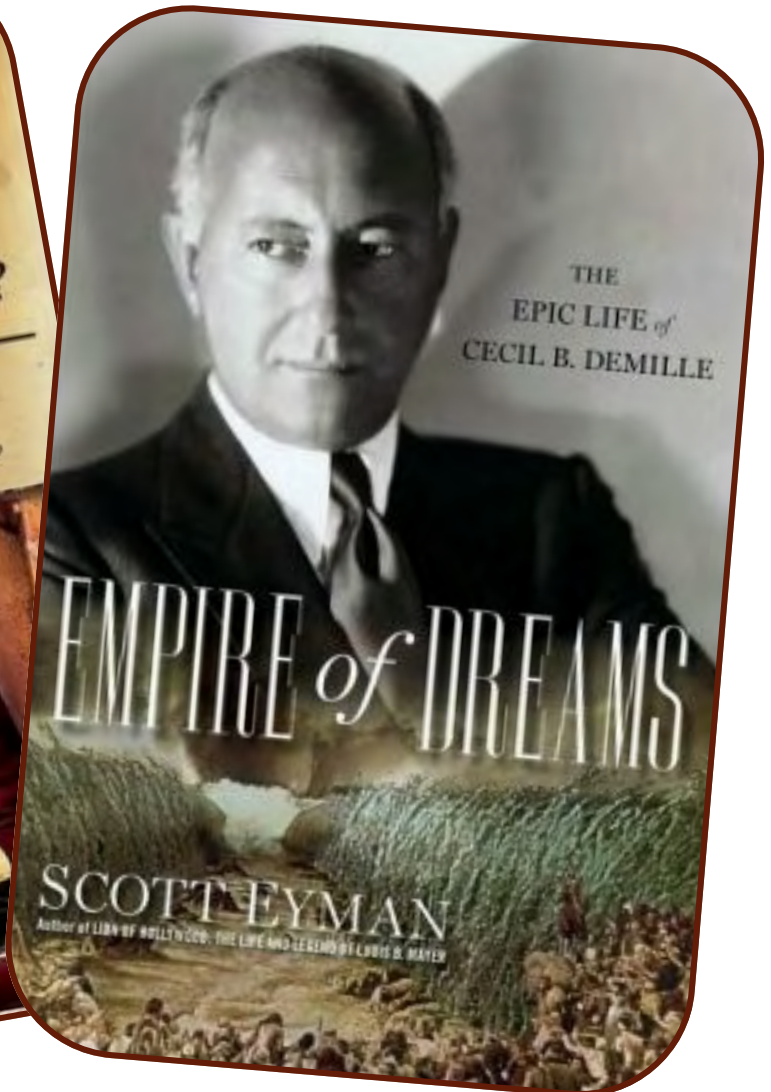
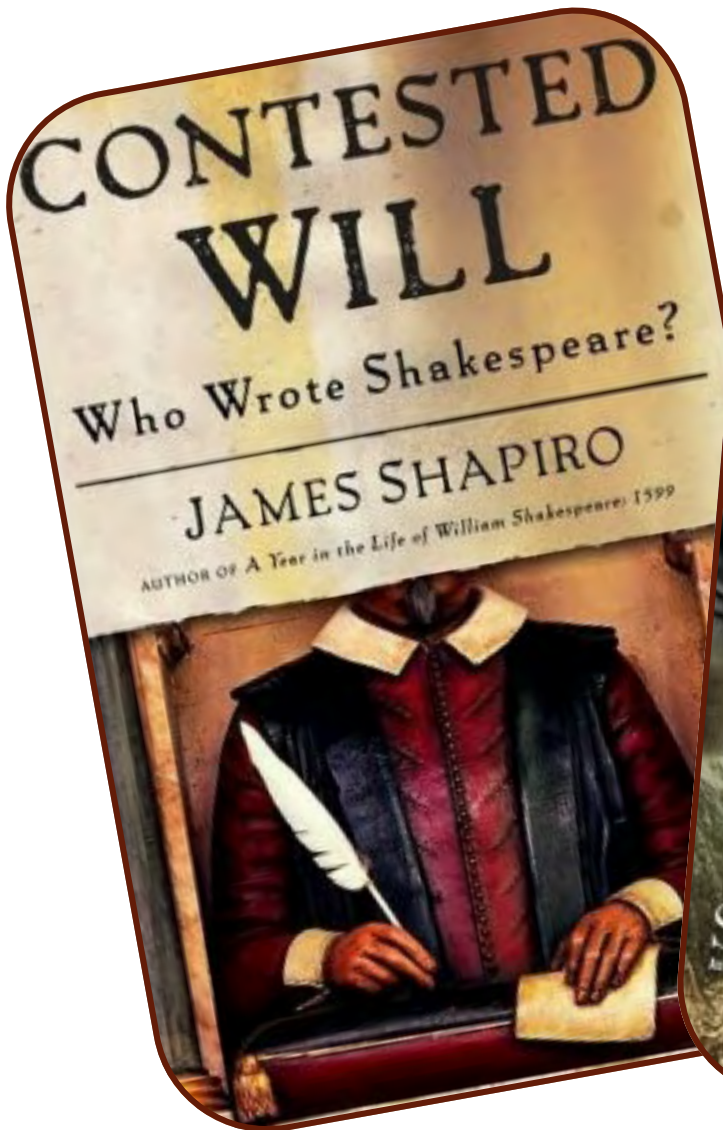


BROADSIDE

38/3 Summer 2011

Newsletter of the Theatre Library Association



TLA Book Awards Winners 2011 **6**

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4	President's Report	<i>BROADSIDE</i> (ISSN: 0068-2748) is published three times a year and distributed to all members in good standing. Contents ©Theatre Library Association Access via login—Members contact info@tla-online.org (info@tla-online.org)
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BROADSIDE PUBLICATION GUIDELINES

BROADSIDE is the principal medium through which the Theatre Library Association communicates news, activities, policies, and procedures. Collectively, past issues also provide historical information about the organization and the profession of performing arts librarianship. *BROADSIDE* has no ambition to serve as a scholarly journal. Scholarly and other articles or monographs may be considered for TLA's other principal publication, *Performing Arts Resources*.

In addition, *BROADSIDE* serves as a means for the exchange among members of information that advances the mission of the organization. Examples of this include short news items about recent activities of both individual and institutional members; short reviews of relevant books and other resources; news of relevant exhibits, conferences, and other developments in performing arts librarianship, collections, and scholarship.

In keeping with the aims of a newsletter, and to help the Editor and the TLA Publications Committee to maintain fair and consistent editorial policies, the Publications Committee has developed the following guidelines.

PHOTO CREDITS:

Page 4: Kenneth Schlesinger and JJ; Kathy Schlesinger, photographer.

Page 12-13: *This Is* exhibition; Greg Hatch, photographer.

1. Priority in the publication of articles will be given to the Association's officers, members of the Board, and chairs of committees. These articles provide the most important means by which the leadership of the Association communicates recent Board decisions, upcoming TLA-sponsored events, appeals for member involvement, etc.
2. TLA members in good standing are encouraged to submit news items that are in keeping with the statement above. All submissions are subject to editing for length, clarity, and factual confirmation.
3. Letters to the Editor are encouraged, but must be limited to 200 words, due to space considerations.
4. Reviews of books or other resources are an excellent way for members to contribute to TLA and the profession. Reviews should be limited to 500 words and should include a concise summary of the resource, a comparison of it to similar resources, and a brief evaluation. Suggestions and unsolicited reviews should be sent to the Book Review Editor.
5. The copyright of all articles published in *BROADSIDE* will be owned by TLA. Permission to republish an article may be requested from the Editor.
6. Ideas for articles – other than brief news items, book reviews, or submissions from officers and committee chairs – should be submitted to the Editor in advance in order to allow sufficient time to plan layout, provide constructive suggestions, and occasionally seek guidance from the Publications Committee. Articles should relate to performing arts libraries, library resources, or related topics in performing arts scholarship, rather than to general performing arts topics.

