

BROADSIDE

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EXHIBITION SURVEYS MANHATTAN'S EARLY THEATRE HISTORY

An exhibition spotlighting three early New York theatres was on view in the Main Gallery of The New York Public Library at Lincoln Center from February 13, 1990 through March 31, 1990. Focusing on the Park Theatre on Park Row, Niblo's Garden on Broadway and Prince Street, and Wallack's, later called the Star, on Broadway and 13th Street, the exhibition attempted to show, through the use of maps, photographic blowups, programs and posters, the richness of the developing New York theatre scene as it moved northward from lower Manhattan.

The Park Theatre has been called "the first important theatre in the United States." It opened on January 29, 1798, across from the Commons (the Commons is now City Hall Park—City Hall was built in 1811). The opening production, *As You Like It*, was presented with some of the finest scenery ever seen. The theatre itself, which could accommodate almost 2,000, was most favorably reviewed. It was one of the most substantial buildings erected in the city to that date—the size of the stage was a source of amazement to both cast and audience. In the early nineteenth century, to increase ticket sales, manager Stephen Price introduced the "star system" (the importation of famous English stars). This kept attendance high but to some extent discouraged the growth of indigenous talent. In its later days the Park was home to a fine company, which, in addition to performing the classics, presented the work of the emerging American playwrights.

The Park burned down in 1820 but was rebuilt. When it was destroyed by fire once again, in 1848, the Astor heirs replaced it with commercial buildings. The neighborhood was changing.

The exhibition included photographic blowups of many of the performers who played at the Park. Junius Brutus Booth as Richard III, Charles Kemble, Tyrone Power, Mrs. John Drew as Ophelia, Ellen Tree as Rosalind, Charlotte Cushman as Lady Macbeth, and Fanny Kemble were among those on view. There was a large photograph of ballerina Fanny Elssler, who made her American debut at the Park in 1840. Also in the exhibition were many examples of early playbills.

Niblo's Garden was opened in the late 1820's by William Niblo, who operated a summer theatre and ornamental garden



on the grounds, which had previously been a farm, a training ground for militia officers, and a summer evening entertainment spot. In 1829 Broadway and Prince Street was considered practically out-of-town—Niblo ran stagecoaches from the Battery to his theatre to encourage attendance.

The exhibition included photographic blowups of Lillie Langtry, Rachel, Fanny Davenport, Lawrence Barrett, Frank Mayo and other important stars to have performed at Niblo's. It also featured sections on early burlesque star Lydia Thompson, on minstrel shows, on the extremely popular Ravel family of comedians, and on

musical performers, such as Adelina Patti, the relative for whom today's Patti LuPone is named.

Perhaps the most important and memorable event during the lifetime of Niblo's was the production of *The Black Crook*, often called the first American musical, which opened on September 12, 1866 at 7:45 P.M. and lasted until 1:15 A.M. The entire stage was rebuilt for this combination of spectacle, drama, music and dance. The show ran for 475 performances, setting a New York record by far, and was regularly revised. Revivals were seen at Niblo's years later. *The Black Crook* toured the country for nearly 40 years.

The exhibition included much original material on the various productions of *The Black Crook*, such as sheet music, programs, and stunning full-color posters. Also shown were color posters for later extravaganzas at Niblo's, such as Rice's *Evangeline* and the Kiralfy Brothers' *Around the World in Eighty Days*, as well as a silk programme for the 100th performance of *Excelsior*, on November 15, 1883.

Niblo's Garden, like so many other buildings of its time, was destroyed by fires and rebuilt. It was finally razed in the 1890's—the theatre which once was too far uptown was now too far downtown for the new theatre district, by now centered around Union Square.

Wallack's Theatre (one of several theatres of that name and associated with that family) opened on September 25, 1861, with a production of *The New President*. It became the leading New York theatre for 20 years and was opened by James William Wallack and then managed for many years by his son Lester, the first important American-born member of the English Wallack family.

