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## Reading the Material Theatre

READING THE MATERIAL THEATRE develops and demonstrates a method of theatrical performance analysis that takes into account the entire theatre experience, from production to reception. Beginning with semiotic and cultural materialist theory, the author quickly moves into detailed politicized analysis of the ways in which specific aspects of theatrical production, and specific contexts of reception, shape the audience's understanding of what they experience in the theatre. It concludes with five case-studies of the cultural work performed by a major Shakespearean repertory theatre, a small nationalist theatre devoted to new play development, a major New York-based avant-garde touring theatre company, a British socialist company dedicated to the work of Shakespeare, and a range of international festivals. This accessible volume provides a first-step introduction to key terms and areas of performance theory, including reception history, performance analysis, and production analysis.

RIC KNOWLES is Professor of Drama at the School of English and Theatre Studies, University of Guelph, Ontario. He is author of *Shakespeare and Canada: Essays on Production, Translation, and Adaptation* (2004) and *The Theatre of Form and the Production of Meaning: Contemporary Canadian Dramaturgies* (1999), editor of *Theatre in Atlantic Canada* (1988), and co-editor of *Modern Drama: Defining the Field* (2003) and *Staging Coyote's Dream: An Anthology of First Nations Drama in English* (2003).

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,  
 Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press  
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by  
 Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521643313](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521643313)

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First published 2004

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress cataloguing in publication data*

Knowles, Richard Paul, 1950–

Reading the Material Theatre / Ric Knowles.

p. cm. – (Theatre and Performance Theory)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 64331 7 – ISBN 0 521 64416 X (pbk.)

1. Theater – Semiotics. 2. Theater – Philosophy. 3. Theater  
 audiences – Psychology. 4. Theater and society. I. Title. II. Series.  
 PN2041.S45K58 2004

792'.01'4 – dc22

2003064048

ISBN 978-0-521-64331-3 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-64416-7 Paperback

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## Acknowledgments

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Like all scholarly books, this one is in effect a collaboration with all those other scholars working in the field, past and present, on whose insights I have consciously and unconsciously drawn. My own particular and most direct debts, beyond those acknowledged in the text itself and its apparatus, are to four groups: members of the Shakespeare Association of America, who have always been challenging and inspirational, and who heard and responded helpfully to an early version of Chapter Six; members of the Association for Canadian Theatre Research, without whose consistent support and encouragement I would not have even entered the field; members of the editorial team and board at *Modern Drama* (especially my co-editors Joanne Tompkins and Bill Worthen); and finally members (faculty, students, and former students) of the School of English and Theatre Studies at the University of Guelph, where I teach – and most especially there to my friend and colleague Harry Lane.

More specifically, I would like to thank my singularly reliable research assistants Nicole Aplevitch, Christopher Tracy, Sheena Albanese, and Patricia Tersigni, as I would like to thank those at various theatre companies around the world who have directly supported my research, including: Neil Murray at the Tron Theatre, Glasgow; Jan McTaggart at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh; Diane Garant and Nathalie Beaulieu at Ex Machina in Quebec City; Maria Fleming, Ciara Ní Shuilleabhain, and Ciarán Walsh at the Druid Theatre, Galway; Dyane Hanrahan at Corcadorca, Cork; Matthew F. Gordon, Chloe Veltman, and Barbara Matthews at Cheek by Jowl, London; Polly Stokes at Theatre de Complicite, London; Nick Marsden at Curtis Brown, London; Tim Chapman at Tarragon Theatre, Toronto; Jane Edmonds and Ellen Charendoff at the Stratford Festival

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x Acknowledgments

Archives; Kim Whitener, Richard Kimmel, and Clay Hapaz at the Wooster Group, New York; Ana Alvarado at El Perférico de Objetos, Buenos Aires; Emma Forbes at the Edinburgh International Festival; Annie Gascon at the Theatre Festival of the Americas; and Laurel Ryshpan at the DuMaurier World Stage. For permission to publish the illustrations I am indebted to photographers Guillermo Arengo (via Ana Alvarado at El Perférico de Objetos), Laurence Burns, Michael Cooper, Paula Court, Kevin Low (via the Traverse Theatre), Terry Manzo (via The Stratford Festival), Joan Marcus (via Theatre de Complicite) Joe Phillips, and Cylla von Tiedemann; and to Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Tarragon Theatre, and actors Martha Henry and Michael McManus.

I am deeply and directly indebted for their specific and ongoing help and support in this work to Hélène Beauchamp (for her intelligence, hospitality, and friendship), Susan Bennett, Mayte Gomez (for sending me materials on Robert Lepage), Barbara Hodgdon (for lending me her massive files on the ESC, and many other things), Michael McKinnie (for lending me his expertise on theatre and urban planning), and especially Skip Shand, to whom my debts, personal and professional, are legion. I am, of course, also deeply indebted to my always supportive (and patient) editor at Cambridge, Victoria Cooper, and to the astonishing (and also patient) Tracy Davis, general editor of the series in which this book appears.

My most important debts are to Christine Bold, for her scholarly intelligence, keen insight, personal support, and sense of perspective, and to her and Lewis Bold Wark, to whom I dedicate this book with love and gratitude for being there.

Parts of this book have appeared elsewhere in earlier forms, and are adapted and/or recontextualized here with permission from *Canadian Theatre Review* (parts of Chapters Two and Seven), *Essays in Theatre/Études théâtrales* (Chapter Five), *Shakespeare Quarterly* (Chapter Three), *Gestos* (Chapter Seven), and *The Performance Text*, edited by Domenico Petropaolo (Chapter Four). The research on which the book is based was undertaken with, and would not have been possible without, the support of a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).