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 40 Lincoln Center Plaza
 New York, New York 10023

TLA website: <http://www.tla-online.org/>

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- 1) Send e-mail (nothing in the subject) to: LISTSERV@listserv.illinois.edu
- 2) in the body of the e-mail message type the following line:
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MISSION STATEMENT

Founded in 1937, the Theatre Library Association supports librarians and archivists affiliated with theatre, dance, performance studies, popular entertainment, motion picture and broadcasting collections. TLA promotes professional best practices in acquisition, organization, access and preservation of performing arts resources in libraries, archives, museums, private collections, and the digital environment. By producing publications, conferences, panels, and public events, TLA fosters creative and ethical use of performing arts materials to enhance research, live performance, and scholarly communication.



JOIN US!

Membership

(Annual dues: \$30 personal, \$40 institutional; \$20 student/non-salaried members. In order to defray the rising costs of international postage, members with non-U.S. mailing addresses are now required to pay a \$10 surcharge.) Includes *Performing Arts Resources*, published occasionally. For availability and prices of past issues of *PAR* and *BROADSIDE*, contact info@tla-online.org.

TLA's Executive Board convened on June 17 at Lincoln Center. We spent the morning in discussion with SIBMAS' Executive Committee about a proposed joint Conference in 2014. After an afternoon meeting of TLA business, SIBMAS kindly offered us complimentary tickets to Cirque du Soleil's sensational ZARKANA at Radio City Music Hall.

BROADSIDE – Open Access

Congratulations! You're reading the first-ever open access issue of BROADSIDE. In recognition of next year's 75th Anniversary, the Board resolved to make all past and present issues of our newsletter available to members and the general public. For all you curious onlookers, you're always welcome to join TLA: <http://www.tla-online.org/members/join.html>.

TLA Book Awards – November 4, 2011

It was with regret that I accepted Book Awards Chair Brook Stowe's decision to step down. After succeeding Richard Wall, Brook automated the process and greatly increased outreach and participation by publishers to guarantee a broader field of submitted monographs.

Fortunately, Cynthia Tobar and Flordalisa Lopez—who closely supported Brook's efforts over the past few years—have come forward to assume responsibilities as Co-Chairs for this year and moving forward. This is a complex process involving two

Awards, six Jurors, and simultaneous tracking of hundreds of books. We enthusiastically welcome Cynthia and Lisa and give them our heartfelt support. We hope you will join us this Fall on Friday, November 4 at Lincoln Center's Bruno Walter Auditorium.



Kenneth Schlesinger and JJ, 2010.

Online Voting and Electronic Renewals

We've decided to bite the bullet and migrate to a virtual process to manage annual Elections and member renewals. Early this Fall we'll pilot Ballotbin, which we find to be a seamless and intuitive task. An e-mail will link you to a site with uploaded documents for renewing your annual membership. Of course, we will readily accommodate those members still wishing to receive paper mailings and ballots.

ASTR-TLA Conference

We hope you'll be able to join us this Fall in lovely, cosmopolitan Montreal from November 17-20 for the American Society for Theatre Research-Theatre Library Association annual Conference. TLA's Plenary, *Fringe Economies, Commercial Ventures, and Cultural Repositories*, will feature presenters from Colby College, Ohio State, and University of Pittsburgh, and—we hope—Cirque du Soleil. In fact, we're planning a tour to Cirque's fascinating world headquarters, which takes up an

entire city block of Montreal!

SIBMAS-TLA Proposed Conference – June 2014

Unfortunately, University of Texas fell through as the host site for the planned joint Conference between our two organizations. However, TLA pitched the proposal of New York City serving as Conference location in 2014. SIBMAS' Executive Committee responded positively—in both English and French!

This ambitious undertaking would consist of a proposed partnership between Columbia, CUNY, New York University, and New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. Initial discussions are under way. We would maintain the original Conference theme, *Reimagining Collections—Engaging Communities*. Now all we need to do is raise the money . . .

Publications

By the time you read this, you should have received Stephen Johnson's whopping *A Tyranny of Documents: The Performing Arts Historian as Film Noir Detective*. Logging in at a cool 360 pages – we're considering selling the film rights as well! Fortunately, University of Toronto pledged a generous contribution to underwrite its publication.

John Calhoun continues his proficient work on *Documenting: Scenic Design*, the third part of our Design Trilogy. And Marti LoMonaco and David Nochimson are assembling writers for their 75th Anniversary edition of *Performing Arts Resources*, which should tell you everything you need to know about current and past state-of-the-art in performing arts libraries.

Simultaneously, Marti and David are helming the planning of TLA's 75th Anniversary event—slated as part of the Book Awards in October 2012. We have already completed a number of Oral Histories with distinguished TLA alumni, which should foster atmosphere and richness at this event. The coordinators are contemplating the year 1937 in performing arts history as the organizing theme.

Brooks McNamara Performing Arts Librarian Scholarship

We've extended the submission deadline to June 30 and should announce our first Winner soon. This individual receives a \$500 stipend and is invited to read their Essay at the Book Awards.

Membership and Budget

TLA membership currently stands at 271 [please help us break 300

again], but includes an unprecedented 42 new members. And for those deadbeats out there [you know who you are], you easily can renew via PayPal.

TLA's financial health is strong. The current balance stands at \$69,859.69 and our savings certificate is worth \$5,220.46.

Kudos

Longtime TLA Board member Phyllis Dircks, Chair of our Distinguished Service Award Committee, recently was named Distinguished Professor at Long Island University. Way to go, Phyllis!

Best Regards,

**Kenneth Schlesinger
President**

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 2011

**4
Fall Board Meeting**

10:00 AM-4:00 PM
The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
111 Amsterdam Avenue (at West 65th Street), New York, NY

**4
Annual Business Meeting and Awards Ceremony**

Business Meeting: 5:30-6:00 PM
Awards Ceremony: 6:00-7:00 PM
The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
Bruno Walter Auditorium

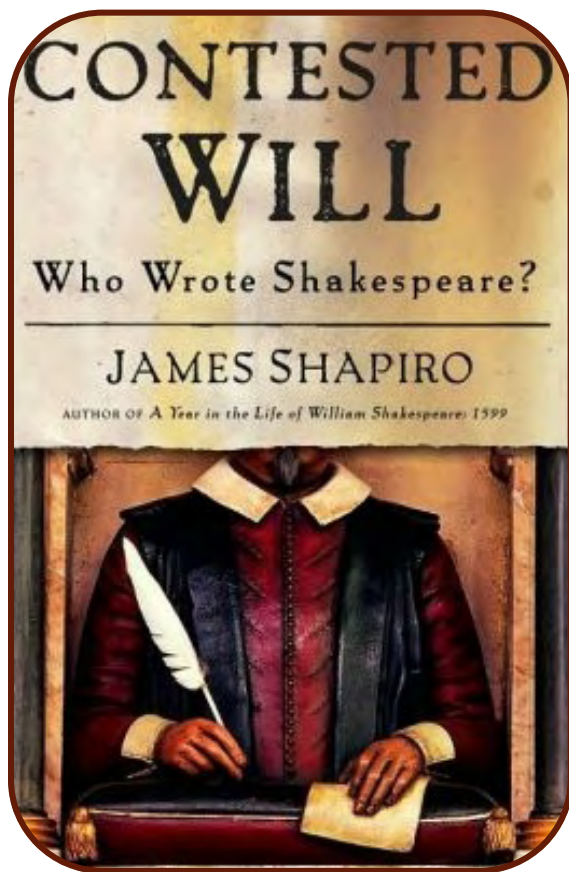
**17-20
American Society for Theatre Research-Theatre Library Association Annual Conference**
TLA Plenary: *Fringe Economies, Commercial Ventures, and Cultural Repositories*
Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth Hotel
900 Rene Levesque Blvd. W
Montreal, Quebec