Under Lester Wallack's management the theatre on Broadway and 13th Street presented "impeccably cast" productions, mounted with "exquisite taste." The company included Lester Wallack, John Gilbert, Fanny Reeves, W. Reynolds, W.H. Norton, and many other fine actors. The exhibition included photographic blowups of many of their productions. A section of the exhibition was devoted to the extremely popular play by Dion Boucicault, *The Shaughraun*, which achieved the longest run of any play at Wallack's through the 1870's.

Wallack was probably responsible for discontinuing the old policy of actors' benefit nights, replacing them with regular salaries. The papers were filled with letters of disapproval, but the new practice caught on, and benefits, for the most part, became a thing of the past. Wallack left the theatre on 13th Street in 1881, to run another one, further uptown. Wallack's on 13th Street was renamed the Germania and presented German plays for a short time. On September 16, 1882, the theatre reopened as the Star.

The Star Theatre, which operated until 1901, presented some of the most famous performers in the world. Lawrence Barrett staged and starred in a revised version of *Francesca da Rimini*, which ran for nine weeks. On October 29, 1883, Henry Irving and his entire company were brought over

from the Lyceum Theatre in London. Whole productions, including props, musical directors, and stage and lighting managers, were transported for this unprecedented event. Henry Irving and Ellen Terry presented many important plays including *The Merchant of Venice*, perhaps the most perfectly realized Shakespearean production to that date. The exhibition included much material related to the Irving/Terry visits.

Edwin Booth also appeared at the Star. The exhibition included photographic blowups of him as Othello, Shylock, Richelieu and Hamlet. It was at the Star Theatre that Booth set a record, in 1864, for consecutive performances as Hamlet—100. This record was not broken until 1923, by John Barrymore.

Many other important performers visited the Star. Depicted in the exhibition were Sarah Bernhardt as Fedora, Adrienne Lecouvreur, Frou Frou and Camille. There were also photos and programs of Modjeska, of Mr. and Mrs. Kendal in *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, and of Mary Anderson and J. Forbes-Robertson in *Romeo and Juliet*. Full-color posters of John McCullough in *The Gladiator* and *Othello* were also on view.

When the Star Theatre closed in 1901 the paper read "Star Theatre Goes; Old Patrons Sad. The Most Famous Actors and Actresses of the Country Trod Its Boards Only a Few Short Years Ago."

In addition to materials related to actors and productions, the exhibition included much related to the physical aspects of the theatres. There were photos of interiors and exteriors, as well as views of the immediate neighborhood. Materials for the exhibition were drawn from the archives of The New York Public Library's Performing Arts Research Center. The Curator of the exhibition was Alan Pally.



Photos: Above, playwright/actor Dion Boucicault (1820-1890) as Conn in *The Shaughraun*, which premiered at Wallack's Theatre in 1874; Below, British actress Lydia Thompson (1836-1908), sometimes credited with introducing burlesque to America. Also known as the first actress to horsewhip a libelous newspaper editor. Thompson and her troupe played at Niblo's Garden for 25 weeks in 1869.



WORKS BY GARBO'S FAVORITE PHOTOGRAPHER ON VIEW

An exhibition which served both as a display of the artfully composed photograph and a history of the golden age of Hollywood was held at London's National Portrait Gallery from May through August 1989. The exhibition, which is now touring throughout Britain, is the first major retrospective of one of the most highly regarded film studio portrait photographers, Clarence Sinclair Bull (1896-1979). In a career encompassing the heyday of the Hollywood studio portrait, Bull recorded for posterity some of the greatest movie stars of all time—Gloria Swanson, Jean Harlow, Clark Gable, Grace Kelly, and, most significantly, Greta Garbo.

Director Frank Lloyd invited Montana-born Clarence Sinclair Bull to Hollywood in 1917 to work as an assistant cameraman. After working for a few studios Bull chose to concentrate on stills and portrait photography and served as head of the MGM stills department from 1924 until his retirement in 1961. In the 1920s his subjects included Lillian Gish, Bessie Love and Joan Crawford. The Barrymores, the Marx Brothers, Charles Laughton, Elsa Lanchester, Leslie Howard and Vivian Leigh were some of his subjects during the 1930s. In the two decades that followed, Bull photographed Spencer Tracy, Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant, Ava Gardner, Fred Astaire, Judy Garland and Elizabeth

Taylor.

