

Performance and the Politics of Space
Theatre and Topology

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and Benjamin Wihstutz

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Introduction

Benjamin Wihstutz

In his 1931 essay, “The Theatrical Experience of Space,” Max Herrmann, director of the first ever academic institute for theatre research, which was established in Berlin, looked back on the nascent stage of German theatre studies: “At the heart of the recent efforts to separate theatre studies from literary studies lies the phrase: ‘performing arts are spatial arts’, for they unfold and reveal their most essential qualities in real space.”¹

The founding of theatre studies therefore implied a change of perspective which, in the place of the analysis of two-dimensional dramatic texts, established the three-dimensional performance space as the central object of investigation. The pioneers of theatre studies—for example, Max Herrmann in Germany or, as Marvin Carlson points out in his contribution to this volume, Brander Mathews in the United States—raised new space-related questions that had only been of minor importance to literary studies: What different conditions for reception could an amphitheatre create as against a box set? How was one to imagine the stages on which Shakespeare’s plays originally premiered? And in what manner were the theatrical arts first and foremost produced by the simultaneous presence of actors and spectators in the performance space? For Max Herrmann, there was no doubt that the audience was “not simply a receptive component, but an active part of the performance itself, so much so that without its involvement the whole thing can never truly come to life.”² The focus thus came to rest on theatres not solely as places of art, but also as physical, architectural, and, not least, social spaces. This meant that the new discipline of theatre studies had to open itself to questions of the cultural and social sciences concerning the theatre as a place and institution within society, alongside aesthetic and historical considerations relating to the performing arts.

In times when it has become popular in the humanities to diagnose spatial turns,³ these preliminary remarks aim to establish that a spatial perspective is nothing new to theatre research. Rather, if there has ever been something resembling a spatial turn in theatre studies, then it must refer to the founding of an autonomous discipline separate from literary studies, focusing on the performance and *mise-en-scène* of theatre instead of on the analysis of dramatic literature.

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1 When, in the 1960s and 1970s, performance studies departments were
2 established within Anglo-Saxon academia, this spatial focus was broadened
3 by the influence of the social sciences and cultural anthropology on perfor-
4 mance research. New perspectives on space became relevant, such as ques-
5 tions of framing and site-specificness, as well as the relationship between
6 performance, urban politics, and geography. The now much broader term
7 “performance” allowed for the traditional link between theatricality and
8 politics to be highlighted in all forms of “cultural performance” (Milton
9 Singer), be it a Broadway show, a dance performance in public space, a street
10 parade, or even a campaign speech held during a political rally. As a con-
11 sequence, performance research became very heterogeneous and sometimes
12 even placed itself in opposition to theatre research. Yet, neither the institution
13 of theatre nor the theatre studies departments at central European universi-
14 ties seemed to suffer from the same “tensions and divisions between theatre
15 and performance that were frequently felt in the United States.”⁴

16 From today’s perspective, the possibility of maintaining a clear distinc-
17 tion between theatre and performance research seems increasingly ques-
18 tionable. As any program of the major European theatre festivals, whether
19 in Avignon, Epidaurus, or Edinburgh, will indicate, such a division no
20 longer exists. Instead, we find the different artistic fields growing closer
21 together, blending dance, drama, and performance, or even visual arts
22 and architecture. A contemporary conceptual artist such as Tino Sehgal,
23 for example, might be invited to “stage” a performative situation at the
24 Guggenheim in New York (2010), at the Tate Modern in London (2012),
25 or at the Theatre Festival in Avignon (2011) and seems to travel easily back
26 and forth between the different artistic fields and institutions.⁵ Some con-
27 temporary theatre productions, on the other hand, such as the Dante Tril-
28 ogy by Romeo Castellucci (2008) could just as well be attributed to a visual
29 or installation artist. It hardly seems suitable anymore to label these inter-
30 art phenomena “postdramatic”⁶ because it is almost impossible to deter-
31 mine whether such art forms are embedded in a theatrical tradition or one
32 pertaining to the visual arts.

