tions of mise en scène as the creation of a stable set of signifiers, and that in the wake of poststructuralist theory's putative downtrend, mise en scène presents itself as *re*construction. A performance analysis of a 2006 Korean production of Sarah Kane's *4.48 Psychosis* directed by Park Jung-Hee best illustrates how this works, with Pavis arguing that the poetic, nonlinear Kane text invites the tight structuring of time and space in its performance, but that this is accomplished not by a forceful directorial concept, but a body-centered, audience-focused dramaturgy.

This articulation of the role that Derridean deconstruction has played in reorienting theatre toward a multiplicity of production artists and audiences is balanced by the author's continuing allegiance to rigorous semiotic analysis. In this way, *Contemporary Mise en Scène* is an answer to Pavis's 2008 *Analyzing Performance*, a book whose careful taxonomies of stage languages could now seem prescriptive. In contrast, this new book instructs by example, counting the dramatic critic as a player in the creative practice of reconstructing meaning.

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PERFORM, REPEAT, RECORD: LIVE ART IN HISTORY. Edited by Amelia Jones and Adrian Heathfield. Bristol, UK: Intellect Ltd., 2012; pp. 650.

LIVE ART IN LA: PERFORMANCE IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, 1970–1983. Edited by Peggy Phelan. Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2012; pp. 256.

Does writing a history of an art form defined by its elusiveness and resistance to theorization entail breaking away from the conventional scholarly format, the monograph? While *Live Art in LA: Performance in Southern California, 1970–1983* deceptively resembles a conventional collection of essays, it makes a convincing case for an editorial model structurally engaging with its material—an ambition shared with and expressed more visibly by *Perform, Repeat, Record: Live Art in History*. Both rely upon a materialist approach to their subject matter, aiming to correct self-referential perspectives on the aesthetic experience of live art by providing ample historical and geographical contexts. *Perform, Repeat, Record*'s presentation is based on the assumption that developing a historiographical approach to *live art* (the term conflates performance and body art throughout) means opening up a "kaleidoscopic" perspective (Jones 41) in an effort to formally espouse the slippery subject-matter, to perform it as it were, rather than smother it under more assertive discourse. The open-ended architecture aims to provide multiple points of entry rather than a recapitulative or anthological perspective, "some orientation points, in an as-yet-uninstituted archive of global late twentieth and early twenty-first century performance and live art" (Heathfield 237).

Perform, Repeat, Record features two separate introductions by coeditors representing the fields and approaches that have traditionally documented live art: art history (Amelia Jones) and theatre and performance studies (Adrian Heathfield). They have surrounded themselves with a "multitude of voices" (11), a combination of "artists, theorists and historians" reflecting the inherent interdisciplinarity of the art form. The book is divided into three parts, somehow reflecting the dialectic between theory and practice, with considerable overlap: "Theories and Histories," "Documents," and "Dialogues." Both Jones and Heathfield insist on a materialist approach, arguing that "performance cannot be . . . understood without some recourse to its complex enmeshment within historical, material and discursive formations" (Heathfield 28).

The first section is organized along loosely chronological lines, including four essays already published elsewhere, and combines theoretical reflections with case studies. The essays extend "philosophically oriented debates into performance theory proper" (Jones 41), deploying intertwining variations on the notions of presence, reception, memory, and documentation, with many taking issue with the traditional vision of performance as disappearance. Although its formal boldness is commendable and generally successful, the centrifugal structure leaves an ambivalent impression, the iterative nature of the variations walking a fine line between nuance and repetitiveness. Several essays directly echo and answer each other, mostly because better-known, previously published works serve as points of reference to be confronted, extended, or entrenched: Christopher Bedford frontally challenges Peggy Phelan's claim that "[p]erformance's only life is in the present" in *Unmarked* (1993); Jane Blocker relies upon Rebecca Schneider's refusal to embrace the "logic of the archive" (139) and its patriarchal implications; Philip Auslander's claim that performance documentation is an inherently performative gesture can be retraced to Boris Groys's interrogation of the shift "away from the art work and toward art documentation" (209), arguing that the installation provides a topographical anchor for documentation to retrieve "an aura of the original, the living, the historical" (217).