The most celebrated of all Bull's collaborations was with Greta Garbo, who insisted in 1929 that she only be photographed by Bull. Starting with his mesmerizing, half-lit and mysterious portraits for her last silent film, *The Kiss*, Garbo and Bull together created some of the greatest images in the history of the portrait photograph. The association lasted until Garbo's retirement in 1941; by then Bull estimated that he had taken more than 4,000 individual studies of her.

At each session with Garbo, Bull sought to capture the magic, beauty and inner mystery that she projected in her screen roles. He devised new lighting techniques suitable to the needs of the portrait—the study of Garbo as the sea captain's daughter in her first talkie, *Anna Christie*, was illuminated by a ship's lantern containing a concealed spotlight. Bull was also a pioneer in the use of strobe lighting and color. In 1943 he photographed a group of 64 MGM stars for the studio's 20th birthday. That color photograph recorded the largest number of stars ever assembled from one studio.

The exhibition has traveled throughout Britain to Leeds, Edinburgh and Bath. It is currently on view at the Wolverhampton Art Gallery in the West Midlands until June 30.



Photos: Above, Garbo (1905-1990) as Marguerite Gautier for *Camille*, 1939; Lower left, Garbo for *The Kiss* (her last silent film), 1929; Lower right, Garbo for *Queen Christina*, 1933. Photos by Clarence Sinclair Bull. All photos c. Bull Estate/Kobal Fine Art Collection.



BACK ISSUES OF PERFORMING ARTS RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Performing Arts Resources is the annual publication of the Theatre Library Association. A cloth-bound, illustrated, library-quality book, it is designed to gather and disseminate articles on resource materials relating to theatre, popular entertainments, film, television and radio; descriptions of collections; and essays on conservation and management. *PAR* is included in TLA membership. Back issues or additional copies are available to current members at \$10 each. Checks should be made payable to the Theatre Library Association and mailed to Dick Buck, Theatre Library Association, 111 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10023. Here is a survey of the contents of available volumes.

Volume Two (c. 1976), edited by Ted Perry. "Guidelines for Describing Unpublished Script Materials" (Eileen Bowser); "With the Compliments of The Raymond Mander & Joe Mitchenson Theatre Collection" (Mary C. Henderson); "Ralph Sargent's *Preserving the Moving Image: A Summary Review*" (Joel Zukor); "The Peabody Collection of the University of Georgia" (James E. Fletcher and W. Worth McDougald); "Promptscreens of *The Rivals: An Annotated Bibliography*" (Mark S. Auburn); "A Descriptive Catalogue of the Filmic Items in the Gernsheim Collection" (David Haynes).

Volume Three (c. 1977), edited by Ted Perry. "A Bibliography of U.S. Government Documents Pertaining to Government Support of the Arts, 1963-71" (Mark Gladstone); "Resources for the Oral History of the Independent American Film at Media Study/Bufalo, New York" (Gerald O'Grady); "Surrealist Cinema: A Selected Bibliography" (Stephen Kovacs); "Theatre on Film and Tape" (Betty L. Corwin); "The Cinema Library at the University of Southern California" (Christopher Wheaton and Richard B. Jewell); "A Short Title Guide to the Edwin Booth Literary Material at The Players" (L. Terry Oggel); "The Chuck Callahan Burlesque Collection (Llewellyn H. Hedg-beth).

Volume Four (c. 1978), edited by Mary C. Henderson. "Dame Nellie Melba or Peach Melba" (Peter Burgis); "Research Opportunities at the Theatre Institute Library, Barcelona" (Joyce Duncan Falk); "History in Motion" (Geoffrey Wigoder); "Theatre Klank En Beeld: Sound and Film Archives of the Dutch Theatre" (Lou Hoefnagels); "The Stratford Festival Archives" (Daniel W. Ladell); "The Shakespeare Centre Library" (Wendy Warnken); "Theatre Research in Moscow and Leningrad" (Micky Levy); "Theatre Research Resources in West Berlin" (Paul S. Ulrich); "The University of Bristol Theatre Collection" (George Rowell); "A Documentary System for Television Archives" (Gabrielle Melischek and Wolfgang Ramjoue); "The International Theatre Institute" (Elizabeth Burdick).