33 Another reason for the title of this book to refer to both theatre and
34 performance is that it is one of the volume’s key aims to bridge the gap
35 between the artistic and academic disciplines of theatre and performance
36 from a contemporary as well as historical perspective. The unifying factor
37 of the contributions in this book is the inquiry into a “politics of space” in
38 performance, marking a political dimension of the placements, demarca-
39 tions, boundaries, and divisions of performance and its spaces, be it at the
40 Tate Modern in London, on Haymarket Square in Chicago, in Rousseau’s
41 Geneva, in early modern England, or in ancient Greece.

42 The spatial significance of the performing arts can be traced all the way to
43 the etymology of the term “theatre,” which indicates not just an art but also
44 a place and a space. *Theatron* in Greek initially described nothing more than
45 a place for viewing. At first, it referred specifically to the section occupied
46

by the spectators in ancient theatres, while it later came to be applied to the	1
entire structure, institution, and art of drama. But the emergence of the theatre	2
as a public space is just as intimately tied to politics. During the course	3
of the Dionysian festivals, the theatre would host state ceremonies honoring	4
distinguished citizens, announce decrees, and provide a forum for political	5
speeches, in addition to the tragedy and comedy competitions. The emergence	6
of the theatre as a place of assembly for the polis is directly linked to	7
the idea of democracy—which was also the reason why Plato dismissed it	8
as a space for the masses. What is at stake when a performance takes place,	9
when a space is divided, when a stage is created, is in fact less a matter of	10
taste than an intersection of aesthetics and politics or, as the French philosopher	11
Jacques Rancière put it, “a distribution of the sensible.” ⁷	12
Yet, this volume was conceived only with the partial intention to confine	13
it to a discussion of the politics of aesthetics, an increasingly recurrent topic	14
among continental political theorists in the past years. The works by the	15
French philosophers Jacques Rancière, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Alain Badiou,	16
frequently at the center of recent debates on politics and aesthetics, are certainly	17
references in matters concerning the political dimension of art but can	18
only help to answer some of the questions raised here. Given that the theatre	19
is never simply an artistic space but also always represents a social, urban,	20
and institutional space, the discourse on the politics of space necessarily	21
plays out on several levels. Although a substantial majority of the contributions	22
collected here have their roots in theatre studies, it is precisely the different	23
levels and linkages between aesthetic theory and geography, art and	24
sociology, architecture and political theory, geometry and history that shed	25
a new light on performance, politics, and space, thereby transforming this	26
historically intertwined triad into a transdisciplinary subject. Consequently,	27
the “politics of space” can have various meanings for theatre and performance.	28
The expression can refer either to the boundaries and demarcations drawn by	29
a performance or to the theatre as a public place of political debate. It can	30
denote a politics of representation or one of emancipation. It can illuminate	31
the deliberate positioning of theatres in a specific urban and economic	32
space or theatre as a place of political community development.	33
<i>Performance and the Politics of Space</i> must therefore be understood not as	34
a hypothesis but, rather, applied to theatre and its history as a heuristic tool	35
with which to investigate a complex and multifaceted relationship.	36
In theatre, every production is inevitably linked to decisions that refer to	37
a “politics of space”: Each staging of a performance divides the space into	38
observers and those being observed, thus positing a performative space in	39
relation to the public nature of the theatre and therefore at the same time	40
to a societal “outside.” Although every performance is inscribed in a place	41
and space within a specific social order, as an artistic event it can just as	42
well distance itself from this order, reflect it, or even endow it with utopian	43
qualities. The history of theatre clearly speaks to the ambivalent potential	44
inherent in the social space of performance to either transform it into a	45
	46

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1 space of dispute, scandal, and rebellion or to serve the interests of (state)
2 power. One need only think of the famed entries by the kings and princes
3 into the boxes of their court theatres, not infrequently stealing the show
4 from the actors.