Most of the original essays are devoted to case studies and offer problematized (re)examinations of a diverse set of artists and collectives, challenging the understanding of canonical works: Hannah Higgins decenters the figure of George Maciunas in the Fluxus movement; Mechtild Widrich looks at Austrian artist VALIE EXPORT's 1969 photo-performance *Genital Panic* through the lens of Marina Abramovic's 2005 reenactment; André Lepecki presents an overlooked aspect of Allan Kaprow's creative process during the preparation of *18 Happenings in 6 Parts*. Several authors incorporate lesser-known, geographically marginal figures to offer a glimpse into an alternative history while exposing the relativity of historiographical choices: critic and live artist Monica Mayer focuses on Mexican performance art, arguing for the development of critical tools to document and define it from a Latin American perspective; Eleonora Fabiaõ employs a phenomenological approach to reflect on the notion of precariousness, illustrated by an analysis of the work of Brazilian artist Arthur Bispo do Rosario; Meiling Cheng presents Chinese live art that defies conventional definition; Angela Harutyunyan thematizes the "attempt at producing a timeline of performance practices in Eastern Europe since WWII" (219), choosing to "embrace the inevitable failure of such histories to be comprehensive" (220).

The broad spectrum of the book constitutes its strength, as well as its weakness: international and transhistorical, its forty-four brief chapters cover a wide range of figures and approaches, but looks like a smorgasbord in need of activation, requiring that the reader create her own set of connections in order to make sense of the material—and perform it in turn for herself, "uncontaining this containing" (22). In that respect, the book can be considered a valuable sourcebook and toolbox on live art and could easily find its way on reading lists for arts courses.

Live Art in LA narrows the scope geographically and historically, while sharing many theoretical and methodological points of contact and references with *Perform, Repeat, Record*. Featuring a wealth of photographs, the book grew out of an exhibition organized by LACE (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions) and sponsored by the Getty Foundation as part of their "Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945–1980" initiative. Three of the four chapters directly address the desire to fill a historiographical gap connected to both the art form and its location, while one essay on Kaprow feels more marginally related to the core objective. The book's main contribution lies in its combative introduction to an overlooked body of work and in the destabilization of canon-building that this entails, reinforced by the presence of authoritative voices in the field—a purpose rendered more evident than in *Perform, Repeat, Record* because of its more topical focus.

Editor Peggy Phelan confronts the gap by exposing the violence surrounding this "relative dearth of serious critical attention" (2). She reveals the darker potential of a joke, "thinking seriously about the sometimes funny associations we make between 'PST'—Pacific Standard Time—and 'PTSD'—post-traumatic stress disorder. . . . It is worth asking if that neglect is a symptom of something traumatic in the location and/or in the work produced 'out west' [to analyze how] violence and creativity are braided through artwork composed in California during the 1970s and early 1980s" (2–3). After evaluating the state of the field, she tries to account for the neglect of West Coast art: as the birthplace of feminist art, it has suffered from the routine misogyny of "high art"; its location has proven a handicap, due to the "outsized role of Hollywood" (4) and the presence of journalistic and media outlets on the East Coast. Yet, a lack of documentation is not the primary factor, as Phelan sets out to demonstrate by examining the pivotal curatorial role of *High Performance* magazine (1968–97). She then tries to articulate the complex relationship between documentation and performance, as "photography and performance conspire to underscore the other's authenticity and purchase on the real" (9), insisting on the performative role of photography. She connects the history of still photography in live art to the contiguity between violence and creation, with the photographic capture ambiguously ensnaring and preserving at the same time. Drawing on recent considerations about performance reenactments in museums, Phelan examines the status of artworks whose fragility challenges preservation, calling for performative, live "refabrications" (14) and rejecting the fetishization of material permanence. It is a pleasure to witness Phelan, a major figure in the field, revise and wrestle with new material to articulate it with precision and elegance.

Art critic Michael Ned Holte retraces his participation in the "reinvention" of Kaprow's *18 Happenings in 6 Parts* at LACE in 2008, claiming that "any act of 'reperformance' is, at the same time, a curious act of scholarship" (41). Drawing on Kaprow's move from Happenings to Activities, Holte examines the spectatorial regime of *reinventions* (a term preferred to *reenactment*), proposing "a model that favors agency and adaptability over institutionalization and fixity," which tends to conflate viewers and performers. Suzanne Lacy and Jennifer Flores Sternad's particularly rich contribution involves an oral archive of fifty interviews with Southern California artists working between 1967 and 1983 and turned into "field reports" (61). Collectively, they offer "a

set of tentative relationalities, the re-enactment of a cacophony of voices" (109), informed by the impact of the topographic specificities of Los Angeles on their work; this work deserves its own monograph. Informed by her experience as a former, long-time resident of Los Angeles with a firsthand knowledge of its arts scene, Jones focuses on a narrower body of work, activist Los Angeles live art from 1970 to 1975. She weaves her attempt to correct a historiographical omission into a wider interrogation on the making of art history and canon-building processes.

