



BROADSIDE

41/2 Spring 2014

a newsletter of THEATRE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

President's Report

Update on TLA Activities

Greetings TLA! I hope this finds everyone well. We are anxiously awaiting spring here in New York City after a long, cold winter.

Below is the President's Report which chronicles most of the TLA activities and includes some important reminders about upcoming events.

First, I would like to thank the TLA Executive Board for another year of terrific work and initiative.

TLA Event

TLA has organized a guided tour of Woodlawn Cemetery on June 21, 2014! Walk among the tombstones and memorials—the focus of the tour will be on performing artists interred in this landmark cemetery. Woodlawn Cemetery is one of the largest cemeteries in New York City and is a designated National Historic Landmark. The tour is open to current TLA members at a cost of \$10 per person. If interested, RSVP to nef4@columbia.edu.

Book Awards Committee

The Book Awards Committee is finalizing the last shipments of books to our jurors for review. They are confident we received a strong selection of works for both the Freedley and the Wall Awards. We are thrilled to have the Book Awards back. The committee is also planning for the TLA annual event in October which will include the annual business meeting, opportunity to honor our award winners and will feature an engaging program focused on women in film. More to come on this! The event is scheduled for October 17, 2014 at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Conferences

ASTR 2014

The ASTR Conference will be held in Baltimore, Maryland in November. Colleen Reilly and Lisbeth Wells-Pratt sent out the Call for Papers for the TLA Plenary in January. The theme is entitled "The Paradox of the Post-Human: Archival Subjects, Systems, and Sites." The ASTR Conference for 2015 will be held in Portland, Oregon.

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Nancy enjoying March break on Cape Cod—
pictured here on Martha's Vineyard

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About BROADSIDE

Editorial Information and Publication Guidelines

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.

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.

BROADSIDE (ISSN: 0068-2748) is published three times a year and is now open access—no login required—and available via *BROADSIDE* online at <http://tla-online.org/publications/BROADSIDEonline.html>.

Contents ©Theatre Library Association

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Image Credits

Page 1: Nancy Friedland on Martha's Vineyard, photograph by Laurie Beaty and Jodi DeSciscio.

Page 5, 6, and 7: Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, photographs by Fred Fehl.

Page 7 and 9: Ming Cho Lee exhibition, photographs by Lindsay King.

About TLA

Executive Board, Mission, and Membership

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

TLA on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Theatre-Library-Association/326948200637>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/theatrelibassn>

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. Dues can now be paid online using PayPal.

For availability and prices of past issues of *PAR* and *BROADSIDE*, contact info@tla-online.org

TLA listserv: To Subscribe:

- 1) Send email (nothing in the subject) to: LISTSERV@listserv.illinois.edu
- 2) in the body of the email message type the following line:
SUBSCRIBE TLA-L your name

President's Report

Update on TLA's Activities

(continued from page 1)

SIBMAS-TLA 2014

Conference planning is moving along smoothly from both sides of the Atlantic. We received an outstanding response to our Call for Papers and have a robust program of plenaries, working sessions and exhibits in place. The conference launches on June 10 with an exceptional roster of excursions followed by a full three days of engaging talks and discussions on dance preservation, digital humanities and the performing arts, and material culture and ephemera. In addition, we will feature a panel presentation-discussion on recorded performance. The conference continues into the evening each day—with a wine event at the beautiful Shubert Foundation, a celebration of the 60th anniversary for SIBMAS at the British Consulate, and a closing wine event on Friday at the conference site. If you haven't already registered—please note that early bird registration fees are in place until April 15, 2014.

Membership

The committee continues its good work on reaching out to our membership.

If you want to be more involved, please let us know! You can send inquiries to Nancy Friedland at nef4@columbia.edu or to Beth Kattelman at kattelman.1@osu.edu.

Publications Committee

Leahkim Gannett and Felicity Brown have begun work on *Documenting: Theatre Architecture*. We are looking forward to Steve Kuehler's volume on the Shakespeare symposium proceedings to be published in time to celebrate Shakespeare's 450th birthday! The committee welcomes proposals for future volumes.

