

FEATURE ARTICLES

Rawle Gibbons and the Theory and Practice of the Third Theatre

Louis Regis

Abstract

This essay examines the contribution of Rawle Gibbons to the theory and practice of a third theatre, which proposes a synthesis of the formal European theatre and the traditional enactments of the African and Asiatic folk. This essay foregrounds Gibbons' MPhil thesis, "Traditional Enactments of Trinidad: Towards a Third Theatre" (1979) which proposes a new theatre practice for the Caribbean. Major references for the central argument in this essay are Gibbons's *I Lawah* (1981), *Shepherd* (1985) and *Ogun Ayan – As in Pan* (2006) which are published together as *The Love Trilogy* (2012), and *Sing De Chorus* (1990), *Ah Wanna Fall* (1991) and *Ten to One* (1992) which are published as *A Calypso Trilogy* (1999). Another significant Gibbons document examined in this essay is his "Answering Ancestors: Caribbean Theatre Praxis in the Crossroads of Now," which he delivered as the keynote address at the "The Caribbean Stage: From Traditional Theatre to Modern Performances," the Second Annual Critical Caribbean Symposium hosted at the College of The Bahamas on Friday 23 November 2012.

Theatre, Memory and National Consciousness in the work of Édouard Glissant

Keithley Woolward

Abstract

This paper proposes a return to Édouard Glissant's seminal essay "Theatre: Consciousness of the People" originally published in the July 1971 edition of *Acoma*, in which he highlights the fundamental link between the theatre as conduit through which to give expression to the "collective consciousness of the people". Glissant frames theatre as the cornerstone of a national liberation project. For Glissant, theatre, and theatrical expression and the cultural practices of the Caribbean, are a viable form of resistance which can mobilise the transformative power of "embodied performance". "Theatre: Consciousness of the People" proposes a new form of creativity as cultural resistance that can bring collective community and national consciousness into profound dialogue to generate genuinely original forms of Caribbean identity.

The Anancy Technique: A Gateway to Postcolonial Performance

Eugene F. Williams

Abstract

Many decades ago I witnessed a performance of Guyanese actor Marc Matthews in the Caribbean classic, *Moon on a Rainbow Shawl*. His expressively fluid muscularity and verbal agility struck me then as culturally authentic but rare on the legitimate Caribbean stage. With the ascendancy of popular culture, this style of performance has gained wider acceptance and some pedagogic attention.

In this paper I share my theoretical probes and some practical discoveries in my role as a theatre director pursuing a technique for deploying this inherent cultural capital of the Caribbean actor for the creation of an aesthetic where the orature and body cognition become legitimate partners with the scribal text. The Anancy technique is an emergent approach that is rooted specifically in a mythos as well as kinesthetic principles of selected Africanist forms in the Caribbean.

**María Antonia, Unwilling Daughter of Oshun, Unaccomplished Mistress of Herself:
The Tragic Struggle towards Feminine Consciousness in Eugenio Hernández Espinosa's Theatrical
Masterpiece**

Rosana Herrero-Martín

Abstract

This paper analyses the question of individuation and consciousness in *María Antonia* (1967), a modern classic within Cuban drama, by the playwright Eugenio Hernandez Espinosa, from a three-fold psychological, social and metaphysical perspective. For this purpose, we will analyse both the concept of Ori, the Yoruba concept of human consciousness, and cosmogonic cornerstone within Afro-Cuban religious syncretism, as well as three main components in the path towards individuation from Carl Gustav Jung's Analytical Psychology: the persona, the shadow and the animus/anima or contra-sexual polarity.

KEY WORDS: Maria Antonia, Eugenio Hernandez-Espinosa, Afro-Cuban Theatre, Ori, Consciousness, Yoruba Cosmogony, Orishas, Oshun, Individuation, Persona, Shadow, Animus, Anima, Carl Gustav Jung, Contrasexual Polarity.

