

Blanche Bates, who ascended to stardom by playing Cio Cio San, Lee keenly notes how white actresses used 'geisha' make-up to enhance their sex appeal and prove their versatility and effectiveness as performers while real Asian women were fantasized, sexualized and othered. She argues that cosmetic yellowface, albeit harmless on the surface, evoked 'the symbolic exclusion of the Asian woman' and showcased the white actress's 'prowess as a tragedienne' (p. 132).

These two points are particularly valuable as they both uncover how yellowface can disguise and disseminate the hazardous racial stereotypes in common discourses beyond stage representations and overt disparagement.

Finally, yellowface posed a special-effect challenge for professional make-up artists in the early film industry, yet again prolonged the 'deformed, grotesque, and monstrous' connotation in Asian characters, and the Epilogue touches upon casting as a continuation of yellowface's function as an 'enduring symbol of erasure' (p. 185). The book also includes an Appendix that catalogues yellowface instructions in theatrical make-up guidebooks during the Exclusion Era in striking detail.

Overall, Esther Kim Lee's concentration may have been confined to yellowface during the Exclusion Era, but her rigorous research and shrewd reading of the archival materials contribute to the larger conversation of racial fabrication in and beyond theatre. Every syllabus that intends to survey Asian-American theatre and performances thoroughly needs to include *Made-Up Asian*, and every scholar who wishes to educate themselves about an important and troubled history should have this book on their shelves.

Theatre Research International 48:3 doi:10.1017/S030788332300024X

***The Cambridge Companion to the Circus.*** By Gillian Arrighi and Jim Davis.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. Pp. xxxv + 292. £75/\$80.57/₹7165  
Hb; £22.99/\$29.99/₹2312 Pb.

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Circus is a form with a highly varied history that has recently developed as a distinct discipline within performance scholarship. The book covers a vast expanse of circus histories, aesthetics, performance and methodologies. Across its sixteen chapters it employs multiple modes of enquiry into circus – race and gender identity, performance analysis, animal and interspecies studies, education, mobility studies, cultural policy and more.

Gillian Arrighi and Jim Davis, the editors, embark on this journey with a succinct peek into the world circus timeline (1537–2018) and cover major circus events to set the tone of an inclusive and expansive approach from the very beginning. The sections following build on this focus on circus's origins and its evolution as a global phenomenon.

The book is divided into four sections discussing the transnational geographies of the modern circus, circus acts and aesthetics, circus as a constantly evolving form, and circus studies scholarship. Arrighi and Davis move beyond Europe, the UK, America and Russia – which are considered the primary centres of circus – and include essays on the circus in Australasia, Argentina and China. These essays on post-colonial histories of circus make important contributions to the field, reminding the reader that circuses from Africa, South Asia and Central Asia that worked within the same networks are yet to find similar ground in circus scholarship.

Arrighi's chapter recognizes not only the movement of circuses from the imperial centres to the colonies but also their circuits within the colonies. Ascribing various factors which caused these movements, she positions circus as a transcultural agent. Acknowledging circuses as hubs of cosmopolitanism, she notes that 'evolving circus arts ... were, by this time, influenced by ancient acts of physical skill from Japan, China, and India' (p. 59). This challenges the belief

that the circus repertoire was defined by acts originating only in Europe and North America. The East contributed at par in laying the foundations of the circus arts.

The following chapters on circus histories from the Americas, China and the Czech Republic narrate a significant dimension and politics of the global circus phenomenon. Each circus developed a distinct aesthetic modelled on the specific sociopolitical conditions of its evolution. Julieta Infantino's chapter on the Argentine experience of the Criollo Circus, which produced a localized subgenre of circus in the colonies, stands out. The legitimization of the circus theatre is historically contextualized and juxtaposed with the consolidation of the Argentine nation state (p. 69).

The book offers a crucial study of circus aesthetics that discusses highly popular yet unmapped circus performances. Kim Baston and Peta Tait critically engage with the evolution of animal acts while simultaneously acknowledging circus's roots as a colonial form which celebrated the colonization of the animals and territories through performances. Baston focuses on the evolution of equestrian acts, encompassing more crucial site-specific contemporary performances which emphasize the decolonial subjectivity of the human–animal relationship that inverts the original equation of master, superiority and control. Tait's chapter examines the representation of animals in war re-enactments and wild west shows that were geared towards creating an aesthetics of national glory and victory for the colonizers.

The following section explores contemporary and other alternative forms of circus, offering essential methodologies for researching alternative histories of circus arts. Catherine M. Young centres her chapter on the oft-ignored performances of variety theatre, which were neither included in the mainstream theatre nor popular entertainment forms. Agathe Dumont's chapter covers the political beginnings of circus within countercultural movements in the late 1960s and its influences in Europe today. She applies the lens of mobility 'as a way to gain legitimacy' (p. 197), an important framework to decode circus aesthetics and popularity which have shifted from virtuosity to sensitivity in the gesture and poetics of acrobatics.

The last section summarizes the preliminary thoughts which define one's approach to circus. Karen Fricker and Charles Batson detail the different methodological approaches in circus scholarship which make it inclusive in terms of disciplinary studies. Anna Sophie Jürgens writes about the seldomly used scientific lens for circus, and juxtaposes it with the humanities, where the aesthetic–semiotic tension turns a mirror on the performance itself.

Like circus, which demands intersectional discussions, emerging circus scholarship is necessarily multi-pronged and this book brilliantly collates the many voices beyond the Eurocentric perception of popular entertainment forms. With its wide-ranging methodologies and performances, the book will be especially beneficial to scholars in history, anthropology, sociology, environmental studies, gender studies and colonial and post-colonial studies, alongside circus and performance scholars.

Theatre Research International 48:3 doi:10.1017/S0307883323000251

***Samuel Beckett and the Theatre of the Witness: Pain in Postwar Francophone***

***Drama***. By Hannah Simpson. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022. Pp. xi + 188. \$80 Hb.

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Hannah Simpson's incisive critique of the representation and simulated presentation of wartime suffering onstage in the postwar francophone plays of Samuel Beckett, Albert Camus, Eugène Ionesco, Pablo Picasso and Marguerite Duras invites the reader to reflect on the role and the