Website and Broadside

The Ad Hoc Committee has completed a careful review of the website redesign. We are working with a designer and anticipate a new website in place this year. I am delighted to report that the Board enthusiastically approved this committee as a new standing committee. Once confirmed, the committee members will work as an editorial team responsible for all content on the TLA website—including news,

book reviews, social media outreach, President's Report, member profiles, reports from the field and more.

Social Media

We have many great postings on Facebook and are delighted to report that we are attracting an increasing number of views.

Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/theatrelibraryassociation>

And Twitter: @theatrelibassn

Liaison and Affiliate Reports

ACRL Arts Section/ALA Affiliates Liaison Report

The 2014 Annual ALA Conference will be held in Las Vegas from June 26-July 1, 2014. Diana King is investigating a possible program centered around the showgirls collection at University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

American Theatre Archive Project (ATAP)

I am delighted to report that Colleen Reilly has assumed the position of co-chair for ATAP. ATAP has become a standing member of ASTR and will continue to have a strong presence at the ASTR Conferences.

Secretary's Report

Laurie Murphy reported that as of January 2014, TLA had 86 personal members and 77 institutional members. We thank our members who have generously supported TLA by renewing at the \$75 at 75 Membership rate.

Treasurer's Report

Colleen Reilly reported our total account balance at \$83,314.45. We are delighted to maintain our Anniversary rate of \$75 at 75 and will be offering a new level of membership—Sustaining Member, \$75+\$75=\$150, supporting both our past and future.

News

Collections, Exhibits, Staff Transitions, etc.

Louis Rachow Distinguished Service in Librarianship Award

Time travel back with me to the old, old, old days... of 1996, 1997, and 1998. TLA was then undergoing an identity crisis. Long serving leaders were retiring. Relationships with other organizations were in a rut. Membership was slipping, and energy was flagging. There were those who thought that perhaps TLA's best days were behind it and that maybe it should be put to sleep. But others felt that it deserved revitalized efforts to bring it into the twenty-first century. These members formed the foundation for the renewed leadership that brought TLA to its current, vital incarnation. And chief among those members was the person we honor tonight: Marti LoMonaco.

In reviewing old issues of *Broadside* from that period, Marti's name was all over them. In fact, Marti has been active in every conceivable area of TLA's activities: committees, conferences, publications, strategic planning, and more. She has never been too busy to lend a hand or take on a task if it will benefit the organization. (And she never needs a microphone to be heard!) Marti played a key role in each of TLA's past symposia and co-chaired the 2007 event, "Performing Reclamation: Research, Discovery, and Interpretation," which spoke directly to Marti's passion for research and respect for archives as a director and teacher. And Marti distinguished herself during two busy and productive terms as TLA President following two terms as Vice President and service on the Executive Board.

When I reviewed the *Broadside* issues during her presidency, I was struck by how much was accomplished during Marti's tenure. She brought our newsletter and membership directory into the electronic age. She hosted the first Executive Board meeting outside New York City—in Austin, Texas at the Harry Ransom Center. She established the series of email blasts called *TLA Promptbook* that many of us always look forward to getting in our in-boxes. And she initiated a major membership drive.



Marti LoMonaco and Kevin Winkler, TLA Business Meeting, 2013

Here's a confession. When I was elected TLA president, I wasn't entirely sure I knew what I was doing. But sometimes opportunities present themselves and you have to step up to them. But I had a secret weapon: Marti was going to run for Vice President. So I knew I would have a strong ally who would bring energy, commitment, and creative thinking to the office. My service as President was greatly enhanced by Marti's contributions.

The TLA membership has always included many non-librarians, but with some exceptions most of the heavy lifting in leadership roles has been done by librarians and archivists. Marti, as an academic and theatre practitioner, not only talks the "library talk," she walks the "library walk." She is passionately committed to the principles of access and preservation of theatre collections, and has a keen understanding of their value. While she is active in other professional organizations, her passion for TLA's work has made her one of its stalwarts.