Jones expresses what may be the common purpose of both books: multiplying case studies to erode existing models and reshape them, to keep performance theory in motion. The scholarly concern to stay relevant takes on an existential dimension, betraying a deep-seated meta-critical anxiety. But displacing the points of reference to propose a new geography of an art form dominated by a few (media-savvy, commercially astute) figures strikes as a salutary, if daunting, enterprise.

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WILD TONGUES: TRANSNATIONAL MEXICAN POPULAR CULTURE. By Rita E. Urquijo-Ruiz. Chicana Matters series. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012; pp. 236.

LA VOZ LATINA: CONTEMPORARY PLAYS AND PERFORMANCE PIECES BY LATINAS. Edited by Elizabeth C. Ramírez and Catherine Casiano. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011; pp. 368.

Until the 1990s, the contributions of Latinas to the American theatre had received little focused attention from publishers of play anthologies or from scholars. Plays by Latinas had been included singly in anthologies, and discussed piecemeal in scholarship about Latino theatre generally; what was missing were entire books, either of plays or of scholarship, devoted solely to Latinas. Several anthologies of Latina plays—including *Shattering the Myth: Plays by Hispanic Women* (1993) and *Puro Teatro: A Latina Anthology* (1999)—and monographs devoted wholly to Latina theatre-makers, such as those by Alicia Arrizón, Elizabeth Ramírez, and Alberto Sandoval-Sánchez and Nancy Saporta-Sternbach, appeared around the turn of the millennium, giving educators, readers, and theatre-makers a much greater sense of the richness of Latinas' contribution to US theatre.

This trend in publishing books of Latina plays and theatrical scholarship has continued at a respectable pace up to the present moment, and it bears tracking, particularly in light of the cancellation in recent decades of multiple Latina/o play-development series and programs at major theatres like the Mark Taper Forum. Scholars cannot support playwrights in the same ways that producers and theatre companies can, but publication does make new scripts available for production and documents performances that might otherwise fall out of the historical record. Increasingly, with gender at the forefront of analysis of Latina/o theatre, we have gained extensive documentation of the presence of Latinas in theatre, their influence on their male counterparts, and a deeper sense of the richness of their contributions to popular culture. Exemplary of these trends, two recent books, Rita Urquijo-Ruiz's monograph *Wild Tongues: Transnational Mexican Popular Culture* and Elizabeth Ramírez and Catherine Casiano's edited collection *La Voz Latina: Contemporary Plays and Performance Pieces by Latinas*, resuscitate potentially forgotten or ignored performances by Latinas while highlighting the complexity of Latina identity in a transnational context.

Urquijo-Ruiz engages in a comparative gender study and adds a much-needed dimension to the study of both Chicana/o and Mexican theatre and popular culture. *Wild Tongues* examines the stock characters of the Mexican *peladito* and the Chicano *pachuco* in literature, *carpa* (a form of tent theatre seen in both Mexico and the southwestern United States), film, and music. The book also tracks the feminine versions of these characters, the *peladita* and the *pachuca*, and how the women who portrayed them onstage used comedy as a form of activism. Finally, Urquijo-Ruiz analyzes Dan Guerrero's one-man play ¡*Gaytino!* as an act of resistance against homophobia and the racism endured by Chicana/os.

Urquijo-Ruiz adds to the substantial scholarship on the *peladito* and *pachuco* by analyzing them across a variety of cultural forms, and by paying serious attention to the female versions of these characters. The figure of the Mexican *peladito*, most famously portrayed by the great comedian Cantiflas, represents a poor, long-suffering though pertinacious laborer. A stock character in Mexican literature, film, and theatre, the *peladito* employs much slapstick humor and bilingual wordplay. He often attempts to emigrate from Mexico to the United States and ends up engaged in hard labor whether or not he escapes deportation. His female counterpart, the *peladita*, suffers similar predicaments and is far less celebrated in scholarly and popular writings. Urquijo-Ruiz examines an iconic representation of the *peladito* in Mexican Daniel Venegas's 1928 novel *Las aventuras de Don Chipote, o Cuando los pericos mamen* (*The Adventures of Don Chipote, or When Parrots Breast-Feed*) and as a stock character in *carpa*