December 2011

**1
Deadline for *BROADSIDE* submissions**



Theatre Library Association 2011 Book Awards

**Freedley Award Winner**

James Shapiro. *Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare?* (Simon & Schuster)

Freedley Special Jury Prize

Stephen Sondheim. *Finishing the Hat: Collected Lyrics (1954-1981) with Attendant Comments, Principles, Heresies, Grudges, Whines and Anecdotes* (Knopf)

Freedley Finalists (Alphabetical by Author)

Barranger, Milly S. *A Gambler's Instinct: The Story of Broadway Producer Cheryl Crawford* (Southern Illinois University Press)

Davis, Andrew. *America's Longest Run: A History of the Walnut Street Theatre* (Keystone)

Hill, Constance Valis. *Tap Dancing America* (Oxford)

Nussbaum, Felicity. *Rival Queens: Actresses, Performance and the Eighteenth-Century British Theater* (University of Pennsylvania Press)

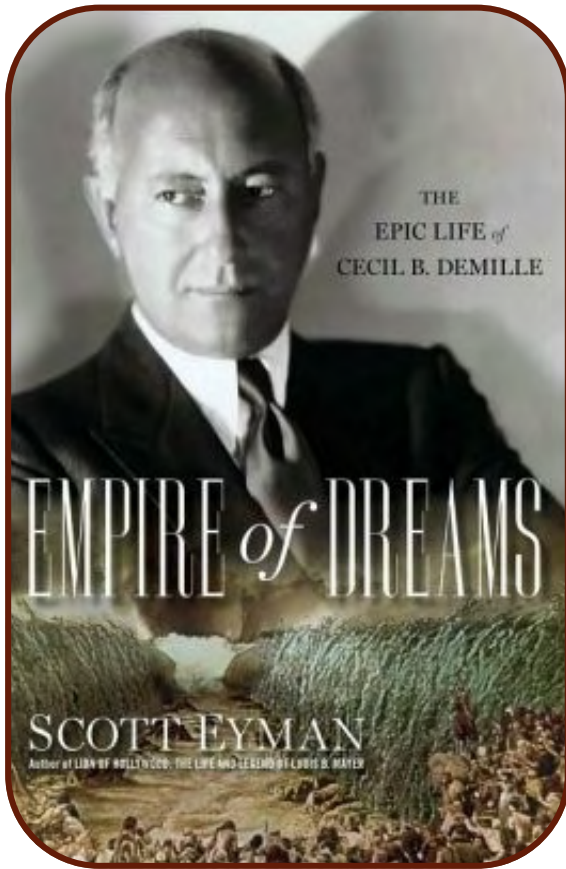
Roberts, David. *Thomas Betterton: The Greatest Actor of the Restoration Stage* (Cambridge)

Rodger, Gillian M. *Champagne Charlie and Pretty Jemima: Variety Theater in the Nineteenth Century* (University of Illinois Press)

Scheijen, Sjeng. *Diaghilev: A Life* (Oxford)

Stempel, Larry. *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* (W.W. Norton)

Theatre Library Association 2011 Book Awards



Wall Award Winner

Scott Eyman. *Empire of Dreams: The Epic Life of Cecil B. DeMille* (Simon & Schuster)

Wall Special Jury Prize

Yunte Huang. *Charlie Chan: The Untold Story of the Honorable Detective and His Rendezvous with American History* (W.W. Norton)

Wall Finalists (Alphabetical by Author)

Bingham, Dennis. *Whose Lives Are They, Anyway? The Biopic as Contemporary Film Genre* (Rutgers University Press)

Giddins, Gary. *Warning Shadows: Home Alone with Classic Cinema* (W.W. Norton)

Irvin, Sam. *Kay Thompson: From Funny Face to Eloise* (Simon & Schuster)

Lawrence, Amy. *The Passion of Montgomery Clift* (University of California Press)

Pipolo, Tony. *Robert Bresson: A Passion for Film* (Oxford)

Price, Steven. *The Screenplay: Authorship, Theory and Criticism* (Palgrave Macmillan)

Schlüpmann, Heide. *The Uncanny Gaze: The Drama of Early German Cinema* (Translated by Inga Pollman) (University of Illinois Press)

Solomon, Matthew. *Disappearing Tricks: Silent Film, Houdini and the New Magic of the Twentieth Century* (University of Illinois Press)

An (Un)discovered Archive: The Records of the Twelfth Night Club, Inc.

For a theatre historian, the thrill of discovering an unexamined archive is alluring. How many times does this occur in an academic's life? I am fortunate enough to be able to say that this has occurred in my lifetime and I am humbled by the opportunity to explore this rich trove of theatre history. As a 19th century American theatre historian, I have known of the Twelfth Night Club since my days toiling over my doctoral thesis. As an actress in New York City, I was invited to Club events in the 1990s, between my own acting engagements. For those of us interested in the history of women in American theatre, the Club has been hovering in the background, like a ghost, during times of research. We've read about the Club in the memoirs of actors and actresses. For scholars interested in the history of acting in America, the Club pops up in the diaries and letters of actors and theatre managers. Scholars in women's history and labor history have seen the Club mentioned in the histories of women's clubs as well as histories of Actors' Equity and the Actors Fund. I have been fortunate enough to not only learn of the Club's existence through my doctoral research, but also to

experience the Club as a member. Through my membership, I have discovered this depository of theatrical history and memorabilia and look forward to excavating and archiving the material.

To give a brief context, I am the Club's Recording Secretary as well as the Club's Historian/Archivist. The Twelfth Night Club, Inc. was founded in 1891 by Alice Fischer Harcourt, Viola Allen, Annie Russell and others. Initially called the F.A.D.s, in honor of the trinity skill set of actors—fencing, acting, and dancing—Fischer Harcourt, encouraged by Edwin Booth, an

in 1893. One of the historical artifacts of the Club, in fact, is the original charter from New York State.²

The early members of the Club agreed that "mutual assistance, study, and improvement" was to be a major tenet for the organization's activities.³ The Club initially consisted of young actresses who thought by "clubbing together" they could get instruction less expensively.⁴ Money went to creating and maintaining a studio "wherein members may pursue musical and other studies." The first

meeting place was the gymnasium at St. George's and they paid their teacher \$2.⁵

While the early years of the club focused on training, study, and improvement, the Club soon developed an interest in mutual assistance to theatrical women. One of the first endeavors in this area was assisting

the Actors Fund in distributing aid to the "ailing and needy women of the profession."⁶ Sometimes the need existed in the Club itself. At the Actors Fund fair of 1891, the "ailing" Annie Russell helped create the Club's exhibit.⁷

From the 1890s throughout the 1910s, the Club grew quickly and,



Twelfth Night Club Portrait, 1923

early supporter, envisioned the Club as a sister organization to the Lambs and the Players Clubs.¹ Daniel Frohman, an early supporter of the Club, suggested that "Twelfth Night Club" would be a more appropriate name for a club whose members were all Broadway leading ladies. This was the name under which the Club incorporated



Portrait of Mary Anderson, a very popular and successful NY actress during the 1870s and 80s; why her portrait is in the archive is a mystery.

through an invitation-only system, limited membership to 100 women. These members were active participants in the New York theatre community and many were on stage during these decades. Over the years, members included Agnes Booth, Alice Fischer, Effie Shannon, playwright Grace Furness, Agnes Ethel, Blanche Bates, Minnie Maddern Fiske, Laurette Taylor, Helen Hayes, Ethel Barrymore, Maida Craigen, Ruth Boucicault, Agnes Moorehead, and actress/producer Helen Bonfils. The Club, however, continued to grow by awarding honorary membership status to prominent theatre women of the 1890s and 1900s, beginning with Helena Modjeska and Sarah Bernhardt and including twentieth-century actresses Julie Harris, Jessica Tandy, Celeste Holm, and Nina Foch. Today, honorary members

include Marian Seldes, Angela Lansbury, Elaine Stritch, Rosemary Harris, and Tammy Grimes.⁸

Moreover, once a month, a distinguished member of the theatrical profession was invited as a guest of honor. The first of these monthly receptions, or teas, was given in honor of Madge Kendal.⁹ Men, sometimes, did have a presence in the Club. At “gala receptions,” men were invited and allowed into the “sacred precincts.”¹⁰ If the guest of honor was a man, he was the only male in attendance. Male guests of honor included Richard Mansfield and Daniel Frohman. At regular Club events, however, men were not included until late in the 20th century.

