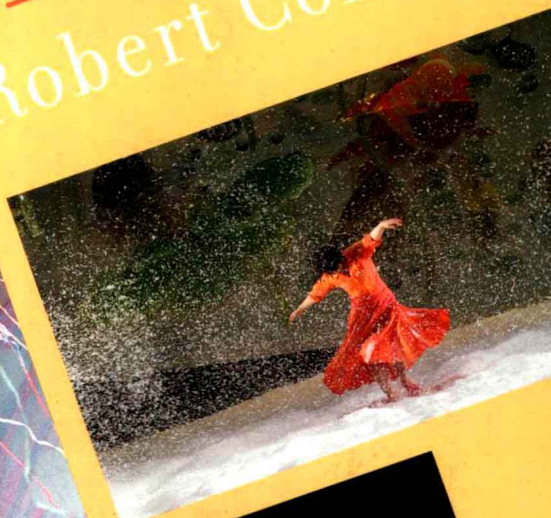
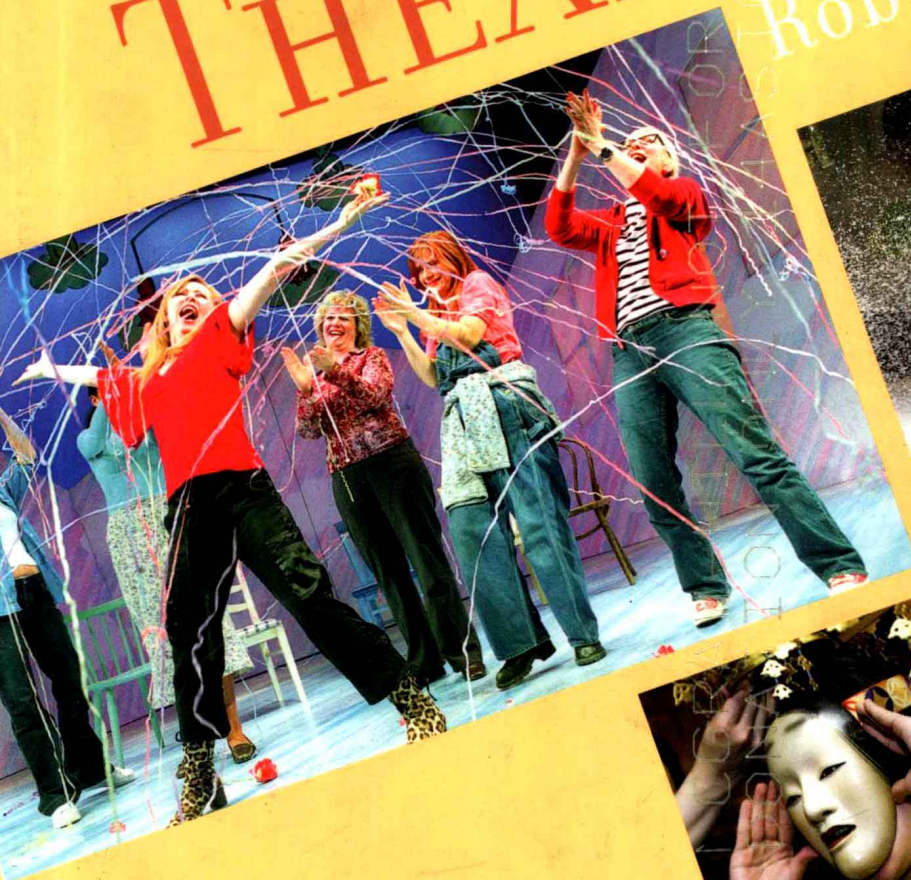


seventh edition

THEATRE

BRIEF EDITION

Robert Cohen



Theatre

Brief Version

SEVENTH EDITION



ROBERT COHEN

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University of California, Irvine*



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Snow in June, written by Charles Mee and adapted and directed by Chen Shi-Zheng for the American Repertory Theatre, 2003; Scene Design: Yi Li Ming. Photo © Richard Feldman.

Jude Law in *Doctor Faustus* by Christopher Marlowe, Young Vic Theatre, London, 2002. Photo: © Geraint Lewis.

Alex Jennings and Imogen Stubbs in *The Relapse* by John Vanbrugh, 1596, National Theatre, London, 2001. Photo: © Manuel Harlan.

Liz Smith and Geoffrey Hutchings in *Endgame* by Samuel Beckett, Albery Theatre, London, 2004. Photo: © Geraint Lewis.