Last year when Nena Couch accepted this award, she said, "I am immensely proud of where recent Boards and officers have taken the organization, with symposia, programming, and publications that address critical issues in the field." It is difficult to imagine TLA in its current good health and renewed purpose without the invigorating leadership Marti has provided over the years.

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It is my pleasure to present the newly-renamed Louis Rachow Distinguished Service in Performing Arts Librarianship Award to Marti LoMonaco!

Kevin Winkler
The New York Public Library

I am deeply honored to be the first recipient of this renamed award in honor of our dear Louis Rachow, who has been the rock of TLA for the past half century. Many thanks to the Board and our membership for recognizing my work, which, astonishingly, now spans the past sixteen years as an elected member of the board, Vice President, President, and Immediate Past President. I am particularly happy to have served as part of the millennial triumvirate, with Kevin Winkler and Kenneth Schlesinger, which spearheaded TLA's reinvention as a forward thinking, 21st century organization.

As Kevin's Vice President in 2000, we published a "Call to Arms" in *Broadside* that propelled TLA's redefinition as an independent association with a board drawn from all of North America. I am especially proud of our three symposia: *Performance Documentation and Preservation in an Online Environment* (2003), *Performance Reclamation: Research, Discovery, and Interpretation* (2007), and *Holding Up the Mirror: Authenticity and Adaptation in Shakespeare Today* (2011), where we successfully brought the worlds of documentation, professional performance, and scholarship together in stimulating dialogue. Our published proceedings, part of the rejuvenated *PAR* series will, in true TLA fashion, allow others to relish that work well into the future.

The thing I've always loved most about TLA—and the reason that I chose to commit my energies to this professional association rather than to others—is that it's fun. I have been privileged to share these sixteen years with a wonderful assortment of people—archivists, librarians, collectors, theatre professionals, and academics—who deeply care about documenting and preserving this most ephemeral of arts in a passionate, electrifying manner. Why do it if we



Marti LoMonaco and Louis Rachow, TLA Business Meeting, 2013

aren't loving our work and enjoying a dynamic collaboration that's also lots of fun? Thanks to you all for making my life that much richer and more joyful in the process. What a long, terrific trip it's been!

Marti LoMonaco
Fairfield University

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Collections, Exhibits, Staff Transitions, etc.

Fred Fehl Dance Collection

Fred Fehl (1906-1995) was a stage photographer who worked primarily in New York City. Between 1940 and 1985, Fehl documented more than fifty dance companies and choreographers, among them the American Ballet Theatre and the New York City Ballet for whom he became the official photographer. The Harry Ransom Center at The University of Texas at Austin holds more than 30,000 of Fehl's dance photographs, most of which are black and white, five-by-seven-inch prints.

Fehl was among the first stage photographers to take candid photographs exclusively using available light. He revolutionized dance photography by using high-speed film that revealed the emotional expression of actors at key moments and captured dancers in midflight. Fehl photographed performances from the perspective of an audience member in the first row, bringing a new urgency and sensitivity to American stage photography.



Dancers in Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's production of *Blues Suite*, 1971. Fred Fehl (American, 1906-1995). Gelatin silver print.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is a modern dance company that was founded in 1958 in New York City by American choreographer Alvin Ailey (1931-1989). The company toured extensively around the globe, earning them the nickname, "Cultural Ambassador to the World." In 1969, they became the first dance company to visit the Soviet Union since Isadora Duncan's historic tour in the 1920s. Throughout its history, the company has performed the works of many noted choreographers in addition to Ailey, including Katherine Dunham, José Limón, Pearl Primus, and Anna Sokolow. The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater continues to perform under the leadership of Robert Battle.

