



Performance in a time of terror: Critical mimesis and the age of uncertainty (Theatre Theory Practice Performance MUP)

Jenny Hughes

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Performance in a time of terror offers a thought-provoking investigation of the way performance has given shape and form to wars on terror past and present, as both a tactic of violence and a strategy of resistance.

The book focuses on an array of performances created during the 'war on terror' of the first decade of the twenty-first century. Beginning with the spate of carefully rehearsed beheadings carried out by Islamic insurgents in Iraq in 2004, a key proposal is that the radical in performance can be most clearly identified in acts of violence that have obliterated life. Here, the reader is also taken back in time to encounter how performance was employed as part of counterinsurgency operations during the 'war on terrorism' in Northern Ireland (1969-1998). Moving on to explore how theatre-makers and performance activists have used performance to generate habitable worlds for life in times of crisis, Hughes argues for a re-engagement with the conservative in the critical project of art-making. As part of this, original discussions of the resurgence of political theatre on London stages and the proliferation of performative anti-war activism during the war in Iraq (2003-2008), are provided. Also documented are an extraordinary series of theatre productions commissioned by counterterrorism agencies following the suicide attacks in the UK in 2005.

Performance in a time of terror will appeal to researchers and students of contemporary theatre and performance, especially those interested in the politics of performance. It will also be of general interest to anyone researching wars on terror and terrorism from an interdisciplinary perspective.

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