5 Irrespective of the system of governance or the architecture of the theatre
6 buildings at any given period, the theatre, as a place and a space, is charac-
7 terized by a dual differentiation. On the one hand, it requires a marker to
8 designate the separation between the theatrical space and the everyday social
9 sphere. This boundary need not be represented by the outer walls of the the-
10 atre building or the threshold between the foyer and the auditorium. It can
11 also be established by a street artist's performance in front of a spontaneously
12 gathered audience in a pedestrian area, bringing shopping activities to a tem-
13 porary halt. Nonetheless, a certain distance from daily life, which enables the
14 theatrical space to become apparent, must be instituted. It was not without
15 reason that the politically motivated avant-garde movements of the twentieth
16 century strove to break down precisely these spatially marked boundaries,
17 forcing the theatre out of its buildings and performance art out of the gal-
18 leries.⁸ On the other hand, emancipatory attempts to break with traditions
19 of theatre history have often targeted the distinction between spectator and
20 actor, so integral to performances. However, as demonstrated by the avant-
21 garde's efforts to reform, this separation cannot simply be abolished by getting
22 rid of the apron stage or the assigned seats. By definition, every performance
23 maintains both groups as two distinct perspectives on the theatre, irrespec-
24 tive of the ways in which the production might modify the spatial division or
25 whether it prompts the reversal of roles.⁹ To a certain extent, this inevitable
26 dual differentiation of space can be described as the topology of theatre.

27 The mathematical branch of topology investigates, among other things,
28 the homeomorphic properties of geometric objects which, despite changes
29 to their form and thanks to the relationships between them, enable the con-
30 tinuous establishment of representations and their ascription to categories
31 such as inside and outside, open and closed, or joined and separate. Thus,
32 whether stretched, compressed, bent, or contorted (though not when cut
33 up), a deformed object's topology remains unaltered. Freely applied to the
34 theatre, the concept of topologies would allow us to assert that the divided
35 space of performance can similarly be stretched, compressed, bent, or con-
36 torted. Spectators and actors cannot, however, be cut into two completely
37 distinct halves or merged into a single one. Yet it was precisely the different
38 forms of the theatre's topology that the theatre reformists and adherents of
39 the avant-garde turned to when formulating their political demands.

40 Cut loose from mathematics, the twin notions of theatre and topology
41 can further be applied to the aforementioned interpretive level, namely the
42 investigation of the location and positioning of the theatre within an urban
43 and social space. In this instance, the focus of attention shifts to the theatre's
44 relationship to its immediate surroundings. That this relationship cannot be
45 considered independently of a politics of space is clearly demonstrated by the
46 fact that the historical significance and function of theatres in society can

frequently be identified by their geographical locations. It is equally important to note that, conversely, those individuals engaged in day-to-day politics have learned to use this relationship knowingly, aiming to influence economic and social developments through the strategic positioning of theatres and art centers. As any first-time visit to a theatre in the Parisian suburbs, such as those among the high-rises of Bobigny or Créteil, will show, one is instantly confronted with the failed attempts of 1970s urban development policies to counteract the poor planning of socially neglected satellite towns through the positioning of Maisons de la Culture.

It is also possible to trace the history of social differentiation and political power relations in the history of theatre architecture itself, enabling the analysis of the performance space with regard to its social topology. Social and societal hierarchies, which in later periods would themselves fall victim to reforms and conversions, are reflected not only in the structure of the auditorium, with its various galleries and boxes, but also in the partitioning of backstage spaces or the creation of different foyers with restricted access.¹⁰

Last but not least, the contributions to this volume also deal with questions concerning the spatial strategies of productions and their mise-en-scène. To what extent do theatre and dance productions or performances in public spaces refer to a politics of space? In what way do these artistic practices offer an alternative approach to spatial orders? Can the staging of theatrical space serve the accomplishment of political goals? And in what respect do the ways in which space is structured become at all politically relevant? A politics of art need not be bound to political content, as Jacques Rancière makes abundantly clear:

Art is not political owing to the messages and feelings that it conveys on the state of social and political issues. Nor is it political owing to the way it represents social structures, conflicts or identities. It is political by virtue of the very distance that it takes with respect to those functions. It is political insofar as it frames not only works or monuments, but also a specific space-time sensorium, as this sensorium defines ways of being together or being apart, of being inside or outside, in front of or in the middle of, etc.¹¹

While, in reference to Michel Foucault, Rancière proposes applying the term “police” to the division of powers and competences—that is, to the entire state apparatus that controls the established order—he defines politics as those practices which bring forth the “redistribution of the sensible” and break with the prevailing order.¹² One of the primary duties of the police therefore consists of the prevention of politics.