Noh actor Otoshige Sakai (right) helps fit his son Otohara with a mask, prior to a performance in Tokyo May 17, 2004. Photo: © Toshiyuki Aizawa/Reuters/Corbis.

The cast, six Canadian actresses, performing *Mum's the Word*, which they also wrote, in London, 2003. Photo: © Geraint Lewis.

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To Whitney Cohen

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Preface

I am sitting in a darkened theatre correcting the galley sheets for the book you are about to read. A technical rehearsal for a play I am directing is in progress; I am seated at a make-shift desk in the back of the house, my reading illuminated by a tiny covered gooseneck lamp. Onstage stand several actors, silent and motionless, as light plays over their faces and bodies. Above me, unseen and unheard, technicians operate, adjust, and record the settings for another of the play's hundred and fifty light cues. To the outside observer, it is the dulllest situation imaginable; nothing observable happens for twenty or thirty minutes at a stretch. A pool of light intensifies and then recedes, muffled conversation crackles over headsets, footsteps clang on steel catwalks lacing the ceiling, and a spotlight is carefully repositioned. This has been going on now since eight in the morning, and it is already past dinnertime.

And yet my eye is continually pulled from these pages to the dance of light upon the stage. The violet and amber hues are rich with color, and the sharp shafts of incandescence dazzle with brilliance. I am fascinated by the patient weariness of the actors, alternately glowing in and then shadowed by the lights, endlessly holding the positions that, in performance, they will occupy for only a few transitory seconds. I gaze with admiration at the followspot operator, his hands gloved, as he handles his instrument with the precision and sensitivity of a surgeon.

The silence, the stasis, is hypnotic. All is quiet but profound with held-back beats, incipient torrents of passion and exhilaration. The potential is riveting—I am alive with ex-

citement—and I look back to these cold galley sheets with alarm.

How can I have thought to express the thrill of the theatre in these pages? How can I have hoped to make recognizable the joy and awe I feel in theatrical involvement?

The theatre is not merely a collection of crafts, a branch of literature, a collaboration of technique, or even an all-encompassing art form. It is a life. It is people. It is people making art out of themselves. Its full reality transcends by light-years anything that could be said or written about it.

What I have tried to do in these pages is not so much to introduce the theatre or to survey it as to *present* the theatre with its liveliness and humanness intact, with its incipient passion and exhilaration always present, with its potential for joy, awe, wisdom, and excitement as clear to the reader as they have been made clear to me.

Features

This is a brief version of a larger book that is published simultaneously. The larger volume includes five chapters on theatrical history that do not appear here and three chapters (instead of two) on the modern theatre. The goal of this brief version is to provide students surveying the theatrical arts and collaborative theatrical crafts—but not dramatic history—with a comprehensive text in the dramatic arts as they exist today.

I have included more than 280 theatre photographs—mostly in color—collected from all five continents. The vast majority of these are of significant recent stage productions from around the world. Other photos illustrate the processes

of theatrical creation or the historical and current contexts of theatre presentation. Completing the book's art are drawings by scholar/architects that illustrate theatres both past and present as accurately as current research and skilled reconstruction can make possible. Extended captions should help readers better appreciate these images of theatre worldwide and make stronger connections to the text examples.

The text offers a number of pedagogical aids. Terms commonly used in theatre and theatre history are defined in the glossary at the back of the book, and further sources of information for the curious can be found in the selected bibliography. To help students enjoy performances, the appendix "Writing on Theatre" is available on the Online Learning Center. The appendix offers advice on observing and writing critically about plays and can be accessed at www.mhhe.com/cohen.

To help students enhance their playgoing experience further, we have revised our brief guide—*Enjoy the Play!* Co-authored with Lorna Cohen, the guide includes suggestions as to how and where students may attend live theatre—at low cost—either in their own hometowns or in major theatre centers here and abroad. It also includes pointers on how to write a play report.

To help busy instructors, there is a Test Bank, written by Marilyn Moriarty, which includes 50 multiple-choice questions and several short-answer or essay questions per chapter. A computerized version of the Test Bank is available to qualified adopters.

No study of the theatre can be truly comprehensive without seeing and reading plays. It is my belief that regular playgoing and play reading, supported by the discussions in these pages and in the classroom, will provide a good foundation for the student to develop an informed and critical enthusiasm for the art of drama.

What's New?