An important Club activity was benefit performances, held not only to raise money for the Club, but also money to be given to a charity. Twelfth Night Club benefits, sometimes called revels or masques, were held several times a year and usually featured entertainments written exclusively for the Club, often by Club members. One early revel featured a performance of *A Burning Question in Elysium*, featuring twelve of Shakespeare’s heroines played by twelve members of the Club. It was “a great success and even delighted the *blasé* members of the profession.”¹¹ This performance also featured *Drama from the Actresses Point of View* by Mrs. Arden. Another benefit, in March 1912, took place at the Lyceum Theatre and proceeds went to the Club and to the Stonywood Sanatorium in the Adirondacks. The program featured an opening

address by Otis Skinner, original songs and monologues by Club members and friends, and various one-act plays and skits. One skit featured George M. Cohan. *Souffle* by Club member Augusta Raymond Kidder, was reviewed by the *New York Times* as “a skit on current plays.”¹² It was common in these benefits to present self-referential skits and plays, commenting on the lives of theatrical performers. The Actors Fund continues to stage similar benefits for its fundraising activities.

A common feature of the revels was the use of cross-dressing for the male roles. Sometimes the Club invited the male members of the Lambs and/or Players Club to play male roles, but cross-dressing still remains popular in the Club today, especially for the January *Twelfth Night* performance. Travesties, satires, and burlesques were also popular, such as member Maida Reed’s *The Twelfth Night Club in Bill’s (Shakespeare’s) Day*.¹³

Today, members of the Club work in all areas of theatre, television, and film. We are established as a tax-exempt, not-for-profit organization dedicated to raising money for theatre-related charities as well as providing our members with a warm and relaxed atmosphere to enjoy the company of other theatre professionals. We are an all-volunteer organization, existing completely through contributions and the dues of our members and Gentlemen Friends.

Almost every month we hold a Sunday afternoon meeting with a

special theme or celebrity guest. Guests in recent years have included Marge Champion, Patti LuPone, Maureen Stapleton, Stiller and Meara, Patricia Neal, Rosemary Harris, Celeste Holm, Hayley Mills, Tammy Grimes, Anne Jackson and Eli Wallach, Liz Smith, and Angela Lansbury.

We invite female playwrights who can stage their own one-act plays, perform one-woman shows, or give lectures on recent publications/memoirs. Open mike events allow our members to read their own writings—poetry, short stories, short plays, etc.—as well as reading favorite works. Our Players and Playwrights group continues to hold readings and stage productions.

Membership participation at all levels (writing, performing, directing, and production) is encouraged and welcomed. Recent productions have included Coward's *Waiting in the Wings*, Christie/Darbon's *A Murder Is Announced*, Rattigan's *Separate Tables: Table Number Seven*, and Giraudoux's *The Madwoman of Chailot*. The Club's purpose is to primarily present plays either written by women or featuring female-centered plots and themes, and/or featuring theatrical themes. For example, in 1929, the Club presented a reading of Alice Gerstenberg's *The Pot Boiler*, a meta-theatrical play about the rehearsal process.¹⁴ For the 125th Anniversary in 2016, the Club will revive the popular midnight Revel, a raucous celebration of theatre, which will include parts of old Revels from the archives as well as new material created by



Twelfth Night Club Archive, June 2011

Club members.

Currently, The Actors Fund of America is generously providing us space to hold our functions. But we are still searching for a permanent home where we can display our extensive collection of memorabilia of the American theatre, and continue as a support network of encouragement and companionship for actresses in the 21st century.

Sadly, in 1999, after more than 25 years at the 55th Street location and over 100 years in existence, the Club lost its clubhouse lease and had no option but to place its vast collection of furniture, paintings, photographs, and other theatre memorabilia in storage while it looked for permanent, appropriate space. The Actors Fund quite graciously offered us shared space in one of its Manhattan locations,

but as of 2011 the Club's possessions have remained in storage and the Club is still using the Actors Fund space.

The archival material is packed in boxes, crated in large containers, in filing cabinets, and wrapped in brown paper and scattered throughout the packed unit. Club members did the first major "cleanout" of the unit in May 2011. As a result, a narrow aisle is now available that allows access to most of the packed material. My project will be in three stages: first, to open boxes, crates, etc.; unwrap portraits, photos, and other framed material; and index exactly what we have in the archives. It is crucial that the Club has an accurate record of what we have. Secondly, I will organize the space to ensure safety of materials. The Club will

purchase archival files, boxes, covers, etc. to protect items. Thirdly, depending on what I find in the archive, I will focus on select materials that lend themselves to scholarly analysis.

The archive will, of course, offer up surprises along the way. At this time, however, we do know that materials include business records of the Club; portraits and photographs of Club members and/or theatrical luminaries; scripts of original plays, including many that were presented at Revels; books and published scripts; and programs and playbills from American and UK theatres, some dating back to the 1850s. I also anticipate finding the original scripts from the Club's revels.

I am excited about this project and look forward to working on it. The Twelfth Night Club has a rich history as an organization that offered, and continues to offer, emotional and physical sustenance to actresses. It also offered, and continues to offer, a space where women in theatre can present their work. By excavating this archive, I hope to illuminate this small corner of theatrical, and women's, history.

Notes

1. *The New York Times*, "A Quaint Theatrical Organization," January 20, 1907. The Lambs Club and the Players Club were exclusively male organizations and, while they did allow women as guests, they were not allowed as members.
2. Twelfth Night Club Archive, New York City, June 2011.
3. *The New York Times*, March 23, 1891.
4. *The New York Times*, January 20, 1907.
5. *The New York Times*, May 3, 1891.
6. Ibid.
7. *The New York Times*, March 24, 1892.
8. Twelfth Night Club, June Activities Flyer, June 2011.
9. Jane Cunningham Croly, *The History of the Women's Club Movement in America*, Vol. 1, General Federation of Women's Clubs, New York: Henry G. Allen & Co., 1898, 915.
10. *The New York Times*, January 20, 1907.
11. Croly, 916. Also, *Pearson's Magazine*, Vol IX, no 1, January 1903, 101. The play, by Grant Stewart, was written expressly for the Club.
12. *The New York Times*, March 17, 1912.
13. Twelfth Night Club Archive, New York City, June 2011.
14. *The New York Times*, January 7, 1929.

Dr. Helen Huff
Associate Professor, Speech
and Theatre Arts Dept.
CUNY-Borough of Manhattan
Community College

Ghost of a Writer: a Review of “*This Is: Tennessee Williams & Friends: A Centennial Exhibition*”

Maybe it was because I was spending a week-long vacation in New York City, wining and dining with my partner’s rich and famous classmates at their Columbia College reunion. Perhaps it was because I’d already purchased my ticket to see the Off-Broadway premiere of The New Group and Tectonic Theater Project’s co-production “One Arm,” a stage adaptation of an unproduced 1967 Tennessee Williams screenplay based on his 1948 short story of the same name.