It is worth remembering that the theatre police constituted a temporary institution at theatres in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, having been created to oversee the enforcement of new theatre laws, ensure that they were complied with, and, among other things, nourish a new relationship vis-à-vis theatrical space. Many theatre periodicals of the

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1 time contain indignant comments about spectator behavior, in particular
2 the customary whistling, clapping, and knocking, as well as habits such as
3 eating and drinking or switching seats during the performance. According
4 to one German theatre critic's account from 1797, an "internal, well-estab-
5 lished house police" was to make sure that events proceeded undisturbed.¹³
6 The theatre police were consequently expected not only to control the
7 actors' behavior and the content of the performances but also to enforce a
8 new contemplative approach to aesthetic perception among the audience,
9 transforming the theatre into a "literarized" artistic space while negating
10 its social character.

11 Did the theatre police contribute to a redistribution of the sensible? Was
12 the underlying state authority used to serve what Rancière terms the aesthetic
13 regime of the arts? The preceding example shows that, in the theatre, politics
14 and the police are not always as clearly separable as Rancière's politics of aes-
15 thetics would have us believe. With regard to the performance space, it thus
16 appears to make little sense to apply the notion of politics to an emancipatory
17 practice alone. Rather, the history of theatre demonstrates that, within the
18 theatrical space, repression and emancipation, order and the redistribution of
19 the sensible occasionally act on one another in a peculiar manner. The claim
20 for the autonomy of art, transferred to the theatre in central Europe at the end
21 of the eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth century, never asserts itself
22 entirely, because the theatre per se remains a public and social space. For this
23 precise reason, the politics of space must inevitably have a variety of shades.

24 *****

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27 The present volume consists of seventeen chapters, roughly half of which
28 are devoted to historical themes and the other half to contemporary ones.
29 The different topics deliberately avoid a chronological order. Instead, they
30 are divided into three parts that represent the thematic priorities of this
31 book: Part I: Placements and Boundaries, Part II: Utopia and Heterotopia,
32 and Part III: Strategies of Spatial Appropriation. Together, these three prin-
33 cipal areas frame the discussion of the history of theatre and performance,
34 understood as a social and artistic space, with a specific focus on its politi-
35 cal dimension. This might provide insight into the location and architecture
36 of theatrical spaces, the places and utopias of theatrical performances, and
37 the potentialities and strategies of a "politics of space" in performance,
38 constantly questioning its artistic and aesthetic boundaries, referring to a
39 public, and drawing up distinctions.