Blues Suite

Blues Suite (1958) is one of Ailey's early works. The dance is set to blues music, which Ailey described as "hymns to the secular regions of the soul." *Blues Suite* features scenes from Ailey's Texas childhood and the joys and sorrows of a life of poverty in the South. The dance was performed during the company's inaugural season and showcases Ailey's distinctive style, which draws on influences from ballet, modern, jazz, and African dance techniques. Ailey's choreography paired a long leg and articulated feet, a "ballet bottom," with an expressive upper body or "modern top." Ailey initially intended *Blues Suite* to be the first part of an evening-length work featuring African American music, followed by *Revelations*. The photographs are from the 1971 season.

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In September 2013, the Ransom Center began a project to digitize the photographs in the Fred Fehl Dance Collection. The images are available on a new platform of freely available digitized images of collection materials on the Center's website. The new site (<http://hrc.contentdm.oclc.org>), launched in November 2013, contains more than 15,000 items and will continue to grow as newly digitized images are added on a regular basis. The digital collections platform provides access to the Ransom Center's collections for students, scholars and members of the public who are unable to visit the Center. It also provides a way for visitors to access fragile materials or collections that can be a challenge to examine onsite, such as personal effects and costumes. The Fred Fehl Dance Collection currently consists of images of the Martha Graham Dance Company and the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Photographs of the American Ballet Theatre will be added during the spring and summer of 2014.

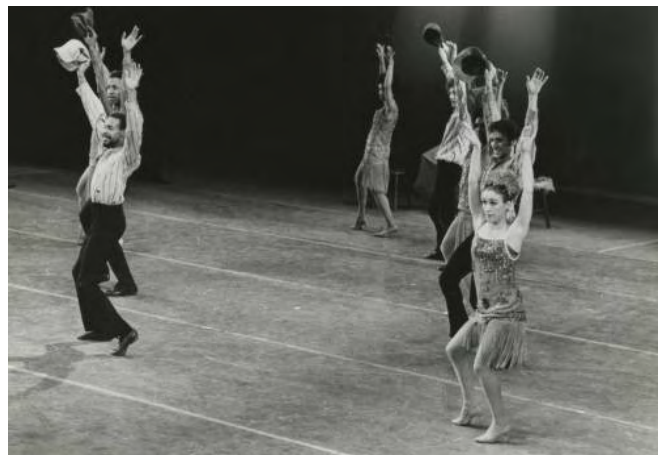
In addition to the Fred Fehl photographs, several other theater collections are featured on the new site: Harry Houdini's scrapbooks, items from the Ransom Center's extensive circus collection including materials related to showmen such as P. T. Barnum, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, and a collection of glass plate negatives that documents theater performances in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This fragile collection was previously inaccessible, but the negative plates were digitized and converted to positive images for the digital collection.

Collections are being added on an ongoing basis, and planned digitization projects include costumes designed by Léon Bakst for *Narcisse* (1911), tunics and hats designed by Nicholas Roerich for the premiere of *The Rite of Spring* (1913), and costumes made by Barbara Karinska for a 1937 production of *Le Coq d'Or*. The latter were designed by Natalia Goncharova for Sergei Diaghilev's staging of *Le Coq d'Or* in 1914, and revisited by Goncharova for the 1937 staging.

Helen Baer
Harry Ransom Center
The University of Texas, Austin



**Dancers in Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's
 production of *Blues Suite*, 1971.
 Fred Fehl (American, 1906-1995).
 Gelatin silver print.**



**Dancers in Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's
 production of *Blues Suite*, 1971.
 Fred Fehl (American, 1906-1995).
 Gelatin silver print.**

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Exhibition Review: *Stage Designs by Ming Cho Lee*

Legendary stage designer Ming Cho Lee has taught at the Yale School of Drama since 1969, but his work had never before been exhibited on campus. *Stage Designs by Ming Cho Lee*, on view November 20, 2013 through February 1, 2014, in the School of Architecture Gallery, drew designers, architects, and theater artists of all stripes. Groups of viewers were often huddled in discussion of Lee's models. Lee's impact on the field of theater design is nearly impossible to overstate—he has trained generations of designers during his career, more than anyone else in American history. He retired from designing in 2005 and is retiring from his teaching position as the Donald M. Oenslager Professor of Design and co-chair of the Design department this year.