Either way, I was excited to view, and review, “*This Is: Tennessee Williams & Friends, A Centennial Exhibition*” at the Columbia University Rare Book & Manuscript Library, March 21 to July 1, 2011. In commemoration of Tennessee Williams’ 100th birthday, Performing Arts Collections curator Jennifer B. Lee chose to display production drafts of plays and screenplays amid his journals and correspondence, photographs and paintings of family, friends, and lovers, set renderings, awards, and personal effects from an extensive collection that was primarily acquired by the library in a 1994 purchase of the contents of Williams’ Key West home.

Walking into the Kempner Gallery, visitors were greeted by a display case filled with four of Mr. Williams’ typewriters, each of a different era, marking his fifty-five years of creative writing that began with a 1928 magazine article published in *Weird Tales*. In the built-in display case to the left was a copy of that early “Tom Williams” publication surrounded by family portraits and



childhood drawings, including a snapshot of his mother Edwina reading to Tom and his beloved sister Rose.

The displays continued chronologically through his adult life, starting with a 1940 production script of his first play to be produced, *Battle of Angels*. A photo of Williams’ lover Kip Kiernan from that same year and a Williams’ poem dedicated to him accompanied the script. Indeed, throughout the exhibition, Ms. Lee presented numerous depictions of

Williams’ male companions, such as a photo of a gleaming, dapper Amado “Pancho” Rodriguez y Gonzalez with Williams in a courtyard garden and portraits of longtime partner Frank Merlo painted by Williams. These images—along with Williams’ heartfelt letters to artistic collaborators, inscriptions of friendship on actors’ scripts, and photos of the playwright relaxing with his bulldogs and bicycling near his Key West home—imparted a sense of love, companionship, and contentment not often expressed in his published works.

Alongside those personal effects were typewritten copies of his most celebrated works—*The Glass Menagerie*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Cat on a*

Hot Tin Roof, *Suddenly Last Summer*—often inscribed with a dedication and a poem on the title page. The texts were interspersed with set renderings by Jo Mielziner, play posters, the only Tony Award Williams won (for *The Rose Tattoo*), and Williams’ oil paint set surrounded by paintings of Icarus falling and an homage to Eugene O’Neill.

Gratefully, Ms. Lee dedicated a portion of the exhibition to Williams’ prolific yet underappreciated last 20 years

as a writer. The late-period scripts—*This Is (An Entertainment)*, *Now and at the Hour of Our Death*, *The Eccentricities of a Nightingale*, *In the Bar of a Tokyo Hotel*, *Vieux Carré*, and *Something Cloudy, Something Clear*, to name a few—were frequently covered with handwritten notes and edits by Williams and by director Elia Kazan. The Presidential Medal of Freedom, presented to Tennessee Williams by Jimmy

Carter in 1980 in recognition of his contributions to literature, was prominently displayed along with its certificate.

The floor cases that made up the rest of the exhibition were primarily filled with movie posters, press books, and publicity stills. These felt a bit out of place, as a presentation of works further removed from Williams' artistic hand, with one humorous exception: the Irving Rapper screenplay for *A Glass Menagerie*,

autographed by Tennessee Williams with the disclaimer, "I have never read this thing, word of honor!" Overall, the arrangement of Williams' written works in the context of his personal life seemed to reinforce the intimate, if not entirely autobiographical, nature of his plays, screenplays, novels, and short stories.

Greg Hatch
University of Utah

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THE 3 VOLUME SERIES
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Edited by Peter McKinnon and Eric Fielding

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AUTHORS and INTERVIEWERS NEEDED for the 75th Anniversary Volume of *Performing Arts Resources*

Call for Authors

We are looking for authors to contribute to the forthcoming volume of *Performing Arts Resources* focused on the history of Theatre Library Association and performing arts librarianship in celebration of TLA's 75th Anniversary. Authors are needed for the following topics:

***Founding of TLA/1937 Theatre Library Roundtable.** TLA was founded at a meeting of the ALA—Theatre Library Roundtable in 1937. We have a full transcript of that meeting and there is additional information in early editions of *Broadside* as well as in other historical documents in the TLA Archive at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. For those of you based in or around NYC or wanting an excuse to travel to NYC, this is for you.

***History of TLA's Publications.** These include *Broadside*, *Theatre Annual*, *Theatre Documentation*, *Performing Arts Resources*, and volumes published separately as conference proceedings. It will be fun to find out what TLA's been saying for the past 75 years!

***Use of New Technology in Performing Arts Librarianship--From Microfilm to Digitization** and how it has transformed modern libraries and archives. This will include everything from answering reference questions to teaching instructional sessions to students and patrons to digitizing collections. The article should attempt to answer the question, "will Google-ization end libraries and archives as we know them?" and address how this will affect performing arts materials.

***History of Access Policies and Procedures in Performing Arts Archives.** We envision this article exploring the challenges of safeguarding materials, but also gently poking fun at the wide range of philosophies, from the vigilant defense from all human contact to more welcoming attitudes towards the handling of materials.

***Historical Development of Preservation and Conservation Techniques for Performing Arts Materials.** This should explore the challenges of maintaining the physical integrity of multifarious types of performing arts materials from promptbooks to costume items to hand-drawn, oversized lighting designs to film/video/digital recordings in light of their varying degrees of deterioration.

***Performing Arts in Public Libraries.** How do librarians service and engage the general public in performing arts materials, history, and practice? How do they interact with local performing arts organizations? What kind of public programming can and do they offer to enhance understanding and appreciation of the performing arts?

Word Count and Deadline. Our plan is to have the volume ready for publication by early 2013. All articles are to be in the 2,500-3,000 word count range. We are setting a submission deadline of May 2012 for articles.

Call for Interviewers

We appreciate the response we received to our call for Oral History Interviewers and Interviewees in the last issue of *Broadside*, but we still need more volunteers. Here is a list of the interviews we have identified as critical, but we are still happy to hear additional suggestions, including TLA members who were not necessarily Officers, Board members, or committee chairs but faithful, longtime members and supporters.

Still Need Volunteers to Interview:

Dorothy Swerdlow (AZ), Mary Ann Jensen (NJ), Bob Henderson (AZ), Don Fowle (NYC), and Maryann Chach (NYC).

Please contact the Co-Editors Marti LoMonaco (martilomonaco@optonline.net) and David Nochimson (davidnoc@softhome.net) for more information or to volunteer!

THE BROADSIDE NEWS NETWORK

Please send news items relating to new collections, exhibits, staff transitions, etc. at your institution, or news of TLA members' professional activities and publications, to your regional reporter:

Stephen Kuehler (Northeast,
skuehler@comcast.net)

Leahkim Gannett (Mid-Atlantic,
leahkim@umd.edu)

Catherine Ritchie (South &
Southwest,
catherine.ritchie@dallaslibrary.org)

Sarah Zimmerman (Midwest &
Plains, szimmerman@chipublib.org)

Rob Melton (West Coast &
Rockies, rmelton@ucsd.edu)

New York: New York

The Al Hirschfeld Foundation launched a new website, <http://www.alhirschfeldfoundation.org>, in June this year. The site serves up 82 years of Hirschfeld's career in digital form and offers simple and advanced search interfaces and a browsable timeline for locating images.

A free exhibition, *Eugene O'Neill As Seen by Al Hirschfeld*, opened on June 1 and will run until August 31 at the NYU Kimmel Center Window Gallery. The exhibit features over 70 years of Hirschfeld drawings of Eugene O'Neill and his plays. Each of

the 13 windows is dedicated to a different play in the O'Neill canon from *Anna Christie* in 1921 to a revival of *A Moon for the Misbegotten* in 2000. The project was conceived by Louise Kerz Hirschfeld, President of the Foundation, and designed and curated by Foundation archivist David Leopold.

For more information about the exhibition, see the Al Hirschfeld Foundation's website: <http://www.alhirschfeldfoundation.org/exhibitions>.

