, although the concept is often linked to Shakespeare and early modern drama ('all the world's a stage'), metatheatre demonstrates its greatest critical power in the late modern period. For example, in *The Shipment* (2008), Korean-American director Young Jean Lee and her collaborators style the performance's first half as an exaggerated minstrel show, shaping contemporary black performance stereotypes (from the aggressive, vulgar stand-up comic to the drug-addled rap star) knowingly into a confrontational display that culminates in members of the cast singing directly, and uncomfortably, to their audience. In its second half the performers put on a conventional living-room drama in the American realist tradition, only to reveal in the final moment – again, nodding to context, convention, and process – that they have been playing white characters all along. Running a broad gauntlet of late twentieth-century performance repertoires, referencing the *long durée* tradition of blackface, and landing back in the living rooms of the modern realists, Lee's thoroughgoing metatheatricality here reveals the extent to which so much modern art, culture, politics, and even social structure relies on black bodies as tools and foils, never as subjects of genuine human experience and need.

The second technique modern theatre and performance artists often use to address the politics of who counts is to foreground those bodies literally, backgrounding in turn those that are typically perceived to count for more, and thus framing the relations of dependence among them in new and revealing

ways. In *Harlem Duet* (1997), black Canadian playwright Djanet Sears tells the story of Othello's first wife, Billy, alive and working on her dissertation in contemporary Harlem; Desdemona appears as a hand, briefly, mid-way through the story, while Billie and Othello debate the ways in which black women's bodies are undervalued, both by white society and by many black men. (*Harlem Duet* of course deploys metatheatre as well; the two practices are often used interdependently.) English playwright Sarah Kane wrote scenes of astonishing violence against disabled, queer, and low-class male, female, and transgendered bodies in works such as *Blasted* (1995) and *Cleansed* (1998), attracting mountains of scorn from the reviewing establishment (largely white and male!) but also critical acclaim for her unflinching representations of modern British society's least-regarded bodies. Earlier in the twentieth century this trend can be seen emerging with playwrights ranging from Elizabeth Robins – who was famous for originating Ibsen's textbook hysteric Hedda Gabler in London but whose *Votes For Women!* (1907) included a mass suffrage rally, and a cast of forty, in its middle act – to Tennessee Williams (see also chapter three), who frequently used both men's and women's bodies to demonstrate queer modes of living in some of his most celebrated plays, including *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947).

In performance throughout the twentieth- and early twenty-first-centuries, the foregrounding of marginalized bodies is increasingly made possible by technology, returning us full circle, but queerly, to the 'full throttle' of modernity. Chapter nine takes up fully the imbrication of body and technology in the modern period, but here, and by way of conclusion, recent work in live cinema by the British-born, increasingly Europe-based director Katie Mitchell is instructive. In 2010's *Fraulein Julie* – an adaptation of August Strindberg's exemplary naturalist play *Miss Julie* (1888) – Mitchell and her team of collaborators reorient the narrative away from the manservant Jean and his social aspirations, and towards the female servant Kristen, who in Strindberg's original functions as a retrograde religious conscience, exemplary of the 'old ways' against which Jean rebels. At the centre of Mitchell's stage sits a classic realist 'fourth wall' space, fully contained by a literal box set – on stage is a real room, for all intents and purposes, in Julie's 'real' home. The cinema apparatus exists all around this space and is the primary object of audience view; we see interiors via a large screen above the stage but barely glimpse the room with our own eyes. Instead we watch Kristen hovering at the edges of the box set, darting in and out, her internal monologues captured as visual montages on screen alongside the movements of Jean and Julie inside the box.

Mitchell and her team deploy classic modernist but also brand-new digital film practices and technologies in order to restructure Strindberg's play as the story of its least regarded character – the young woman in service; the woman (in this adaptation) pregnant out of wedlock. All the while they innovate new theatrical technologies[25] and focus audience attention on artistic, technical, as