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Elements in Women Theatre Makers

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EMMA RICE'S FEMINIST ACTS OF LOVE

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Abstract: This is a love story but not as you know it. Should an academic study be framed in this way? Love seems an unlikely bedfellow for critical thinking. Watching an Emma Rice production and being in her rehearsal room you feel the love: a warm and generous welcoming in, a joyful celebration of the theatrical exchange. What produces this pleasurable affect and how might we consider its political potential?

This Element positions Emma's theatre-making, a body of work spanning three decades, as feminist acts of love. Drawing on fieldwork research, her practice is viewed through the critical lenses of feminisms and affect to consider its contextual tensions, its ethics of affirmation, staging of femininities and contribution to queer worldmaking. Mapping her work from this perspective brings to light her important contribution to UK feminist theatre, its love activism offering an emergent strategy for change.

Keywords: Emma Rice, theatre directing, feminisms, affect, queer worldmaking

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