For those unable to visit the Kimmel Center in person, photos of the window exhibition are posted on the Al Hirschfeld Foundation's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/alhirschfeld>.

Maryland: College Park

Special Collections in Performing Arts (SCPA) is happy to announce that the James J. Taylor Collection of the Washington Area Performing Arts Video Archives (WAPAVA) has acquired its 500th video recording. Founded in 1991 by Jim Taylor, WAPAVA is one of only two active public archives in the country devoted to video-recording theatre and other performing arts.

When the collection was transferred to the University of Maryland in December 2004, the holdings consisted of approximately 385 productions—all of which had been filmed and post-produced by Taylor using his own equipment and financial resources. Upon his death in February 2005, WAPAVA's Board of Directors

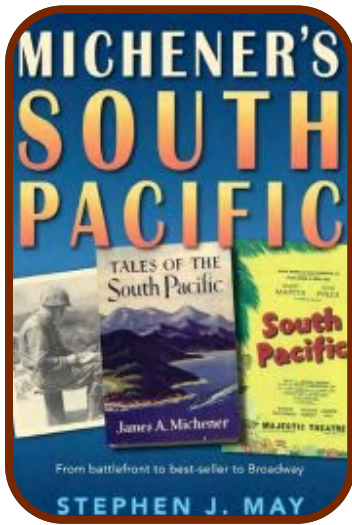
assumed responsibility for continuing Taylor's vision, which is why this milestone is so remarkable. WAPAVA thrives thanks to a devoted nucleus within the Board, specifically Jackson Bryer (Professor Emeritus of English at UM), Stephen Jarrett, and Irene Wagner. Through grant funding, donations, and Board contributions, WAPAVA is able to hire professional videographers to film the productions, creating an ideal special collection for performing arts scholarship.

Perhaps it is appropriate that the 500th WAPAVA video is *Waiting for Godot*. This 2004 production mounted by the Washington Shakespeare Company was one of the later films shot by Jim Taylor. It was recently rescued from a post-production backlog by grant funding.

WAPAVA videos are regularly used by UM classes in the School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies, as well as by those in literature, philosophy, and religion. Local and national theatre companies, dance companies, and other performers have come to the Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library (MSPAL) to take advantage of this unique source of performance documentation. While the official archive for WAPAVA is at SCPA, videos from the collection are also available for use at D.C. Public Library's Washingtoniana Division (MLK Branch). WAPAVA videos are available to researchers any time MSPAL is open.

Compiled by Leahkim Gannett

Stephen J. May. *Michener's South Pacific: From Battlefield to Best-Seller to Broadway*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2011. 192 pp. ISBN 9780813035574.



The recent Broadway revival of Richard Rodgers', Oscar Hammerstein II's, and Joshua Logan's Pulitzer Prize-winning musical *South Pacific*, adapted from James A. Michener's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *Tales of the South Pacific*, brought forth a fine new cast recording along with a spate of books about the show, including Laurence Maslon's *The South Pacific Companion* (Fireside Books, 2008) and Jim Lovensheimer's *South Pacific: Paradise Rewritten* (Oxford University Press, 2010). Maslon's lavishly-illustrated volume surveys various stage productions and screen versions, while Lovensheimer's tome is a scholarly treatise on the cultural context of the show and its creation. Now comes Stephen J. May's *Michener's South Pacific*, which may prove, for those

planning productions of the musical, a valuable dramaturgical resource.

May, who previously wrote *Michener: A Writer's Journey* and served as technical advisor on the recent *South Pacific* revival, is a

Michener's observant position on the production's sidelines, providing fascinating insight into the unique processes of creating both a novel and a musical. May understandably tends to give much credit to Michener for the show's success, especially in

What stands out in May's account is that the show's creation is seen through Michener's observant position on the production's sidelines, providing fascinating insight into the unique processes of creating both a novel and a musical.

generally engaging writer. The book is divided into three sections, with the first, "The Paths of the Sea," tracking the genesis of *South Pacific* from Michener's wartime experiences to the creation of the stories in *Tales of the South Pacific*. The third section, "Return to Paradise," is comparatively brief in its coverage of a valedictory trip Michener made to the stories' locations near the end of his life. For theatre lovers, the heart of the book is the second section, "On Broadway," which relates the making of the musical from Michener's return to the United States from military service in early 1946 through its opening (at which Michener noted that the conversion of his book to musical form was "miraculous" [109]) and the announcement of its 1950 Pulitzer Prize victory.

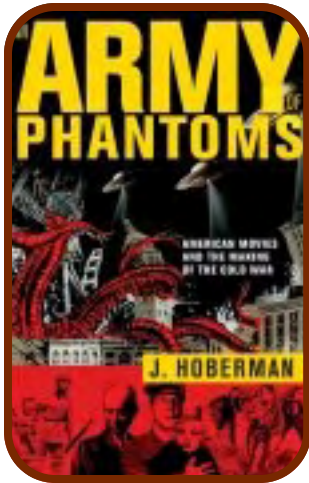
Others have written about the creation of *South Pacific*, with personal recollections from central participants, including star Mary Martin, Rodgers, and Logan, as well as scholarly treatments and the aforementioned Maslon and Lovensheimer books. What stands out in May's account is that the show's creation is seen through

regard to establishing the theme of racial discrimination central to the show, which he argues is an element present in *Tales of the South Pacific*. True enough, though in doing so he fails to adequately credit Hammerstein, whose long commitment to social commentary was evident in many of his musicals and, in regard to race, dates back at least as far as the creation of the landmark musical *Show Boat* in 1927. However, May, with some equanimity, concludes that "Michener and Hammerstein were committed to improving postwar race relations" (105). Indeed.

The book contains only about a dozen photos and, curiously, none of the musical, but for anyone wanting a deeper background understanding of the evolution of this classic and enduring musical and its literary source, May's book is of considerable interest. Directors, designers, and performers of the show will find it especially useful.

James Fisher
University of North
Carolina-Greensboro

Hoberman, J. *An Army of Phantoms; American Movies and the Making of the Cold War*. New York: The New Press, 2011. 383pp. ISBN: 9781595580054.



J. Hoberman's *An Army of Phantoms* is an example of cultural film criticism at its finest. Using a dense yet elegant style, Hoberman examines the American cinema of the 1950s as a reaction to and an influence on the politics of the time. He manages the admirable feat of maintaining both depth of critical insight and breadth of cultural overview to deliver a comprehensive and satisfying volume. (The first part of a trilogy, *The Dream Life: Movies, Media, and Mythology of the Sixties* is already in print, and an examination of the cinema of the eighties is forthcoming.)

The gossipy pleasures of this political and cinematic history include a boozy, red-hunting Joe McCarthy strutting his outsized ego at every turn, John

Wayne throwing an atomic bomb of a tantrum after reading the script of *High Noon*, and Cecil B. DeMille bringing in the Paramount Studio lighting crew to bathe his attempted right wing coup of the Directors Guild in a warm pink glow. Hoberman skillfully balances these anecdotes with trenchant criticism of not only acknowledged classics such as *The Searchers* and *Rebel*

active actor framed for prostitution, is unsentimentally presented. Estes Kefauver, a crusading senator who jumped to national prominence holding televised hearings on the evils of organized crimes and comic books and silver screen stardom as a Jack Webb-style narrator for "crime does not pay" movies, proves an exemplar of the times.

[Hoberman] manages the admirable feat of maintaining both depth of critical insight and breadth of cultural overview to deliver a comprehensive and satisfying volume...

Without A Cause, but also such bottom of the Turner Classic Movies barrel dwellers as *The Next Voice You Hear* and *The Iron Curtain*.