Richard III, 1966. Ming Cho Lee. Delacorte Theatre. ½" scale scenic model.
New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Lee's brilliant career has been chronicled in numerous publications. Born in 1930 in Shanghai, he began college in the United States in 1949. He moved to New York in 1954, where he began his life's work in theater with groundbreaking designers Jo Mielziner and Boris Aronson. Since then, he has designed hundreds of productions around the world. Among numerous honors, Lee has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, a Helen Hayes Award, an Obie Award, a Tony Award, a Drama Desk Award for outstanding set design, the National Medal of Arts in 2002, and a Lifetime Achievement Tony Award in 2013.

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The exhibition took full advantage of the space within the gallery in Rudolph Hall, which is divided into various levels and areas with open sightlines. Scenic models and enlarged photographs of designs were generally grouped into types of productions: dance, opera, Shakespeare, Eugene O’Neill, etc., but rather than create the impression of separate endeavors, the exhibition reinforced visual connections throughout Lee’s work.

Gathering over sixty of his stage design models into one exhibition allowed visitors a retrospective view of his vision and aesthetic shifts over time. Walking through a small forest of models at eye level, viewers saw echoes of elements like scaffolding, staircases, richly modeled surfaces, and strong vertical structures. Lee’s work does not adhere to a single visual identity, but instead proposes sculptural, poetically abstract notions of design for the theater.

Of widely varying sizes, most of the models are 1/8-inch or 1/2- to 1-foot scale, showing the sets in the round or proscenium stages. Some of the models belong to the Billy Rose Theatre Division at The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts; the rest remain in Lee’s collection.

The representation of designs for several plays by O’Neill highlights a notable confluence of two major Yale figures. Lee designed sets for *Ah, Wilderness!*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, and two productions each of *A Touch of the Poet* and *Long Day’s Journey into Night*, as well as others not included in the exhibition: *Mourning Becomes Electra* and *Anna Christie*.

A new aspect of this exhibition, compared with previous retrospectives, is the inclusion of twenty-four watercolor paintings, not for stage designs, which evoke mood and atmosphere via minimal elements of shape, color, and light. Views of Bar Harbor and Cape Cod share elements of Edward Hopper’s work, while sketches of New York or LA nod to Ben Shahn. Lee apprenticed with Chang Kwo-Nyen, a well-known Chinese landscape artist, when he was in high school and studied art at Occidental College after coming to the United States in 1949.

Some of his designs, like those for *The Witch of Endor*, a 1965 dance for Martha Graham Dance Company, and a 1966 production of *Richard III* at the Delacorte Theatre, clearly show the influence of modernist artists like Isamu Noguchi and Louise Nevelson. This was a radical departure from more realistic set designs that preceded Lee. His modernist approach created an abstract world as a stage environment, a “stage-as-stage,” much as modernist painting rejected photographic realism in favor of images that celebrated their two-dimensionality.

“The Essence of Ming,” a video commissioned by James Bundy, dean of the School of Drama, provides context for the works in the exhibition, with colleagues and former students discussing Lee’s career and influence. Lee himself also speaks about designing and teaching. He tells the story of being an English-challenged student in Hong Kong whose father (a 1919 Yale graduate) read *Julius Caesar* with him to improve his command of the language. The shy Lee was initially drawn to the art studio, but found his calling in the creative parameters of design for the theater.

In the video, Lee argues for political involvement rather than escapism on the part of theater artists. He organized a boycott of visits to China after Tiananmen Square and put off retirement to design sets for *Stuff Happens*,

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A Moon for the Misbegotten, 2005. Ming Cho Lee. Long Wharf Theatre. ½” scale scenic model.

David Hare’s 2005 play about the invasion of Iraq. He exhorts students: “Do something you would never dream of doing—see if you can.”