Volume Five (c. 1979), edited by Mary C. Henderson. Monograph: "Recollections of O. Smith: Comedian" (William W. Appleton, Guest Editor).

Volume Six (c. 1980), edited by Mary C. Henderson. "Federal Theatre Project Rec-

ords at George Mason University" (Laraine Correll); "Research Materials of the Federal Theatre Project in the Theatre Collection of The New York Public Library at Lincoln Center" (Dorothy L. Swerdlow); "The Museum of Broadcasting" (Robert Sauddek, Mary V. Ahern, Douglas Gibbons and Judith E. Schwartz); "Archives of the Mouse Factory" (David R. Smith); "Player Piano Rolls in the Collection of the Songwriters' Hall of Fame" (Ginnine Cocuzza); "The San Francisco Archives for the Performing Arts" (R. Eric Gustafson).

Volume Seven (c. 1980), edited by Ginnine Cocuzza and Barbara Naomi Cohen-Stratyner. Monograph: "Lazzi: the Comic Routines of the Commedia dell'Arte" (Mel Gordon); "Pulcinella, the False Prince" (Claudio Vincentini, translator).

Volume Eight (c. 1983), edited by Ginnine Cocuzza and Barbara Naomi Cohen-Stratyner. *Stage Design: Papers from the 15th International Congress of SIBMAS: "African State Design: Problems of Collecting, Cataloguing and Conserving Documents"* (Cecilia Folasade Adedeji); "The Stage Design Collection of the National Arts Centre, Ottawa, Canada" (Anthony Ibbotson); "Design by Motley: A Theatre and Costume Arts Collection" (Melissa Cain and Michael Mullin); "The McDowell Research Classification System for the Cataloguing of Scene and Costume Designs" (Alan Woods); "Problems and Observations Concerning the Translation of Scenographic Terms from French to English" (Alfred Golding); "Some Experience in Collecting of Documents on Theatre Scenery from the Past" (Olga Milanovic); "Conserving Theatre Designs for the Record and for Exhibition: A Designer's Views" (Peter T. Vagenas); "Influence of Stage Design on Music/Drama" (Nadezda Mosusova); "Models of Scenery and Costumes in the Performing Arts Department of the Biblioteque Nationale, Paris" (Cecile Giteau); "Elements of a Method for Using Models of Scenery or of Scenery Arrangements as Study Documents" (André Veinstein); "Audiovisual Techniques Used in Exhibits: Various Procedures" (Marie Françoise Christout); "Eighteenth-Century Stage Settings at the Court Theatres of Drottningholm and Gripsholm" (Barbro Stribolt); "Some Original Early 19th Century Stage Decorations in the Ludwigsburg Court Theatre: Problems of Conservation and Presentation" (Harald Zielske).

Volume Nine (c. 1983), edited by Ginnine Cocuzza and Barbara Naomi Cohen-Stratyner. Monograph: "An Essay in Stage Performance: A Translation of Franz Lang's *Dissertatio de Actione Scenica* (1727)" ("Symbolic Images especially Useful in Theatrical Performance and Costuming" (Alfred Siemon Golding).

Volume Ten (c. 1985), edited by Ginnine Cocuzza and Barbara Naomi Cohen-Stratyner. "Twentieth Century Fox Corporate Archives at the UCLA Theater Arts Library" (Audree Malkin); "Verbal Messages Cause Misunderstandings and Delays (Please Put Them in Writing): The Warner Bros. Collection" (Joanne L. Yeck); "The

Warner Brothers Collection at Princeton University Library" (Mary Ann Jensen); "Performing Arts Collections at The Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives" (Steve Nelson); "Performing Arts on Madison Avenue" (Cynthia G. Swank); "The Pasadena Playhouse Collection" (Lee R. Nemcheck); "The Dublin Gate Theatre at Northwestern University Library" (Ellen V. Howe); "The Penn State Archives of American Theatre Lighting" (William Allison); "Engineering Contributions to Theatre Technology: Remembering the Innovators" (Bruce Whitehead); "The Strand: Its History and Archives" (Frederick Bentham).