While some of the material Hoberman covers has been examined in more depth in other volumes (Victor Navasky's *Naming Names* for example), Hoberman consistently views such overvisited material from a fresh perspective. The works of David Platt, film reviewer for *The Daily Worker*, are quoted in depth and are revelatory. Whether the fare is *I Married A Communist* or *Davy Crockett, King of The Wild Frontier*, not a scrap of anti-communist, pro-imperialist sub-text passes unremarked. The effect of such criticism juxtaposed against Congressional hearings considering the same films (Platt had the advantage of actually having seen the movies he comments on) is nothing short of mind-blowing.

Hoberman's gift for characterization makes this volume a truly enjoyable read. The tragic saga of Dorothy Commingore, a politically

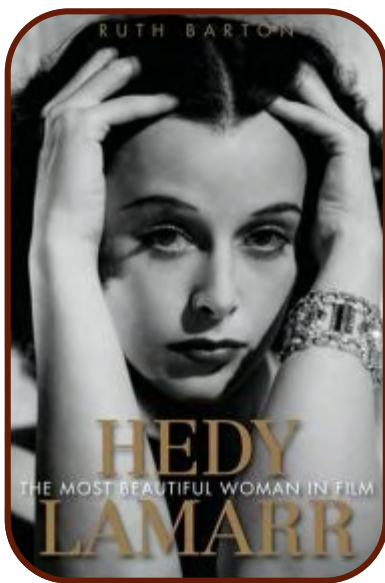
Joseph McCarthy, whose meteoric ascent and descent is vividly and compactly chronicled, is shown as both beneficiary and victim of the nascent video age.

Army of Phantoms is an essential purchase for both college and public libraries. Those seeking a snapshot of the cultural zeitgeist of the fifties buttressed with top drawer film criticism and impeccable research will find satisfaction in this exceptional volume.

John Frank
Los Angeles Public Library

Barton, Ruth . *Hedy Lamarr: The Most Beautiful Woman in Film*. Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2010. 281 pp. ISBN 9780813126043.

Shearer, Stephen Michael. *Beautiful: The Life of Hedy Lamarr*. New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2010, 464 pp. ISBN: 0312550987.



What prompted the publication of two books about Hedy Lamarr in 2010? Writing in very different styles, two authors with backgrounds in film studies concluded the time was ripe to give Lamarr her due as an underappreciated talent, an overlooked inventor, and a misunderstood personality. Both books proceed chronologically from birth to death, yet each presents from different perspectives the dual (and sometimes dueling) aspects of Lamarr’s public and private lives.

Each author goes further than preceding biographers in sorting out the facts and fictions (equally present in Lamarr’s own “autobiography,” *Ecstasy and Me* (1966)) and in unifying her striving for attention, mainly between the two World Wars, with the contentious saga marking her life thereafter. Shearer seeks to uncover what made her “mysterious and alluring,” while Barton probes why Lamarr’s contemporaries could not reconcile her facile intellect with her facial beauty. Shearer takes critics to task for lack of depth, while Barton scolds feminist writers for their neglect of breadth. They both

that life became increasingly fictionalized. I’m interested in how Hedy’s image, often literally (in the form of a portrait or painting), threatened to overwhelm her reality and how she fought to hold her own in a system that she both despised and needed” (5).

Both Barton and Shearer believe Hedy Lamarr deserves more notice than Mel Brooks’s “Hedley Lamarr” parody in *Blazing Saddles*, and both carefully analyze her contributions as an inventor of a radio-operated torpedo using a method of wireless communication.

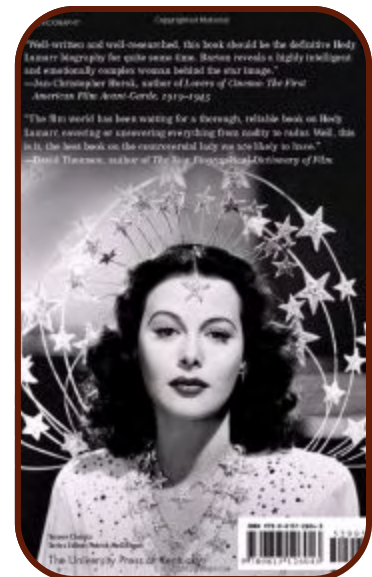
Shearer takes critics to task for lack of depth, while Barton scolds feminist writers for their neglect of breadth. They both succeed in presenting a compelling multi-dimensional portrayal of a woman whose “beauty was also her burden, and from it she would never escape.”

succeed in presenting a compelling multi-dimensional portrayal of a woman whose “beauty was also her burden, and from it she would never escape” (Shearer Introduction).

In 1940, working with composer George Antheil, Lamarr developed a secured torpedo guidance system that she called “frequency-hopping.” Antheil contributed the control system for transmitter and receiver. They

Shearer comments, “The goddess image distanced Lamarr from personal and professional fulfillment.” Because even Lamarr’s autobiography fails to examine truthfully her life, he sets out to answer the questions: “What was behind that astounding, seemingly unattainable image? And what was the real truth about the life she lived?” (4).

For her part, Barton explains: “My own interest in writing this biography was to explore the consequences of leading a life that was based on an image, and how



patented the invention and gave it to the U.S. government “as part of their contribution for the war effort” (Shearer 112). In 1980, an electrical engineer unsuccessfully lobbied Congress for a Medal of Honor for Lamarr, but not until 1997 was she actually honored by multiple organizations (Barton 225).

By then, the full significance of her creation to the communications industry was being recognized. The media took notice of this and of the generous ways in which Lamarr acknowledged the invention’s value to the world at large. Two

unanticipated consequences. Both equally show why her immediate appeal to people off and on stage and screen might have thwarted her own personal fulfillment and happiness. Most important, both provide a picture of the vibrant European arts scene, of Nazism’s reach and its consequences for all Jewish artists and intellectuals, and the resultant growth of the U. S. film industry in Hollywood. Did Lamarr become a victim of circumstance? Each author lays out the facts for readers to consider.

While Barton’s acknowledgements cite multiple institutions and their

From both authors, readers gain an understanding of Lamarr’s drive to be an actress and glean why some of her decisions led to unanticipated consequences.

facts are essential: no other actor has a history of inventions of Lamarr’s scope, and not many other inventors incurred the disbelief regarding her intellectual ability to produce a device that has played an essential role in communication theory, with practical application. Cell phone users, take note.

Both books document and detail Lamarr’s life and career—Shearer particularly in the context of larger world events, Barton more narrowly as a family story. Shearer’s accessible style is the more readable in contrast to Barton’s more scholarly tone.

From both authors, readers gain an understanding of Lamarr’s drive to be an actress and glean why some of her decisions led to

personnel for her research, Shearer principally credits the encouragement and support of Lamarr’s adopted and birth children by actor John Loder, along with interviews with intimate friends and colleagues.

Any library already housing titles on film personalities will find these two books worthy companions for shelf space.



Rita Kohn
Freelance writer

Davis, Andrew. *America's Longest Run: A History of the Walnut Street Theatre*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010. 412 pp. ISBN 9780271035789.



The Pennsylvania Historical marker outside Philadelphia's Walnut Street Theatre proudly proclaims it to be "the oldest theater in America in continuous use in the English-speaking world," and Andrew Davis does his best in *America's Longest Run* to substantiate the claim. His meticulously researched and engagingly written study is a detailed history of every production, actor, and producer at the Walnut from its founding in 1809 to the present day. What makes his book significant for readers outside of Pennsylvania is how he positions this important venue within the larger scope of American theatre and social, economic, and political history. Davis demonstrates how the history of the Walnut parallels the history of professional theatre and popular entertainments in the United States and is contingent on the events, tastes, and transformations of the developing nation.