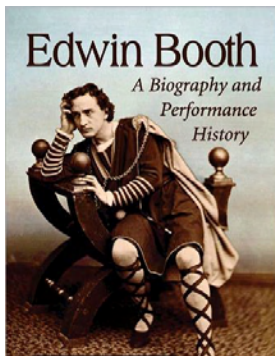
This exhibition was co-curated by Ming Cho Lee; Michael Yeargan, Yale School of Drama professor and co-chair of Design; and Barbara Cohen-Stratynier, Rosenberg Curator of Exhibitions at Shelby Cullom Davis Museum, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. It was based on retrospective exhibitions held in 1995 at The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, the National Museum of History in Taipei in 1997, and at the Shanghai Art Museum and the Ningbo Museum in 2011. Adapted for the Yale venue by School of Architecture Director of Exhibitions Brian Butterfield and School of Drama lecturer in Design Lee Savage, this iteration of the exhibition was jointly presented by the Yale School of Architecture, the Yale School of Drama, and Yale College.

Stage Designs by Ming Cho Lee opened on November 21, 2013, with a lecture by Arnold Aronson, professor of theatre arts at Columbia and author of the forthcoming biography *Ming Cho Lee: A Life in Design*. A small catalog was published to accompany the exhibition, including an essay by Aronson and a checklist of works featured.

Lindsay King
Haas Arts Library, Yale University

Book and Media Reviews

Reviews of Theatre and Film-Related Books and Multimedia



Bloom, Arthur W.
***Edwin Booth: A
 Biography and
 Performance History.***
Jefferson, NC:
McFarland & Co., 2013.
358pp.
ISBN: 978-0786472895

...this reader is applauding loudly for an outstanding volume that combines a penetrating biography with a remarkably detailed production history that anyone with an interest in Booth's work, and nineteenth-century theatre in general, will find an essential addition to their library.

The name Booth, one hardly need point out, has positive and negative poles in nineteenth-century American theatre. On the negative side, actor John Wilkes Booth perpetrated the most devastating murder in U.S. history; while on the positive side, his brother Edwin, after battling off family demons of alcohol and sexual promiscuity, distinguished himself as the nation's greatest actor and raised the bar of quality to heights that set the scene for a golden age of American theatre that would flower in the first half of the twentieth-century. In an era of bombastic over-acting, Booth, whose life spread across the nineteenth-century, moved toward a more natural acting style, one concurrent with the next century.

A murderer, sad to say, especially one who murders the nation's greatest president, tends to attract more fascination than one who does so much good for our culture. This is an unfortunate reality, though Arthur W. Bloom has, in *Edwin Booth: A Biography and Performance History*, invited us to think a bit more about the positive pole of the name Booth and this reader is applauding loudly for an outstanding volume that combines a penetrating biography with a remarkably detailed production history that anyone with an interest in Booth's work, and nineteenth-century theatre in general, will find an essential addition to their library.

Bloom's biography is divided into short chapters, each covering a few years, and is jam-packed with quotes from Booth and those close to him. These are expertly woven into Bloom's penetrating narrative and analysis of events, particularly Booth's evolution as a man and an actor. This superbly researched biography reads like an engaging novel.

Bloom's biography of Booth fills 175 tightly-packed pages laced with excellent illustrations of Booth and family members. Many of these will be familiar to those who have studied Booth or his times, but there are some less familiar images, from Booth's mother to Booth himself at all ages. Bloom necessarily covers the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, but wisely keeps his focus on Edwin and the rest of the Booth family and the impact of the tragedy on their lives. There is, it hardly need be said, a great irony in the fact that Edwin Booth's greatest role, Hamlet, is a character enhanced by an actor able to apply considerable melancholy. Booth's Hamlet, already his greatest performance before the assassination, probably grew in depth as an unparalleled melancholy filled his soul.