Volume Eleven (c. 1986), edited by Ginnine Cocuzza and Barbara Naomi Cohen-Stratyner. *Scenes and Machines from the 18th Century: The Stagecraft of Jacopo Fabris and Cityoen Boulet* (C. Thomas Ault, translator).

Volume Twelve (c. 1987), edited by Barbara Naomi Cohen-Stratyner. *Topical Bibliographies of the American Theatre*. "Preliminary Checklist of Early Printed Children's Plays in English, 1780-1855" (Jonathan Levy and Martha Mahard); "Actresses of All Work: Nineteenth-Century Sources on Women in Nineteenth-Century American Theatre" (Noreen C. Barnes and Laurie J. Wolf); "A Checklist of American Civil War Drama: Beginning to 1900" (Rosemary T. Cullen); "Female Impersonation on the American Stage, 1860 to 1927: A Selected Bibliography of Performed Materials, and a Review of Literature" (Geraldine Maschio); "Workers on Stage: An Annotated Bibliography of Labor Plays of the 1930s" (Colette Hyman).

Volume Thirteen (c. 1988), edited by Barbara Naomi Cohen-Stratyner. *The Drews and the Barrymores: A Dynasty of Actors: "American Acting Dynasties"* (Don Wilmeth); "From Strolling Players to Steven Spielberg: 200 Years of a Theatrical Family" (Mary Ann Jensen); "The Duchess of Arch Street: An Overview of Mrs. John Drew's Managerial Career" (C. Lee Jenner); "The Unbroken Chain: Traditions in Style" (James Kotsilibas-Davis); "Remembering Ethel Barrymore and Others" (William Roerick); "The Barrymores and Screen Acting" (Charles M. Affron); "An Introduction to Nadezda" (James Kotsilibas-Davis); "Nadezda: A Modern Tragedy" (Maurice Barrymore).

Volume Fourteen (c. 1989), edited by Barbara Naomi Cohen-Stratyner. *Performances in Periodicals: "Introducing Parlor Theatricals to the American Home"* (Florence C. Smith); "The Theatre as Seen Through Late Nineteenth Century Technical Periodicals" (Jack W. McCullough); "Popular Entertainment in the Trades: A Case Study of the *New York Clipper* and the *New York Dramatic Mirror*" (Stephen M. Vallillo); "Sound Recording Periodicals: 1890-1929" (Sara Velez); "The New York Review" (Maryann Chach); "Researching Exhibition Ballroom Dance: Exploring Non-traditional Sources" (Julie Malnig); "Fashion Fillers in Silent Film Periodicals" (Barbara Naomi Cohen-Stratyner).



From PAR 7



From PAR 13

CLAIRE McGLINCHEE

Distinction, grace, and creativity. These were among the many charms and accomplishments of Claire McGlinchee, emeritus professor of English at Hunter College and long-time member of the Theatre Library Association, who died in New York on January 25th, 1990.

Claire, a graduate of the class of 1921 of Radcliffe College, began her career at Hunter College as an assistant instructor of English in 1924 and retired in 1969 as a full professor. A Shakespearean scholar, she was active in numerous national and international organizations and associations, including the American Society for Theatre Research, the Shakespeare Association of America, the International Federation for Theatre Research, and the Society for Theatre Research in London.

With her sister Constance, an accomplished pianist, visitations to annual European Shakespeare and music festivals and congresses were an integral part of their cultural agenda. Closer to home, two of her delights were the George Freedley/TLA Awards ceremonies and the Shakespeare Birthday Celebration at The Players.

