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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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