Following the biography, Bloom has constructed an astonishingly detailed 119 page production history chronicling, year-by-year, the location and role Booth played every day he worked. This record is annotated with considerable commentary, including quotes from reviews and information about fellow players and other activities. The production history is followed by nearly 50 pages of notes on the content of the biography chapters equally detailed, filled with quotes, information on those connected to Booth's life, and the sources of the specifics in each chapter.

For those researching American theatre in the span of Booth's life, *Edwin Booth: A Biography and Production History* will be a well-thumbed book providing many answers to many questions.

James Fisher
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Book and Media Reviews

Reviews of Theatre and Film-Related Books and Multimedia



Kennedy, Matthew.
Roadshow!: The Fall Of
Film Musicals In The
1960s. Oxford University
 Press: New York. 2014.
 307 pp.
 ISBN: 9780199925674

Matthew Kennedy takes us on a tour of the roadshow musicals of the sixties featuring bloated film budgets, even more bloated actors' egos, and desperate publicity campaigns that were the equivalent of selling seats on the Titanic after it struck the iceberg.

Film histories of the sixties and seventies

traditionally focus on the accomplishments of rebel filmmakers such as Coppola, Lucas, and Scorsese. Rarely do such overviews consider the extravagant last gasps of the old studio system (Mark Harris' *Pictures at a Revolution* is a notable exception). Matthew Kennedy takes us on a tour of the roadshow musicals of the sixties featuring bloated film budgets, even more bloated actors' egos, and desperate publicity campaigns that were the equivalent of selling seats on the Titanic after it struck the iceberg.

The roadshows started in the late fifties as a way of giving audiences an experience television could not duplicate. The venues were large theatres, usually the classic movie palaces of the twenties. The trappings of a Broadway opening (ushers, programs, overtures, exit music and reserved seating) were offered to a film audience willing to pay a premium price. The films that justified this treatment had to be big, long, and reek of middlebrow cachet.

The phenomenal success of *The Sound of Music* demonstrated that this genre, with its gargantuan capital outlay, could deliver proportionally outsize profits. As Kennedy shows in excruciating detail, more than one studio was driven into bankruptcy attempting to duplicate this formula.

The aesthetically sterile concept of more being more (a chorus of two hundred is twice as good as one of one hundred) was adopted by virtually every producer and studio head and produced a mix of jaw dropping abominations and middling hits (*Funny Girl*) that never approached the success of *The Sound of Music*.

Julie Andrews was the biggest movie star in the world for most of this period. Her descent from the peaks of *The Sound of Music*, *Mary Poppins*, and *Thoroughly Modern Millie* to the depths of *Star!* and *Darling Lili* reflects the rise and decline of the roadshow.

Rex Harrison was the male equivalent of Andrews in this sub-culture. A whole book could be written about his imperious behavior and his torturing of co-stars, producers, lyricists and anybody else working on a motion picture. *My Fair Lady* made Harrison the eight hundred pound gorilla and he wielded that power with Mussolini-like reticence.

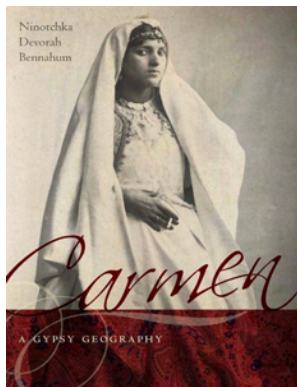
The wit with which Kennedy describes this wasteland is only exceeded by the critical acumen he uses to mine diamonds from this Everest of dreck. Articulating Peter O'Toole's outstanding performance in *Goodbye Mr. Chips*; showing how Bob Fosse used the lessons he learned making the mediocre *Sweet Charity* to craft the classic *Cabaret*; and illuminating the musicals of forgotten auteur (and hammerer of the last nails in the road show musical's coffin) Andrew Stone (*Song of Norway* and *The Great Waltz*) is the work of a critic and scholar at the top of his form.

This volume is highly recommended. The mix of critical earnestness and effortless wit makes it not only unique, but also an essential addition for any collection concerned with film history and theatre history.