Those who knew Claire well will remember her lively anecdotes and reminiscences of the McGlinchee family's friendship with actress Julia Marlowe—tea in white gloves at the Plaza when Claire was barely in her teens! Although published a half century ago, her book, *The First Decade of the Boston Museum*, remains a basic and essential work for all major theatre collections. In it, she analyzes the various duties of the Museum's proprietors, stock company actors, and visiting stars. Claire McGlinchee was, indeed, a distinguished member of our association.

— Louis A. Rachow



From PAR 8

BOOK REVIEWS

Andrew Lloyd Webber: His Life and Works. By Michael Walsh. New York: Harry Abrams, 1989. 240 pp. \$39.95.

According to the publicity handouts that came with this book, the reader "will learn the truth about" Andrew Lloyd Webber's mother-in-law's involvement in the Christine Keeler scandal of the 1960's; the accusations of plagiarism that have plagued ALW's career; and the stormy relationship between ALW and lyricist Tim Rice.

While this tome was written with ALW's cooperation, it is not an "authorized" biography. The author, while obviously sympathetic to the music of ALW, goes out of his way to include excerpts from derogatory reviews and comments from the press, not only concerning ALW's music, but his private life, and even his personal appearance.

Some readers may take exception to the author's claim that ALW "has become the dominant figure of the postwar musical theatre" but none will dispute the statement that "he has earned more money from his music than any other theatre composer who ever lived." The British press has taken to referring to him as the "millionaire gnome."

No matter what you think of ALW's music, you cannot help but enjoy this book. It is crammed full of facts and gossip, not only about the shows, but about the actors, directors, producers and critics—all those who make up the world of ALW—as well. Frank Rich ("the butcher of Broadway") and Sarah Brightman ("Minnie Mouse on Quaaludes") are but a couple of them. This is a large, handsome volume with over 100 illustrations, 80 in full color. It is also heavy and "coffee table/Abrams" and difficult to read while relaxing in bed. I recommend playing all your ALW original cast albums in chronological order while going through this book.

Concerning the revelations promised in the beginning, Sarah Brightman's mother "had been one of the attractions" at a basement club in Soho where Christine Keeler and Mandy Rice-Davies also worked and met John Profumo and Stephen Ward. As for charges of plagiarism, the author states that "musical history abounds in uncanny resemblances, some intentional, some not." ALW and Tim Rice disagreed over the original production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*; other disagreements led to their determination to show the other that each could succeed on his own. There is also a "we can do it better than the Americans" theme running through their careers. Perhaps they can.

—Richard C. Lynch

son, Jr. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press Inc., 1988. 608 pp. \$75.

Their Place On The Stage: Black Women Playwrights in America. By Elizabeth Brown-Guillory. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press Inc., 1988. xiv + 163 pp. \$37.50.

The Development of Black Theater in America: From Shadow to Selves. By Leslie Catherine Sanders. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988. 252 pp. \$25.

The field of Afro-American drama welcomes the addition of three works: Bernard L. Peterson's comprehensive encyclopedia of over 700 black playwrights, script and screen writers whose work has either been written, produced and/or published since 1950; Elizabeth Brown-Guillory's insightful analysis of the black female perspective in the plays of Alice Childress, Lorraine Hansberry and Ntozake Shange; and Leslie Catherine Sanders's vigorous examination of the development of black theatre in America through the works of Willis Richardson, Randolph Edmonds, Langston Hughes, LeRoi Jones (Imamu Amiri Baraka), and Ed Bullins. Each makes a unique contribution to the study of African-American plays and poses a challenge to scholars to use it as a point of departure for further critical explorations.

Peterson's book is an invaluable resource which has taken over 20 years to compile. It provides the producer, theatre historian and educator with a directory that documents the names of writers and scripts that might otherwise have been lost. Since the 1960s and 1970s saw the proliferation of church-, community- and university-affiliated theatres, the writers and the works produced on these stages comprise the better part of this reference work. Alongside these yet unknown voices are listed celebrated Pulitzer Prize winners and playwrights whose reputations have been secured. For each entry, available biographical information and play and film titles are included. Each title is followed by a brief synopsis and production history. To insure that the directory can serve as a liaison between playwright and potential producer, the source of each play is noted: either the publication in which the script appears or the archival collection in which the unpublished manuscript is held. In many cases the author includes addresses of the writer or the writer's agent.

