

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-33915-5 - By Means of Performance: Intercultural Studies of Theatre and Ritual

Edited by Richard Schechner and Willa Appel

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CONTRIBUTORS: Willa Appel, Monica Bethe, Herbert Blau, Paul Bouissac, Karen Brazell, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Du-Hyun Lee, Barbara Myerhoff, Ranjini Obeyesekere, James Peacock, Miles Richardson, Richard Schechner, Rosamond Spicer, Yi-Fu Tuan, Colin Turnbull, Edith Turner, Victor Turner, Anselmo Valencia, Heather Valencia, Phillip Zarilli

The cover illustration shows the 1972 performance in Nagoya of Paul Claudel's *La Femme et Son Ombre* by Izumi Yoshio and Izumi Yasutake. Photo: Tanaka Masao. The cover design is by Margaret Downing.

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BY MEANS OF PERFORMANCE

The field of performance studies embraces performance behavior of all kinds and in all contexts, from everyday life to high ceremony. This volume investigates a wide range of performance behavior – dance, ritual, conflict solution, sports, story-telling, and display behavior – in a variety of circumstances and cultures. It considers such issues as the relationship between training and the finished performance; whether performance behavior is universal or culturally specific; and the relationships between ritual and aesthetics, popular entertainment and religion, and sports and theatre and dance.

The contributors to this volume discuss these and related subjects using the examples of initiation rites among the Mbuti of central Africa, the deer dancing of the Yaquis of the American Sonoran desert, Sri Lankan ritual, mainstream and experimental theatre and dance in Europe and America, Korean shamanism, Indian kathakali dance-theatre, Purim plays in Brooklyn, Protestant and Catholic church ceremony in the American south, Japanese noh theatre, and circus clown performances. Beneath this diverse panoply of subjects lies a singularity of approach, the underlying unity of which consists in treating all these events as performances – as actions rehearsed, prepared, and presented.

The volume brings together essays from leading anthropologists, artists, and performance theorists to provide a definitive introduction to the burgeoning field of performance studies. It will be of value for scholars, teachers, and students of anthropology, theatre, folklore, semiotics, and performance studies.

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*Intercultural studies of
theatre and ritual*

Edited by

RICHARD SCHECHNER AND WILLA APPEL



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

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Published by the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211 USA
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, Melbourne 3166, Australia

© Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research

First published 1990
Reprinted 1993, 1995, 1997

British Library cataloguing in publication data

By means of performance: intercultural studies
of theatre and ritual.

1. Man. Social behaviour
I. Schechner, Richard II. Appel, Willa
302

Library of Congress cataloguing in publication data

By means of performance: intercultural studies of theatre and ritual
/ edited by Richard Schechner and Willa Appel.

p. cm.

Bibliography

ISBN 0-521-32608-7. – ISBN 0-521-33915-4 (pbk)

1. Theater and society. 2. Performing arts – Philosophy. 3. Rites
and ceremonies. 4. Turner, Victor. I. Schechner, Richard, 1934–
II. Appel, Willa.

PN2039.B9 1989

306'.484 – dc19 88-37458 CIP

Transferred to digital printing 2001

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-33915-5 - By Means of Performance: Intercultural Studies of Theatre and Ritual

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To Victor Turner

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Willa Appel is the Executive Director of the Citizens' Housing and Planning Council, an independent non-profit-making think tank concerned with New York City's housing and urban development issues. Author of *Cults in America* (1983), she has also published numerous articles on various subjects including power relations in southern Italy, urban housing problems in the U.S., and immigration to the U.S. in the early twentieth century. She has lectured in social anthropology and housing concerns, and was responsible for developing a series of international conferences on theatre and ritual for the Wenner-Gren Foundation.

Monica Bethe graduated from Radcliffe in 1967. She then became a student and practitioner of Noh, studying first mask making then song, dance and all the instruments. Performances include full noh of *Tadanori (shite)*, *Kakitsubata* (hip drum), and *Kiyotsume* (flute), as well as the lead in *Crazy Jane* by David Crandall. She devised costumes for *Crazy Jane*, for Crandall's next play, *The Linden Tree*, and for Izumi Yoshio's *The Afternoon of the Faun*. Publications include *Noh as Performance* (1978), *Dance in the Noh Theater* (1982–3) (both with Karen Brazell), translations of *Bugaku Masks*, *Tsujigahana*, and articles in *Noh Costumes of the Ii Family*, *Kosode*, and *The Encyclopedia of Japan*.

