

# Foreword

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FREDDIE ROKEM

Performance analysis is a form of repetition. It is an academic practice that attempts to recapitulate and reconsider analytically what the author considers to be the most significant aspects of a specific stage production. It is written for an audience of theatre researchers who have not necessarily seen the performance itself. As a rule this practice also attempts to point out the theoretical implications of the specific stage performance dealt with, specifically drawing attention to the kind of knowledge that can be applied in viewing other performances than the one specifically dealt with by the author. As a repetition of a theatre performance, which because of its obvious ephemerality has ceased to exist as such, the practice of performance analysis necessarily enters into what could be somewhat loosely termed the 'field of the mimetic', a representation of an action.

All the seven articles presented in this issue of *Theatre Research International* in different ways reflect this aspect of performance analysis: moving between the verbal reconstruction of different aspects of the performance itself, on the one hand, and reflecting on the theoretical implications of viewing this performance, on the other. They have all been presented at the meetings of the 'Performance Analysis Working Group' which are held in connection with the IFTR/FIRT conferences. This working group met for the first time in Dublin in 1992 and has since then held its meetings in Helsinki, 1993;

Moscow, 1994; Montreal, 1995; Tel Aviv, 1996; Puebla (Mexico) 1997, and Canterbury 1998. Sarah Bryant-Bertail, Eli Rozik and myself are the co-ordinators of the working group. One of us convenes the group for each of the meetings where the papers, which have already been distributed among the participants in advance, are discussed among the members of the group rather than read out aloud.

This has proven to be a very productive way to engage in a continuing discussion about a number of issues connected to what has become one of the central areas of theatre research and a vital aspect of the teaching of theatre in universities. In addition to the meetings and discussions themselves this journal has opened its pages for the publication of a selection of papers presented at the meetings. This is the third issue of *TRI* devoted to the sometimes completely re-written contributions to the working group, presenting its activities to a larger audience of readers. The first selection (*TRI*, 19, 2, Summer 1994) was edited by Sarah Bryant-Bertail and the second (*TRI*, 22, 1, Spring 1997) was edited by Eli Rozik. This issue of *Theatre Research International* presents a selection of papers presented at the conferences in Tel Aviv, Puebla and Canterbury. Finally, before letting the articles speak for themselves, I want to thank the authors, my co-ordinating colleagues, and Claude Schumacher, the editor, for their co-operation and support.

## Notes on Contributors

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FRIEDEMANN KREUDER teaches theatre historiography at the Institute for Theatre Studies at the Freie Universität Berlin.

His dissertation on forms of recollection in the theatre of Klaus Michael Grüber is forthcoming.

DEAN WILCOX teaches theatre history and performance studies, North Carolina School of the Arts. He continues to explore connections between deconstruction, semiotics, phenomenology, and performance.