The second book advances the arena most neglected in critical studies of Afro-American theatre: the plays written by black women. Elizabeth Brown-Guillory, an award-winning playwright, begins her study with a brief overview of the women writers of the Harlem Renaissance. Their dramas of protest and race pride provide a context for the discussion of contemporary black women playwrights that follows. Childress, Hansberry and Shange have been chosen as specific voices that represent how the black feminist perspective has promoted the development of black dramatic themes over the past four decades.

What is most enlightening about the book is the critical construct that shapes Brown-Guillory's discussion. Once biographical data are dispensed with, the author divides her analysis into four chapters: Tonal Form—a discussion of the playwrights' use of symbols to express their unique viewpoints and personal values regarding what it means to be both black and female; Structural Form—the development of the principal female characters through stages of growth that parallel African initiation and survival rituals: Images of Blacks—the creation of new multidimensional male and female character types; and The African Continuum—the importance of the familial and racial bonds that do and will promote survival. Selected plays by Childress, Hansberry and Shange as well as autobiographical writings and critical essays serve to illustrate the formal or thematic concern being treated.

Brown-Guillory's interpretation shows depth of understanding and critical acumen, and the structure of her discussion provides a framework that can be used in further examinations of the work of black women playwrights. However, her method of presenting evidence from the plays is frustrating. The reader never has the sense of how these aesthetic angles come together in an individual play as a whole.

The final and third offering by Leslie Catherine Sanders explores the development of a "black stage reality" in the works of five representative playwrights. Through careful analysis she shows how each author approaches the dilemma facing the black playwright in America: how to create a discrete theatre that portrays black characters realistically and at the same time uses dramatic conventions appropriate for black audiences. Her examination begins with the need to free black characters from traditional stereotypes in the works of Richardson and Edmonds. She moves on to Langston Hughes' celebration of the ordinary black folk—their concerns, their humor, their religion—using both conventional stage realism as well as experiments with the connections between theatrical presentation and the Southern Baptist church service. With Le Roi Jones, Sanders shows how this "founder" of the black arts movement created a drama rooted in the theories of Artaud. The plays that resulted were a shared communal exorcism as well as ritualistic celebration. Finally she ends with Ed Bullins whose more than fifty plays explore universal questions about the quest for self-knowledge from a black perspective.

In Sanders' book, the theatre that once could only portray "Negro" life against a white ground is shown transforming into a theatre in which Afro-American life is the dramatic landscape. It is a theatre for a black audience but it is no longer exclusive. The once-dominant white audience is invited to "encounter the Other" and learn something about themselves in the process. Although Sanders mentions Ntozake Shange and Charles Fuller, it is almost in passing. One only wishes that the author had either examined those play-

Contemporary Black American Playwrights and Their Plays: A Biographical Directory and Dramatic Index. By Bernard L. Peter-

wrights in detail or brought her study up-to-date with the discussion of at least one other important contemporary black playwright of the 1980s: Richard Wesley or August Wilson to name two.

— Andrea J. Nouryeh

Contemporary Polish Theater and Drama (1956-1984). By E. J. Czerwinski. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1988. xix + 155 pp. \$29.95.

If you mention the Polish theatre of the last thirty-five years to most American students and scholars of theatre and drama, the only name familiar to most will be Jerzy Grotowski. But to E. J. Czerwinski, Grotowski is only "the tip of the iceberg." In *Contemporary Polish Theater and Drama (1956-1984)*, Czerwinski vividly demonstrates that theatre in Poland has "always been an exciting phenomenon." Since the beginning of World War II, the artists of the stage in Poland have battled censorship and carefully guarded interaction with Western theatre that only Grotowski and a very few others managed to circumvent. Perhaps recent events in Eastern Europe will finally alleviate the constraints that have hampered the Polish stage. But, as Czerwinski superbly illuminates, an impressive diversity in dramatic literature and theatrical practice has emerged in Poland despite the seemingly overwhelming obstacles.