40
41 Part I, Placements and Boundaries, sets its sights on the various topologies
42 of theatre and performance spaces, questioning place distributions and the
43 positioning of actors and sites and the resultant political implications of
44 these spatial choices. This applies to the location and positioning of theatre
45 buildings within an urban and economic space, as well as to the question
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of site-specificness in theatrical and political stagings or to the relationship between place, framing, and censorship.	1
	2
In “The Theatre <i>ici</i> ,” Marvin Carlson considers some of the many political and cultural implications of the physical location where various public acts, both political and theatrical, take place. The basis of this exploration is centered on the “hereness” that constitutes the performative event, be it the “here” of a stage direction such as Alfred Jarry’s “nowhere” in <i>Ubu Roi</i> , the “here” of certain historical theatres such as the one in which Jarry’s play premiered in fin-de-siècle Paris, or the “here” of a campaign speech by Barack Obama. By drawing a parallel between these diverse examples, Carlson demonstrates that the question of place matters in performance, both aesthetically and politically.	3
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Going further back in history, Janette Dillon’s contribution also highlights the political dimension of placements in performance, focusing on the spatial organization in the scripting of ceremonial events in early modern England, such as the famous court trials of Mary, Queen of Scots and Henry VIII, both of which eventually served as models for theatrical productions. With these specific historical examples, Dillon’s study shows paradigmatically to what extent the hierarchical disposition of people and objects in space could have a highly political meaning—in court as well as on stage.	13
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Loren Kruger’s contribution deals with the conflicts between continuity and change regarding a specific place with a political history: Haymarket Square in Chicago. Using the physical disappearance and subsequent ideological recovery of Haymarket Square, along with theories of performance archeology and urban spatial practices as points of departure, Kruger analyzes the economic, social, and cultural conditions that enable the excavation of historical events and the enactment of present politics on contested sites in the modern city.	22
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Michael McKinnie considers how cultural districts are implicated in the governance of cities. Contemporary modes of urban governance rely on ways of seeing that predate the emergence of those modes. Districts such as London’s South Bank play an important part in positing London as a cutting-edge creative city that competes successfully with other global cities. The current South Bank, however, relies on the spatial and cultural inheritance of the welfare state. It illustrates how cultural districts help make contemporary urban governance work—not by repudiating the welfare state, but by applying its forms of governance differently and better.	30
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By asking “What is Sydney about Sydney theatre?” Gay McAuley argues that theatre is always locally specific for theatre makers and theatre goers alike. Starting from the observation that theatre in Sydney largely takes place in adaptive re-use buildings, mostly associated with the city’s industrial past, the chapter examines three such buildings and its aesthetic, local, and political implications. Drawing on Clifford Geertz’s notion of a matrix of sensibility, McAuley argues that the material features of these	39
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1 idiosyncratic buildings are central to a whole way of conceptualizing and
2 experiencing theatre specific to a given city.

3 Christopher Balme examines issues revolving around tolerance, censor-
4 ship, and the theatrical public sphere. With reference to the paradox of
5 tolerance as developed by Jürgen Habermas and discussing some of the
6 contradictions inherent in censorship in open modern societies such as
7 Germany, Balme examines two examples of censorship: the famous self-
8 imposed ban by the Deutsche Oper in Berlin on performances of *Idomeneo*
9 in response to a perceived terrorist threat and the banning of a theatrical
10 poster in Munich deemed to be blasphemous. The opposing public responses
11 highlight the extreme discrepancies in discursive power available to differ-
12 ent religious groups and raise the question of boundaries and thresholds of
13 tolerance in the arts, its different places and institutions.

14 With Nicolas Salazar-Sutil's chapter on Alfred Jarry's politics of topologi-
15 cal space, the last contribution to the first part refers back to its beginning.
16 Salazar-Sutil takes a different viewpoint on Alfred Jarry's "nowhere" than
17 Marvin Carlson, focusing on the surreal and higher dimensional time-space
18 of the French dramatist and iconoclast. Salazar-Sutil points out that math-
19 ematical concepts of topology allow Jarry to present a more vital and fleshed
20 out sense of living space-time, within which a new politics of space is acti-
21 vated by the forces of endless change and continuous deformation, which can
22 be seen as a politics of the unimaginable. This critical review of an emphatic
23 "hereness" of performance raises questions that are at the core of the vol-
24 ume's second part and concern the utopian dimension of a politics of space.

25
26 Part II, Utopia and Heterotopia, considers the historically rooted claim
27 that theatres should serve as society's "other space," referring to Michel
28 Foucault's famous essay on "Different Spaces." According to Foucault,
29 theatres function as one of these spaces, "which are sorts of actually real-
30 ized utopias, . . . sorts of places that are outside all places, although they
31 are actually localizable."¹⁴ With a focus on the politics of space, the ques-
32 tions raised by the five contributions in Part II touch on topics in between
33 theatre, philosophy, and the public sphere, each of them highlighting an
34 ambivalence linked to the heterotopian framing of performance itself.

35 Ludger Schwarte's "Equality and Theatre Architecture: Voltaire's Private
36 Theatre" examines some of the parameters in which spatial constructions,
37 specifically theatre buildings, shape and reflect social hierarchies. Based on
38 the one hand on an analysis of Voltaire's private theatres and, on the other,
39 on a critical rereading of Foucault's text, the chapter puts forward the argu-
40 ment that the political performance of those theatre spaces can neither be
41 captured through a utopian ideal image nor through a heterotopian mirror
42 image, but only through the physical enablement of new ways of perception
43 and experience.

