Women, Modernism, and Performance is an interdisciplinary study that looks at a variety of texts and modes of performance in order to clarify the position of women within – and in relation to – modern theatre history. Considering drama, fiction, and dance, as well as a range of performance events such as suffrage demonstrations, lectures, and a legal trial, Penny Farfan expands on theatre historical narratives that note the centrality of female characters in male-authored modern plays but that do not address the efforts of women artists to develop alternatives both to mainstream theatre practice and to the patriarchal avant garde. Focusing on Henrik Ibsen, Elizabeth Robins, Ellen Terry, Virginia Woolf, Djuna Barnes, Edith Craig, Radclyffe Hall, and Isadora Duncan, Farfan identifies different objectives, strategies, possibilities, and limitations of feminist–modernist performance practice and suggests how the artists in question transformed the representation of gender in art and life.

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For my mother
Aurelie Wickham Farfan
and
in memory of my grandmother
Aurélie Vega Wickham
Contents

List of illustrations  viii
List of abbreviations  ix
Acknowledgments  x

Introduction  1
1 From ‘Hedda Gabler’ to ‘Votes for Women’: Elizabeth Robins’s early feminist critique of Ibsen  11
2 Feminist Shakespeare: Ellen Terry’s comic ideal  34
3 Unimagined parts, unlived selves: Virginia Woolf on Ellen Terry and the art of acting  49
4 Staging the ob/scene  65
5 Writing/performing: Virginia Woolf between the acts  89
6 Feminism, tragedy, history: the fate of Isadora Duncan  102
Conclusion  116

Notes  120
Bibliography  154
Index  168
Illustrations

1 A studio portrait of Elizabeth Robins as Hedda Gabler (1891), apparently destroying the manuscript. Elizabeth Robins Papers, Fales Library, New York University. Reproduced with the permission of the Royal United Kingdom Beneficent Association as Trustees of the Backsettown Trust.


5 Edith Craig as Rosa Bonheur (circa 1909–1910). Reproduced with the permission of the National Trust, Ellen Terry Memorial Museum, Smallhythe Place.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in parenthetical references within the text:

AROO  Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*
AS   Elizabeth Robins, *Ancilla’s Share: An Indictment of Sex Antagonism*
BSC  Elizabeth Robins, *Both Sides of the Curtain*
“ET”  Virginia Woolf, “Ellen Terry”
IA  Elizabeth Robins, *Ibsen and the Actress*
ML  Isadora Duncan, *My Life*
SML  Ellen Terry, *The Story of My Life*
TF  Elizabeth Robins, *Theatre and Friendship*
WH  Elizabeth Robins, *Whither and How*
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