New to this edition is a first-ever section on the beginnings of theatre in African shamanism and

ritual dance-drama, a reconsideration of ancient Greek and Roman theatre buildings and staging as discovered in recent research, a reorganized chapter on music theatre incorporating the startling directions of the past three years, new coverage on the "theatre of community" as pioneered by Bill Rauch and others, multi-language "macaronic" theatre increasingly popular in Europe and America, non-Aristotelian dramatic forms, the "verbatim theatre" of political immediacy widespread in England and the United States, a look at the major works of rising American playwrights Richard Greenberg and Neil LaBute (and emerging ones David Auburn, Doug Wright, Lynn Nottage and Tracy Butts), an examination of non-Aristotelian theatre formats in the "What is a Play?" chapter, expanded and better illustrated sections on theatre design and, especially, theatre technology, and a more sustained look at the parallels and differences between acting in theatre and cinema. Expanded space is also given to individual topics such as Greek Old Comedy, medieval morality plays, Spanish drama of the Golden Age, and Japanese *bunraku*, among others. Of course, the entire "Theatre Today" chapter is wholly revised, as are the considerations given to the careers of living American playwrights from Arthur Miller to Tony Kushner. Several new "boxes" of text, mostly illustrated, propose new "sideline" topics of discussion not previously considered.

In addition to the written text, over 140 new photographs and illustrations have been personally selected from photographers around the world, to help the reader better visualize—and experience sensually—the theatrical activity referred to in each chapter.

Acknowledgments

In all of these revisions, I have profited from literally hundreds of valuable suggestions from readers and from a dozen reviews solicited by the publisher from around the country. These include:

Joe Aldridge, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Leo J. Van Dyke, Ph.D., University of South Alabama

Robert Gerald Levy, Clarion University of Pennsylvania

Dr. Albert F. C. Wehlburg, University of Florida

I am also very grateful for the generous counsel of my past, current, and future colleagues who have contributed to this edition. Suk-Man Kim, at the Korean National University of the Arts, has given me great insight into Korean theatre while also providing readers the image of his most fascinating dramatic work in that country. William Sun, at the Shanghai Theatre Academy, has helped me better understand the complexities of Chinese drama, as has his wife Faye (the translator of the Chinese edition of this book). Mohammed Ben Abdallah, at the University of Ghana, has opened my eyes to the splendors of both current and historic African theatre. Dan Yang was extremely helpful in clarifying and correcting passages throughout the chapter "The Theatre of Asia," as was Dennis Castellano in "The Musical Theatre" chapter, while Tom Ruzika and Tom Umfrid came to my aid with photographic support in the "Designers and Technicians" chapter. Bill Rauch and Neil LaBute were both kind and prompt in reviewing pertinent new material in the chapter "Theatre Today." I was also very pleased to enjoy the guidance of Cliff Faulkner and the inspiration of Marvin Carlson in preparing that chapter. Most of all, I am deeply indebted to the continuous and unstinting support of Lorna Cohen, and for her unerring editorial, aesthetic, and theatrical judgment which has found its way into decisions made on practically every page and image in this edition.

I am overjoyed to have had the opportunity, once again, to have the contributions of many of the finest theatre photographers in America and Europe in selecting and acquiring the many new images of current theatre work around the world. These artists of the lens include Laurencine Lot of the Comédie Française

in Paris, and Geraint Lewis who covers most major theatre activity in London and Edinburgh; each of them invited me to spend a day in their studios wading through many hundreds of slides, photos, and digital images. Ryan Jensen not only contributed a photo from his files but also responded to my request to photograph the New York TKTS booth in the rain. Other fine photographers with whom I have worked in the past—Stephanie Berger, Joan Marcus and Paul Kolnick in New York, Richard Feldman in Boston, Michal Daniel in Minneapolis and Craig Schwartz in Los Angeles—were as brilliant as ever, and for the first time, Manuel Harlen in London and Frank Lin in Taipei made excellent contributions to this edition's art program.

I would also like to thank the many theatre directors and press officers who were so helpful in tracking down images that I requested: Steven Padla at the Yale Repertory Theatre, Antonio Rojas at the Almagro Theatre Festival of Spain, David Howells at the Royal Shakespeare Company, Barbara Higgs and Ronny Förster at the Zurich Schauspielhaus, James Morrison at the Guthrie Theatre, Paul Marte at Hartford Stage, Lee Lawlor at the Cornerstone Theatre, Kati Mitchell at the American Repertory Theatre, Donna Law at the Utah Shakespearean Festival, Dick Devin at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, and Cris Gross at South Coast Repertory.