Herbert Blau, currently Distinguished Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, has also had a long career in the theatre. Starting with The Actor's Workshop of San Francisco, of which he was cofounder, he later became codirector of The Repertory Theater at Lincoln Center in New York, and subsequently Artistic Director of the experimental group KRAKEN. Two recent books, *Take Up the Bodies: Theater at the Vanishing Point* (1982) and *Blooded Thought: Occasions of Theater* (1982), received the George Jean Nathan Award in Dramatic Criticism. He has just published *The Eye of Prey: Subversions of the Postmodern*, and recently finished another book entitled *The Audience*.

Paul Bouissac is a Professor of French and Linguistics at the University of Toronto (Victoria College). His principal research interests are nonverbal communication and the semiotics of the performing arts. Among his publications are *La Mesure des gestes: Prolégomènes à la sémiotique gestuelle* (1973), *Circus and Culture* (1976), *The Semiotics of Nonsense* (1977); he has co-edited *The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Semiotics* (1986) and *Iconicity: Essays on the Nature of Culture* (1986).

Karen Brazell is Professor of Japanese Literature at Cornell University. She is currently working on a book tentatively titled *The Ghosts of Warriors on Stage: Noh Plays by Zeami*, and editing two volumes: *Plays from the Noh and Kyōgen Theaters* to be published by the Cornell China-Japan Program, and *Traditional Japanese Theater: An Anthology* with Stanford University Press.

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett is Professor of Performance Studies in the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University, where she holds a secondary appointment as Professor of Hebrew and Judaic Studies. She is also Research Associate at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. Her essays on various aspects of Ashkenazic Jewish

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ritual and the artifacts associated with them, including weddings, childbirth amulets, Torah binders, ceremonial textiles, and food will appear in a volume to be published by Indiana University Press. Her publications include *Fabric of Jewish Life: Textiles from The Jewish Museum Collection* (1977) and *Image Before My Eyes: A Photographic History of Jewish Life in Poland, 1864–1939* (1977, with Lucjan Dobroszycki).

Du-Hyun Lee, born in 1924, graduated from Seoul National University majoring in Korean literature. His academic career began at the College of Education, Seoul National University, and he later went to Peabody College and Catholic University in the United States to study drama and Anthropology for a year. He received a Litt. D. degree from Seoul National University in 1968 and is now professor of Korean drama and folklore at its College of Education.

He was Visiting Professor at Tokyo University in 1968, at the Ruhr University Bochum, West Germany in 1975, and at the National museum of Ethnology, Japan in 1981. He is Director of Research Institute of Korean Mask-dance Drama (since 1969) and was president of Korean Society for Cultural Anthropology (1972–74) and Korean Society for Theatre Research (1975–77). He is a member of National Academy of Sciences, Republic of Korea (since 1982).

His publications include, among others, *A History of Modern Korean Drama* (1966), *Korean Mask-dance Drama* (1969), *A History of Korean Folk-life* (1973), *A History of Korean Theatre arts* (1973), *Introducing Korean Folklore* (1974) and *Essays on Korean Folklore* (1984).

Barbara Myerhoff, who died in 1985, was Professor of Anthropology in the Anthropology Department at the University of Southern California. Among her writings were *The Peyote Hunt* (1974) and *Number Our Days* (1978). The latter book was the basis for a documentary film which won an Academy Award.

Ranjini Obeyesekere taught for several years in the Department of Literature, University of Sri Lanka, Peradeniya, and at the University of California, San Diego. She is now lecturer in the Department of Anthropology, Princeton University. Her publications include *Sinhala Writing and the New Critics* (1974), articles on Sri Lankan literature and culture, and translations of Sinhala poetry and fiction. She was co-editor of *An Anthology of Modern Writing from Sri Lanka* (1981), and guest editor of *Writing from Sri Lanka* (1987). She also translates and directs for the Sinhala theatre: *Muhudu Yanno* (1966), (*Synges Riders to the Sea*) and *Bernadage Sipirigeya* (1971) (*Lorca's The House of Bernada Alba*) which was recently revived (1986).

