

Cambridge Elements

Elements in Contemporary Performance Texts

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PLAYWRITING, DRAMATURGY AND SPACE

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Playwriting, Dramaturgy and Space

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Abstract: Theatre has come back to text, but with perspectives shifted by the experimental practices of the twentieth century across performance forms. Contemporary playwriting brings its scenographic engagement to the foreground of the text, reflecting the spatial turn in theory and practice. In production, this spatiality has renewed and enlivened the status and impact of text-based theatre. Theatre studies need to better describe the artfulness of contemporary text-based theatre, bringing to it the same sophisticated lenses scholars and critics have used for performance-based theatre and other experimental theatre practices. This Element does that by presenting the work of Caryl Churchill, Naomi Iizuka and Sarah Ruhl as exemplary of the way text-based theatre, both its scripts and productions, now creates and expects a spatialized imaginary and demonstrates the potentials of text-based theatre in an increasingly visual and spatial field of cultural production.

This Element also has a video abstract: www.cambridge.org/freeman

Keywords: contemporary playwriting, space and the spatial turn, Caryl Churchill, Naomi Iizuka, Sarah Ruhl

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