44 Like Schwarte, Juliane Rebentisch argues from a philosophical perspec-
45 tive in "Rousseau's Heterotopology of Theatre." The chapter examines
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Rousseau’s famous “Letter to d’Alembert on the Theatre” in the context of Rousseau’s political philosophy, especially the <i>Social Contract</i> . For Rousseau was convinced that a flourishing theatre culture meant the beginning of the end of a functioning polity, taking the theatre to be a subversive force which not only alienated each individual from his or her social roles but thereby also disintegrated the very social bonds that are a necessary condition for collective self-governance. Yet, as Rebenitsch argues, Rousseau’s hostility toward the theatre bears high political costs. For democracy and theatre are, in fact, inseparable.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Rousseau also plays an important role in Patrick Primavesi’s “Theatre and Festival around 1800.” The chapter outlines how Michel Foucault’s concept of heterotopia can be applied to the transition from courtly to bourgeois culture and to the development of a public sphere. Referring to Goethe’s novel <i>Wilhelm Meister</i> , Primavesi demonstrates how the ambivalent stance adopted by bourgeois culture toward theatre, festival, and the public sphere unfolded in heterotopias, reflected in the spread of theatres across society. The (self-)reflection of theatre in that period is fundamental to all the heterotopian ideas of the public that are still relevant to contemporary discussions about the places and the localization of theatre in society.	10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19
My own chapter (Benjamin Wihstutz) reflects on strategies of contemporary political theatre that aim to reestablish the theatre as a democratic space belonging to the public, in which a staging of the marginalized classes of society can take place. When refugees or unemployed or disabled people appear as themselves in front of middle-class audiences, the question arises to what extent theatre can serve as a social heterotopia in which unheard voices are finally heard. The chapter highlights and probes the ambivalence of this political claim, as well as that of the theatrical space itself as suspended between the aesthetic and the social sphere.	20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28
Susan Haedicke’s contribution focuses on the contemporary site-specific interventions staged in public spaces by the French street theatre company <i>Opéra Pagai</i> . The chapter explores how the group’s performances exploit a utopian aesthetic strategy of radically modeling other worlds and advocating improved ways of living that simultaneously offer a critique of contemporary life and social issues. Haedicke looks at how each space of performance is a “performing space” which is social, relational, iterative, and paradoxical: a collage of geographical, imagined, and discursive spaces.	29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37
The contributions to the book’s third and last part deal with Strategies of Spatial Appropriation. Based on different production and artistic practices, this part addresses the ways in which performances take over, occupy, and transform their places and spaces. What unites the five contributions in Part III is the hypothesis that performance spaces do not exist prior to a performance but are first and foremost produced by the performance and its strategies. These might be strategies of participation or community-building, new ways of dealing with the environment or with modes	38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46

1 of construction and destruction: strategies that pioneer a new politics of
2 spatial appropriation.

3 In “Policies of Spatial Appropriation,” Erika Fischer-Lichte demon-
4 strates how European theatre began to leave the established and represen-
5 tative buildings at the turn from the nineteenth to the twentieth century—a
6 movement to be continued on a larger scale in the 1920s and 1930s. Here,
7 three different examples will be investigated: Richard Wagner’s Festival,
8 to be conceived of as taking place on the banks of the river Rhine as a
9 democratic festival and realized on the Green Hill at Bayreuth; the British
10 and American Pageant Movement, striving for a theatre of the people, by
11 the people, for the people; and Max Reinhardt’s performances of Greek
12 tragedies in Berlin’s Circus Schumann as the birth of a new people’s the-
13 atre. All three examples show that the demand for new spaces has always
14 been linked to specific political aims, be they democratic, revolutionary,
15 and even nationalistic-conservative in nature.

16 Philip Ursprung’s contribution examines “The Architecture Perform-
17 dances of Gordon Matta-Clark” as a striking strategy of spatial approp-
18 riation which became an integral part of the performance art scene of
19 the 1970s. Ursprung points out how Matta-Clark’s critique of traditional
20 modes of representation is intrinsically linked to the social, political, and
21 economic context of its time, as it puts the faith in economic and social
22 progress to the test by producing a new kind of performative spatiality
23 where construction and destruction merge.