James Peacock holds a doctorate from Harvard in Social Anthropology and is Kenan Professor of Anthropology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He has done fieldwork in Indonesia and Appalachia. His books include *Rites of Modernization: Symbolic and Social Aspects of Indonesian Proletarian Drama* (1968, reissued with an Afterword, 1988) and *The Anthropological Lens: Harsh Light, Soft Focus* (1986).

Miles Richardson is Professor of Anthropology in the Department of Geography and Anthropology at Louisiana State University. He has pursued the theme of how people in the American South and those in Spanish America use space in the construction of their lives in several authored or edited writings: *San Pedro, Colombia* (1970), *The Human Mirror* (1974), and *Place: Experience and Symbol* (1984). He is currently at work on a manuscript titled "Being-in-Christ and the Social Construction of Death in Spanish America and the American South: A Humanistic Portrayal." Similar themes

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appear in the fiction he has published in *The Southern Review*, *Louisiana Literature*, and *Amelia*. Richardson is editor of *The Anthropology and Humanism Quarterly*, the journal of the Society for Humanistic Anthropology.

Richard Schechner is Professor of Performance Studies at the Tisch School of the Arts, New York University. He is editor of *TDR*, a journal of performance studies, and he is a theatre director whose productions with The Performance Group include *Dionysus in 69*, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *The Tooth of Crime*, *Oedipus*, and *The Balcony*. In New Delhi he directed Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard* (in Hindi) and in 1989 he directed Sun Huizhu's *Tomorrow He'll Be Out of the Mountains* (in Chinese) at the Shanghai People's Art Theatre. His books include *Environmental Theater, Essays on Performance Theory* (1977), revised as *Performance Theory* (1988), and *Between Theater and Anthropology* (1985). He is co-author of *The Englebert Stories: North to the Tropics* (1987) which he wrote with his son, Samuel MacIntosh-Schechner.

Rosamond B. Spicer completed graduate studies in anthropology at the University of Chicago, and then in 1936 came with her husband, Edward H. Spicer, to make a community study of immigrant Yaqui Indians at Pascua Village, near Tucson, Arizona. In 1942 they did a similar study of Potam, in Rio Yaqui, Sonora, Mexico. Living in Tucson from 1946 on, they were much in contact with Yaquis, including the founding of the new village of Pascua Pueblo and the attaining of a reservation. The Spicers also worked with many other Southwestern Indian tribes and Mrs. Spicer conducted a community study of the Papago. For many years Mrs. Spicer taught modern dance and Dr. Spicer was professor of Anthropology at the University of Arizona.

Yi-Fu Tuan, born in China but educated in Australia, England, and the United States, has taught for many years at the University of Minnesota. He is now the J.K. Wright and Vilas Professor of Geography at the University of Wisconsin. His interests have shifted from desert landforms and cultural geography to history of ideas and the psychological dimensions of human reality. His books include *Space and Place* (1977), *Segmented Worlds and Self* (1982), *Dominance and Affection* (1984), and *The Good Life* (1986).

Colin M. Turnbull was born in 1924, educated at Westminster and Oxford, England; first pursued philosophy and music, doing post-graduate work for two years at Banaras Hindu University, then going into Anthropology with Africa as his major area of research. Currently Randolph Distinguished Visiting Professor of Anthropology at Vassar College, he formerly taught at George Washington University, and as a Visiting Adjunct Professor in the Department of Performance Studies at New York University.

Edith Turner is on the Faculty of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Virginia. She is author of *The Spirit and the Drum* (1988), co-author of *Image and Pilgrimage* (1978), and has published a number of articles on ritual and initiation. Her fieldwork has been wide ranging. For instance she has worked among the Ndembu of Africa, Mexican pilgrims, the Yaqui Indians of Arizona, and Civil War re-enactors. In 1985 she made a restudy of the Ndembu and has completed a full-length manuscript on their contemporary ritual entitled *The Tooth: Switching Realities in an African Healing Ritual*. She is at present in Northern Alaska following up an interest in the healing procedures in the Inupiat Eskimos.