As a native Pennsylvanian, I was fascinated to learn how the animosity of William Penn (the eponymous founder of the commonwealth) towards theatre influenced 17th century laws passed by the Pennsylvania Assembly prohibiting "stage plays, masques, and revels," akin to the similarly

restoration transformed the traditional 19th century theatre into a 20th century state-of-the-art multi-use center that produced drama, film, ballet, music concerts, lectures, recitals, art exhibits, and children's theatre, and eventually included studio venues in the new annex for

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puritanical dictates of the New England colonies. Davis points out, however, that entertainments were rare anywhere in America until the mid-18th century, when earlier state prohibitions began to ease up and most major cities, including Philadelphia, welcomed the popular traveling companies and players who form a who's who of early American theatre.

He also discusses the fluidity and diversity of early entertainments that shared venues with dramatic productions, such as circuses, equestrian shows, spectacles, and other para-theatricals. The Walnut was a strictly commercial venture throughout most of its history, welcoming any entertainment that would attract large crowds, from Shakespearean tragedies featuring Edwin Booth to Harrigan and Hart's popular ethnic comedies, Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Shows, and vaudeville shows starring Eva Tanguay.

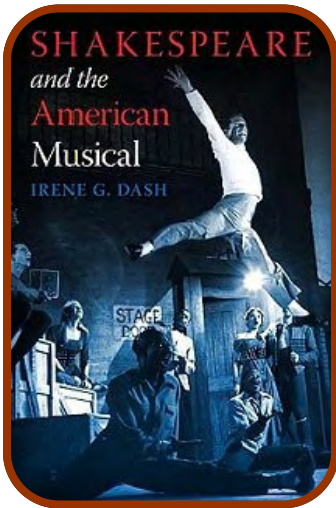
In 1969, the Walnut embarked on a new era as a nonprofit cultural and educational organization that operated as a community-oriented performing arts center. A 1971

smaller-scale productions. Throughout its long history, to say that everyone and anyone played the Walnut is not an exaggeration; the theatre even hosted the Ford-Carter presidential debates in 1976. In 1999, the Walnut became the State Theatre of Pennsylvania, an honor that the theatre enjoys as it continues to change with the changing times and is ever responsive to the "vox populi, the voice of the people," who have sustained it successfully for the past 200 years.

The book is beautifully produced with a lush, velvet cover that sits as comfortably in one's hands as, no doubt, patrons sit in the theatre's lush seats. Readers throughout the country will enjoy this book; although it is a case study of only one significant theatre, it is a comprehensive, fascinating introduction to American culture and society as depicted through the history of its entertainments.

**Marti LoMonaco
Fairfield University**

Dash, Irene. *Shakespeare and the American Musical*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010. 248 pp. ISBN 9780253221520.



Much has been written about the timeless appeal of Shakespeare's plays. It could easily be argued that no other Western playwright has stood the test of time as easily as Shakespeare. Despite his dominance in drama, his countless performances, and his seemingly effortless transfer to media that did not exist in his time (such as film), very little has been written about the actual process of adapting Shakespeare's plays into those other media. Irene Dash takes a major step towards filling this void in *Shakespeare and the American Musical*. In it, Dash investigates the adaptation of five Shakespearean texts into American musicals.

Dash brings not only her own vast knowledge of both Shakespeare and musical theatre, but a well-researched

examination of the difficult choices and various transformations a text goes through in the process of converting it into another form. Her introduction conveys both a thorough investigative approach (incorporating promptbooks, correspondence among principals, and reviews of productions among other materials) and a genuine enthusiasm for the research

adaptation process is interesting enough in its own right, Dash convincingly grounds this study in her argument that the foundation of the original Shakespearean text gave the adaptors the freedom to explore new ideas and forms in their work. The familiarity of the plots allowed boundaries to be pushed in terms of content, resulting in shows

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process itself, an enthusiasm demonstrated throughout the book.

The author provides a minimal amount of historical and biographical context regarding each of the shows investigated but this is not the book's focus nor should it be. The real strength lies in her insightful analysis of the original Shakespearean text compared to close readings of the adapted productions. For all but one of the five musicals examined, Dash is able to supplement her research with her own firsthand recollections of the productions. Although years removed from seeing these productions, the author expertly recreates for the reader the atmosphere and staging of the shows.

Those unfamiliar with either the musicals examined or the original plays need not be concerned as concise and informative summaries of all the shows are peppered throughout the prose in a way that informs without coming across as redundant for those more familiar with the texts involved.

While the examination of the

questioning marriage and gender roles in contemporary society (*Kiss Me Kate/Taming of the Shrew*), racial tolerance (*West Side Story/Romeo & Juliet*), or the social constraints imposed on human sexuality (*Your Own Thing/Twelfth Night*).

Perhaps more significant is the freedom Shakespeare's text provided in pushing the formal conventions of musical theatre. Dash positions these works as pivotal in the development of the "new American Organic musical," as an early example of a fully integrated musical (*Boys from Syracuse/The Comedy of Errors*), the first tragic musical (*West Side Story*), and a pioneer in multi-racial casting (*Two Gentlemen of Verona*). This thorough study is recommended to anyone who is interested in Shakespeare, musical theatre or the adaptation process.

**Michael Saar
Lamar University**

Havis, Allan, ed. *American Political Plays After 9/11*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2010. 304 pp. ISBN 9780809329540.



What constitutes political theatre in the contemporary American landscape, and how have September 11 and its aftermath impacted playwriting? *American Political Plays After 9/11* answers both questions through its deftly-assembled “artful kaleidoscope of revelatory dramatic texts” (1). In some regards, the title of Allan Havis’ anthology is slightly misleading. Readers may assume that each of the six plays included deals explicitly with the historic event. Yet, as Havis asserts in his introduction to the collection: “All do not focus on the tragedy of September 11, but they reverberate in the wake of our nation’s ordeal and our economic uncertainty” (9). *American Political Plays After 9/11* is a welcome addition to the canon of thematic anthologies, offering a poignantly interwoven yet ultimately expansive set of plays.

Havis opens the anthology with a dense introduction that addresses the vast legacies of political theatre in the United States throughout the 20th century, production and theatre criticism trends following September 11, and the ways in which contemporary theatre connects to the larger social milieu

The three remaining plays in the collection could appear in a number of other contexts. Yet refracted through the anthology’s theme, they each take on additional layers of politicized meaning. Readers familiar with Naomi Iizuka’s imagistic, poeticized dramaturgy will

“All do not focus on the tragedy of September 11, but they reverberate in the wake of our nation’s ordeal and our economic uncertainty”.

and popular entertainment including film and television. At times a bit unwieldy as an introduction, Havis’ opening operates more strongly in retrospect, once readers have completed all six plays. He includes brief descriptions of each play, addressing the writing process and production histories and, where applicable, contextualizing the work within the larger scope of historic events.

Half of the plays included in the collection deal explicitly with September 11 and its residual effects. Anne Nelson’s heartbreaking two-hander *The Guys* dramatizes her own experience in assisting an NYC fire captain in writing eulogies for some of his lost men, who perished in the collapse of the World Trade Towers. *Back of the Throat* by Yussef El Guindi addresses the racial profiling and compromises of liberty in the wake of the Patriot Act. Allan Havis’ own *Three Nights in Prague* offers a fictionalized account of the early planning of one of the September 11 masterminds, based on the will he left behind.

recognize her signature style within her mosaic of life in Butchertown, KY. Kia Corthron’s darkly comic yet ultimately chilling *The Venus de Milo is Armed* serves as an indictment of U.S. involvement in, and complicity with, the landmine industry and the destruction it wreaks upon humanity. Lastly, Chay Yew’s montage of stories of Japanese internment camps in the U.S., woven by four performers, resonates profoundly in light of the ongoing use of Guantanamo Bay.

All in all, *American Political Plays After 9/11* is a stunning collection of drama in a wide array of styles. Using September 11 as the touchstone for the anthology, each of the plays included within offers new understandings of the potential power and poetry of American political theatre.

Christine Woodworth
University of North Carolina-
Greensboro