

Avant-Propos - Foreword

This new issue of *Coup de Théâtre* adds a stimulating chapter to the long-term commitment of the French Society for Contemporary Anglophone Theatre: RADAC (Recherche sur les Arts Dramatiques Anglophones Contemporains). This collective of theater researchers and practitioners has been dedicated for over 40 years to investigating English-speaking drama and performance. RADAC's journal has consistently aimed at exploring contemporary issues that are vital to academic and artistic debates to break new aesthetic and epistemological grounds. The editorial team of this volume, Anouk Bottero (INU Champollion, Albi), Marianne Dugeon (Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier III), and Claire Hélie (Université de Lille) have accomplished an amazing feat in putting together such a great collection of articles and artistic writings. Why is it a feat to have picked up the gauntlet of providing a fresh and cutting-edge volume on the issue of "Seriality, reboots and iterability on the Anglophone contemporary stage"? First, because it is both a burning issue and a timeless one, forcing editors and contributors to bridge the impossible gap between past and present, myths and actuality, canons and counter-canons. Secondly, because this leading trio has shown compellingly how drama cannot exist outside the parameters of variations without turning theater and performance into dust. Finally, the rigor of the editors shines through their ability to have transformed the RADAC adventure of a group expedition to an international conference that took place shortly after the COVID-19 crisis into a solid, inventive, and well-researched volume.

Indeed, the spark for this volume came from RADAC's double panel called "Seriality, reboots and iterability on the Contemporary Stage". As the panel organizer, I was honored on behalf of RADAC to learn that we were accepted at the 6th International Conference

on American Drama and Theatre “Game Over!: U.S. Drama and Theater and the End(s) of an American Idea(l)” organized in Madrid from May 31st to June 3rd, 2022. The organizers, Noelia Hernando Real (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid), John S. Bak (Université de Lorraine), Alfonso Ceballos Muñoz (Universidad de Cádiz), Ramón Espejo Romero (Universidad de Sevilla), and Josefa Fernández Martín (Universidad de Sevilla) were thrilled to meet the members of RADAC in the flesh. Similarly, the RADAC participants were enthralled by the challenging topics discussed, the high scientific standards met, and the very convivial gathering marshaled by the Spanish team and their benevolent President Noelia Hernando Real. RADAC President Emeline Jouve fully supported this initiative to promote French research in US theater and performance by chairing one panel and joining the conference. Finally yet importantly, the flyer designed by Anouk Bottero allowed for the circulation of the new RADAC logo and the promotion of the new RADAC team, maybe even set off a reboot of RADAC US research with the many encounters and (re)discoveries triggered by the event.

In keeping with the transformative power of iterability, the editorial scholars in charge of this issue came up with a reboot of their own by convincingly expanding the US perspective into a global one, selecting a significant British contingent of plays and performances to discuss further the implications of seriality. Meanwhile Hernando, Real and Bak published a sister volume in *Revista de Estudios Norteamericanos* (vol. 27, 2023) solely dedicated to US productions. Importantly, “Seriality, reboots and iterability on the Anglophone contemporary stage” further contributes to nourishing a primarily European network dedicated to Anglophone drama and performance. Many European theater societies renewed this collaborative spirit at the 2018 RADAC’s 40th anniversary Conference yielding special issues (*Coup de Théâtre* special issue #5), conferences and international publications as with the German sister society CDE (*Journal of Contemporary Drama in English*, vol. 11, 2023). Similarly, *Coup de Théâtre* 38 accrues on the constellation of European and international scholarship firmament of performance

and research thanks to its diversity. I especially command Bottero, Drugeon and Hélié for their subtle and meticulous attention to the formal and political dimensions resulting from tackling the issues linked to seriality and variations on the current Anglophone stage.

A final word to thank all my colleagues on the RADAC board, past and present, and all the members of RADAC who have been so loyal to our society and its journal since 1978. Thanks to their dedication, we can collectively boast being a major voice in the field of French Anglophone theater and performance studies. Enjoy this read that will, no doubt, reboot drama once again. Reset, reload and rejoice!

Xavier Lemoine, Director of Publication, Paris August 12, 2024.