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Victor Turner (1920–83) was an anthropologist and comparative symbologist with a deep interest in ritual and theatre. He was a principal organizer of the series of conferences upon which this book is based. Turner's field research began in Africa among the Ndembu of Uganda. Later he traveled to India, Israel, Mexico, Ireland, and Japan. His academic career included posts at the University of Manchester and Cornell University. In 1977 he became William R. Kenan Professor of Anthropology and Religion at the University of Virginia, a chair he held until his death. His many books include *The Forest of Symbols* (1967), *The Drums of Affliction* (1968), *The Ritual Process* (1969), *From Ritual to Theatre* (1982), *On the Edge of the Bush* (1986), and *The Anthropology of Performance* (1986).

Anselmo Valencia, Yaqui Indian and U.S. citizen, has held a prominent place in Yaqui society since the 1950s. He was largely responsible for the founding of the new village, Pascua Pueblo, and led the campaign to grant Yaquis federal recognition as an American Indian tribe. Holding the positions of chairman of the Pascua Yaqui Association and later Community Manager, he has watched Pascua Pueblo grow from an idea to a village of several thousand Yaqui inhabitants. Through teaching and example he has fostered Yaqui culture in all its complex aspects, including language, law, religion, and ceremonial life. He is himself an eminent singer of the sacred Deer songs.

Heather Valencia is married to Anselmo Valencia, and is of mixed English and Cherokee Indian blood. She values the Indian way of life and sees that it comprehends her philosophical predilections. She is a medicine woman and oracle in her own right. She attends all the ceremonies and assists in the village in many capacities.

Phillip B. Zarrilli is Associate Professor of Asian Performance at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he directs the Asian/Experimental Theatre Program. He studied *kathakali* in Kerala under M.P. Sankaran Namboodiri at the Kerala Kalamandalam, and *kalaripayattu* under Gurukkal Govindankutty Nair of the C.V.N. Kalari, Trivandrum. His books include *The Kathakali Complex: Actor, Performance, Structure* (1984) and (with Farley Richmond and Darius Swann) *Indian Theatre: Traditions of Performance* (1988). He is currently completing an ethnography of the process and experience of practicing *kalaripayattu*, '*Conquering Even the God of Death*': *Accomplishment and Power in a Traditional South Indian Martial Art*.

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Concerning Victor Turner

This book, really, is a festschrift for Victor Turner who died in 1983 at the age of sixty-three. He, more than anyone, conceived and birthed the conferences after which this book comes. Turner's wide and generous mind and spirit housed an indefatigable will to connect, weave, link, contact, and interact. He wanted to form, furnish, and enjoy what he embraced in his very widely cast big net of energy.

I was happily drawn into Turner's net in the spring of 1977 when, one morning, Turner phoned me. He wanted me to participate in the 1977 Burg Wartenstein Symposium No. 76 on "Cultural Frames and Reflections, Ritual, Drama and Spectacle." The conferences of 1981 and 1982 that form the background to *By Means of Performance* flowed naturally from the 1977 Symposium.

During the years I knew him, Turner focused ever more carefully and passionately on the relationship between theatre and ritual. On a number of occasions he participated in the work of the Department of Performance Studies at NYU (where I am a professor). In the summer of 1979 Turner and I were joined at NYU by Barbara Myerhoff, Alexander Alland, Edith Turner, and (for two days) Erving Goffman for a two week workshop exploring the relationships among theatre, ritual, and performance in everyday life. This intense summer workshop was a place where not only discussions but practical exercises and experimental performances took place, where we deconstructed texts, played with on-site staging, and laid the groundwork for what Turner and his wife Edith called "performing ethnography." Sadly, Turner, Myerhoff, and Goffman are dead, all too early in their lives. I hope this book will help propel their worthy work forward.

Richard Schechner