John Frank
 Los Angeles Public Library

Book and Media Reviews

Reviews of Theatre and Film-Related Books and Multimedia



Bennahum, Ninotchka Devorah.
Carmen: A Gypsy Geography.
Middletown, CT:
Wesleyan University Press, 2013.
269pp.
ISBN: 9780819573537

While displaying the ways in which Carmen represents the mythic and historical importance of the Gypsy in western cultures, Bennahum also illustrates how the character embodies the spirit of dancers the world over.

Carmen is an iconic figure: mythic, earthy, free spirited—the embodiment of Gypsies and flamenco. People who may know nothing of her fictive origins, as well as those well versed in the theatricality surrounding her story, comfortably use her name as metaphor. As author Ninotchka Bennahum demonstrates, Carmen is an ideal subject for a broad interdisciplinary examination. In Bennahum’s telling the multiple manifestations of Carmen, in a variety of art forms, provide a “map of Gypsy history,” particularly in the Iberian peninsula, as well as an archetypal image of female performers.

Bennahum’s seminal search for the origins and imprints of the character Carmen will interest and inspire readers across many disciplines. *Carmen: A Gypsy Geography* is one of those rare scholarly works that provides rigorous research within an absorbing and accessible framework. We travel with Bennahum on her journey to learn why Carmen became part of the fabric of multiple cultures. We witness what inspired early-nineteenth Century novelist Prosper Mérimée to invent *Carmen* and how, by mid-nineteenth Century, she made her larger-than-life appearance in Georges Bizet’s opera. In the twentieth century, Pablo Picasso returned to Carmen as a theme in his artwork.

While displaying the ways in which Carmen represents the mythic and historical importance of the Gypsy in western cultures, Bennahum also illustrates how the character embodies the spirit of dancers the world over. Through Bennahum’s depictions of movement as a vehicle for storytelling, we gain an understanding of the role dance plays in performance art. While verbal communication is uppermost in a play script, language is also heightened through movement within a space.

Carmen: A Gypsy Geography starts in France with Mérimée’s creation of a work of fiction that is later transposed into an opera. Then the book moves backward in time and place to the influence of the Islamic Mediterranean culture. Carmen’s archetypal essence flows from the Gypsy heritage and place in culture: a people not welcome anywhere, even though their presence as sojourners migrating from the Middle East into Europe was well established in early modern Spain. Bringing us along with the migration, Bennahum shows why we are drawn to Carmen, who represents Gypsy songs, dance, flamenco music, and the free lifestyle associated with stage performers. We live with Mérimée and Bizet while they create their works of fiction and opera, and with Picasso, as Carmen’s persona enters into his way of seeing and depicting. Utilizing a non-linear approach, the book opens new pathways to reading performance and history.

Bennahum, a dance historian, choreographer and performance theorist, says in summary: “What seems most apparent at the end of my journey is the idea of the Gypsy artist as historian, writing her own history in the dance, which I take to mean energy flow or migrational route.... This is not so much an act of retrieval of Gypsy history as an ephemeral moment of bearing witness to her [Carmen’s] life and its layered meaning.” (201)

Rita Kohn
Freelance Author

Upcoming Events

TLA Events and Deadlines

2014

June
10-13

Joint Conference of the International Association of Libraries and Museums of the Performing Arts (SIBMAS) and Theatre Library Association: [Body, Mind, Artifact: Reimagining Collections](#)

John Jay College
City University of New York
524 West 59th Street
New York, New York

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Spring Board Meeting
The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

21
[Woodlawn Cemetary Tour](#)
New York, New York

October
17

[Fall Board Meeting](#)
The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

[Annual Business Meeting](#)
The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

November
20-23

[ASTR/TLA Annual Conference](#)
Baltimore Marriott Waterfront, Baltimore MD

BROADSIDE 2014 Deadlines

July
4

Summer 2014 Issue

December
12

Fall 2014 Issue