In an introductory chapter, Czerwinski traces the rise of Polish theatre and drama in the eighteenth century before examining the influence of a few forerunners of the contemporary Polish stage. Leon Kruczkowski, Witold Gombrowicz, Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz and Adam Tarn. This brief survey precisely sets the scene for his detailed and finely constructed chapters on Leszek Kolakowski and Jan Kott, Tadeusz Rozewicz, Slawomir Mrozek, Jerzy Broszkiewicz and Tymoteusz Karpowicz, and a variety of directors and scene designers in two final catch-all chapters.

Czerwinski is at his most interesting when he ties developments on the Polish stage to political and social events in Eastern Europe and to theatrical practices in the West. The book manages the tricky combination of thorough scholarship without pedantry, and it is as accessible to those with little background as it is to those familiar with the cross-currents of Eastern European theatre.

A brief chronology of major events in recent Polish theatre and a good bibliography of primary and secondary sources accompany the text. Unfortunately, no production photographs are included, which could especially amplify the accomplishments of Polish designers. Quibbles aside, Czerwinski's study is a welcome introduction to a little-known, but fascinating and significant theatrical culture.

— James Fisher

Jazz Cleopatra: Josephine Baker In Her Time. By Phyllis Rose. New York: Doubleday, 1989. xi + 321 pp. \$22.50.

Any biographer of Josephine Baker is asking for trouble. The subject of journalistic hype for many years, she compounded the problem by often indulging interviewers with flights of fancy as imaginative as her costumes. Undaunted, Phyllis Rose has given us a lively and often moving account of this extraordinary entertainer who rose from obscurity on dingy U.S. stages to international stardom.

Ms. Rose has chosen her title carefully. In Baker she finds the same vigor, the same talent for improvisation, and the same capacity to shock that sophisticated Parisians found so refreshing in American jazz. In depicting Baker as a twentieth-century avatar of Cleopatra, she rejects the historical Cleopatra in favor of Shakespeare's heroine. Certainly, both possessed an "infinite variety," and Baker's exotic allure—her feathers, her pet leopard, and her famous banana costume—captivated the *gratin* of Paris as completely as Cleopatra conquered Antony.

But Baker, despite her own capitulation to the pleasures of Paris, remained an American. Her signature song, "J'ai deux amours, mon pays et Paris," makes this very plain. But far from having two worlds, she was a woman without a country. Despite the adoring French public and countless male admirers, some of whom she married, her place in society was clearly defined in the two lamentable talkies which she made in 1934 and 1935, *Zou-Zou* and *La Princesse Tam-Tam*. In the first she plays a weebegone laundress who pines for Jean Gabin, achieves overnight success as a dancer in a bird cage, and loses Gabin to a vapid blonde Aryan. In *The Princess Tam-Tam*, first seen as a Tunisian goatherd, she again achieves stardom as an uninhibited dancer, but in the final scene reverts to Tunisian poverty as a goat munches a leaf from a book entitled *Civilization*.

Even after her success she remained a displaced person in the United States. Her celebrated jousting over civil rights with Walter Winchell, Sherman Billingsley, and J. Edgar Hoover drew vigorous applause, but it also drew upon her a storm of abuse. Even her partisans were dismayed when, for a short time, she succumbed to the energy and magnetism of Mussolini and Evita Peron. Her marriages failed, one after another. Her Quixotic project, *The Rainbow Tribe*—in the course of which she adopted a dozen children of various nationalities—proved a noble but disastrous failure. Even her exploits during World War II, as an intelligence agent for De Gaulle, however courageous they may have been, were somehow inept.

She was, in short, a "natural"—a woman who lived intuitively. Not surprisingly, she doted on animals who, in turn, doted on her. She was indeed a "jazz Cleopatra" and Ms. Rose has effectively captured the spirit of this elusive, untamed woman.

— William W. Appleton

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Dennis Kennedy's **Granville Barker and the Dream of Theatre**, winner of the Freedley Award Honorable Mention for 1985, is now available in paperback from Cambridge University Press at \$16.95.

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