**Mancrab's Enlightenment: Posthuman Prosthetics and Performance in Peter Minshall's *River* and
*Callaloo an de Crab***

Justin Haynes

Abstract

Peter Minshall's 1983 carnival band *River* features various posthuman characters: carnival king Mancrab, carnival queen Washerwoman, and several mythological villagers. Mancrab operates as an extension of eighteenth-century European Enlightenment that privileges man's intellect through a move toward technology and epitomised in metallic prostheses. The mythological characters, which include Douens, Soucouyants, and La Diabliesse, all differentially abled, display their posthumanism in their organic appendages that work to heal and reform the maimed ancestral bodies of their enslaved forebears. Minshall highlights these mythological characters in his novella *Callaloo an de Crab*, which holds much of *River's* narrative, but the discrepancy between the two texts – that on the page versus that on the stage – underscores posthumanism in man versus mythological characters. When shifted to the stage the masqueraders replace the mythological villagers. This article investigates the discrepancy between the forms of humanism in the various texts – Mancrab's, Washerwoman's, and that of the mythological Caribbean characters.

The Ghost of Mikey Smith: Space, Performance and Justice

Honor Ford-Smith

Abstract

In 1983 the poet Mikey Smith was stoned to death. Here, I discuss Mikey's work and his death as a public enactment of power that teaches us much about the ways old and new injustices operate through space in Jamaica. Mikey's death dramatises the ways that legacies of older forms of plantation violence pop up unexpectedly, recomposing themselves in strange disguises to mark space and the human bodies in it, to limit the exits and entrances as well as the details of the script. Such violent legacies reconstitute themselves in ways that shape the outer social geographies and the interior spaces of the humans that move across them, and they do so in ways which are not immediately obvious. Mikey's death confronts us with the enduring presence of this violent geographic legacy and with an analysis of what it does to bodies. Understanding this, and working to dismantle geographies of violence – the unjust ways in which power marks space – can be critical to thinking about alternatives to narratives of criminality,

policing, fencing, surveillance and arming, as business as usual.

Caribbean Festival Arts: Exploring Praxis for the Future

Jo-anne Tull

Abstract

Festival arts of the Caribbean remain one of the important platforms of intellectual, creative and artistic engagement. There are a number of development opportunities to be derived from festivals. To date, these remain largely unexplored in spite of the increasing movement towards culture as a pillar of development by most countries. Valuing is critical to understanding how cultural forms such as festivals are relevant to national development agendas. This paper contends that in the absence of an appropriate framework that articulates the importance of valuing festival arts in the region and that gives guidance on how to do so (praxis), efficient use of festival arts as a key indigenous resource can remain challenged. The paper therefore explores what would be required to formulate a viable praxis for Caribbean festival arts, and the key elements that would comprise such a framework.

KEY WORDS: Caribbean; festival arts; praxis; CARIFESTA; measuring festivals

Culturally Industrious: The Making of a Theater Festival in Nassau, Bahamas”

Nicolette Bethel

Abstract

In 2007, a Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery survey of the cultural industries in the Caribbean observed that Caribbean performing arts exist in a not-for-profit environment which is often heavily dependent on government subsidy and struggle to survive in a break-even environment. At the same time, the cultural industries are globally robust, and even in the Caribbean, festivals generate considerable revenue.

Shakespeare in Paradise is an international theatre festival established in 2009 in Nassau, Bahamas. Among the reasons for its establishment was the goal to create a self-sustaining festival which would jump-start the theatre industry in Nassau, the Bahamian capital. This paper looks closely at Shakespeare in Paradise as a means to gauge its success to date. The paper draws upon data collected over the eight-year lifespan of the festival, examining programming, finances, and audience reach. It concludes that to date, the festival model has proven successful in the short term, and ends with a SWOT analysis of the festival’s current state.

Creating Theatre for an iPad Generation

Carla W. Springer

Abstract

In a society where everything seems technologically fast paced, how do you keep the “do-it-fast, do-it-now” generation of iPhoneers and Androids interested in sitting in a darkened room with 399 other people for approximately 90 to 120 minutes, and focused on actors on stage? How can theatre practitioners encourage a group of thumbers, silent head-bobbers, screen-tappers and swipers who can download hundreds of songs, movies, games and books onto a single device, to enjoy a theatrical presentation of *Julius Caesar* or *The Lion King*, or be enthusiastic about a stage play on the life of an iconic figure in our history?