24 Kirsten Maar’s chapter deals with strategies of spatial appropriation
25 in dance, specifically in William Forsythe’s choreographic installations,
26 exploring how these modes of spatial organization and improvisation create
27 participatory models based on particular arrangements and choreographic
28 practices which serve as models for potential transitions and create unpre-
29 dictable in-between spaces. Referring to Heidegger, Deleuze and Guattari,
30 and Jean-Luc Nancy, Maar examines this complex play of disorientation
31 and assemblage between actors, objects, and spatial devices.

32 Jens Roselt’s chapter also deals with spectator participation, focusing
33 on contemporary performances in and outside of the theatre. According to
34 Roselt, every performance space contains a political dimension, as it enables
35 an encounter and a process of negotiation between stage and audience. By
36 using examples from everyday culture (temporary showrooms), architec-
37 ture (Holocaust Memorial Berlin), and participatory performance (Tino
38 Sehgal and Rimini Protokoll), Roselt shows how the performative charac-
39 ter turns spaces into events that can neither be fully planned nor exactly
40 repeated, constantly drawing or erasing boundaries.

41 Shannon Jackson’s “Life Politics/Life Aesthetics” concludes the third
42 part of the book by presenting a collaborative cross-arts project that
43 launches a discussion of environmental performance in both aesthetic
44 and social terms. The performance *red, black & GREEN: a blues* shows
45 the connections but also the differences among choreographic, sculptural,
46

architectural, and theatrical understandings of space, as it also critiques the racial and economic politics of space in the United States. Integrating scholarly frames from art history, performance studies, and the environmental justice movement, this last chapter once again reveals how crossing boundaries in performance and performance research can reflect on the various facets of a politics of space, leading to a rethinking of theatre and topology.

NOTES

1. Max Herrmann, "Das theatralische Raumerlebnis," in Jörg Dünne and Stephan Günzel (eds.), *Raumtheorie. Grundlagentexte aus Philosophie und Kulturwissenschaften* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2006), 501–514, 502–503.
2. *Ibid.*, 502.
3. See, for example, Barney Warf and Santa Arias (eds.), *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2008).
4. Marvin Carlson, "Introduction: Perspectives on Performance: Germany and America," in Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 1–10, 4.
5. For further reading on Tino Sehgal's "constructed situations," see Jens Roselt's contribution to this book. Also see Dorothea von Hantelmann, *How to Do Things with Art* (Zurich: JRP Ringier, 2010).
6. The term "postdramatic theatre" was first introduced in the discussion by Andrzej Wirth in the 1980s, and further developed by Hans-Thies Lehmann's book *Postdramatic Theatre* (New York: Routledge, 2006) (German edition 1999).
7. Cf. Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible* (London: Continuum, 2006).
8. Erika Fischer-Lichte's chapter in this volume shows that this occurred in the theatre long before the 1960s and 1970s.
9. See Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance*, trans. Saskya Iris Jain (New York: Routledge 2008).
10. Cf. Marvin Carlson, *Places of Performance: The Semiotics of Theatre Architecture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 148ff., and Ludger Schwarte's contribution to this volume.
11. Jacques Rancière, "The Politics of Aesthetics," lecture at the Frankfurter Sommerakademie 2004, <http://www.16beavergroup.org/mtarchive/archives/001877.php> (accessed September 10, 2012). Rancière has used similar wording in several publications. See, among others, *The Politics of Art and Its Paradoxes*, trans. David Quigley, *Brumaria* 9 (Fall 2007) and *Aesthetics and Its Discontents*, trans. Steven Corcoran (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009), 23.
12. Cf. Jacques Rancière, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 40ff.
13. Dramatischer Briefwechsel, das Münchner Theater betreffend, Letter 5 (1797), 10, quoted in Peter Heßelmann, *Gereinigt Theater* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2002), 392.
14. Michel Foucault, "Different Spaces," in James D. Faubion (ed.), *The Essential Works of Foucault, vol. 2: Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology* (New York: The New Press, 1998), 178.

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