Finally, it is a pleasure to acknowledge the great workforce at McGraw-Hill Higher Education with whom I have been working very closely on this revision. Sponsoring Editor Caroline Ryan has shepherded this edition from the very outset with enthusiasm, sharp intellect and skill. Andrea McCarrick, copyeditor for the fifth edition, has once again made her expertly-crafted improvements on every page. Art editor Inge King has pored over every photograph with consummate taste and appreciation, and Production Editor Anne Fuzellier has assembled all this material with great care, concern, and keen efficiency. No author could have a better team to work with, and I am immensely indebted to each and all of them.

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- an overview and outline of the text chapter
- a list of significant names and terms found in the chapter
- Lecture Launchers for student essays or discussions

The last section of the *Instructor's Manual* contains a *Test Bank*, organized by chapter containing multiple choice and true-false questions, for in-class quizzes and testing.

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ONLINE LEARNING CENTER: WWW.MHHE.COM/COHEN The Online Learning Center is an Internet-based resource for students and faculty alike. The Instructor Resources are password

protected and offer the complete text of the *Instructor's Manual* and a link to our customizable database of plays. To receive a password for the site, contact your local sales representative or email us at theatre@mcgraw-hill.com.

Additionally, the Online Learning Center offers chapter-by-chapter quizzes for student testing. These brief quizzes are separate from those offered in the *Instructor's Manual*, generate instant grades, and the results can be emailed directly to the instructor with the click of a button (see Student Resources below). This special quizzing feature is a valuable tool for the instructor who requires a quick way to check reading comprehension and basic understanding without using up valuable class time.

Student Resources

ENJOY THE PLAY! This free theatre guide is packaged with every copy of the text. Revised and updated for the seventh edition, this booklet can be the ultimate tool for introductory theatre students, with information ranging from getting to the theatre to what to write in a theatre report, *Enjoy the Play!* is an excellent introduction to the art of attending a play.

ONLINE LEARNING CENTER: WWW.MHHE.COM/COHEN McGraw-Hill offers extensive Web resources for students with Internet access. Students will find the Online Learning Center of particular use with the seventh edition of *Theatre Brief Version*, as each chapter is equipped with: glossary terms, chapter objectives, discussion questions, and online testing. In addition, the site hosts links to promote getting involved in theatre and in conducting research on the Web.

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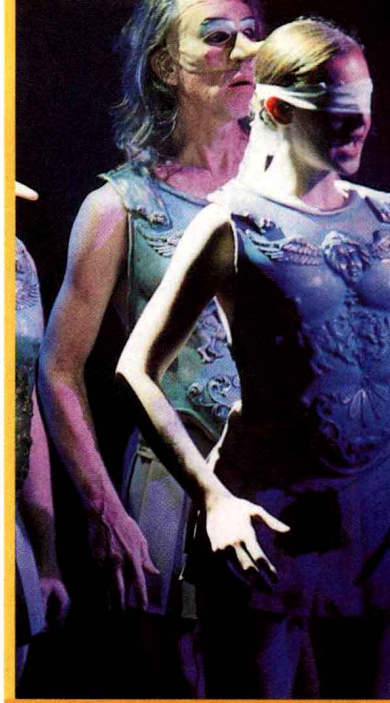
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Introduction



IT IS EVENING IN MANHATTAN. On Broadway and the streets that cross it—from 42nd to 54th—marquees light up, “Performance Tonight” signs materialize in front of double doors, and beneath a few box-office windows placards announce “This Performance Completely Sold Out.” At Grand Central and Penn stations, trains disgorge suburbanites from Greenwich, Larchmont, and Trenton; students from New Haven and Philadelphia; day-trippers from Boston and Washington. Up from the Times Square subways troop denizens of the island city and the neighboring boroughs. At the Duffy Square “TKTS” booth, hundreds line up to buy the discount tickets that go on sale a few hours before curtain time for those shows with seats yet to be filled. Now, converging on these few midtown blocks of America’s largest city, come limousines, restaurant buses, private cars, and taxis, whose drivers search for a curbside slot to deposit their riders among the milling throng of pedestrians. Financiers and dowagers, bearded intellectuals, backpack-toting teenagers, sleek executives, hip Harlemites, arm-in-arm widows, out-of-town tourists and conventioners, between-engagement actors, celebrities, honeymooners, and the precocious young—all commingle in this bizarre aggregation that is the New York Broadway audience. Even during (and perhaps *especially* during) troubled times in this vibrant city, it is as bright, bold, and varied a crowd as is likely to assemble at any single place in America.

It is eight o’clock. In close to forty theatres within two dozen blocks of each other, house-lights dim, curtains rise, and spotlights pick out performers whose lives center on this moment.