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PQ 2023 is inviting you! : PQ Best Publication Award in Performance Design & Scenography

Theatralia. 2023, vol. 26, iss. 1, pp. 118-121

ISSN 1803-845X (print); ISSN 2336-4548 (online)

Stable URL (DOI): <https://doi.org/10.5817/TY2023-1-9>

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/digilib.77970>

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Access Date: 18. 02. 2024

Version: 20230505

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PQ 2023 is inviting you!

Pavel Drábek

PQ Best Publication Award in Performance Design & Scenography

[events]

The shortlist of PQ Best Publication Award 2023 contains 9 titles. These books were published across more than 10 countries from all around the world, often straddling national and cultural borders and bringing together artists, practitioners, scholars and arts, practices, and knowledges of an amazing width. While PQ Best Publication Award 2023 is a competition, we wish it to be first and foremost an opportunity to share knowledge, promote good work, and cultivate our global scenographic communities. We believe that while competitions may make good business, they do not always make good societies. It is our hope that all the publications submitted to this PQ programme's call help to make good company of artists, practitioners, scholars, and other lovers of scenography and performance design.

Several books on the shortlist focus on a specific scenographic skill or domain: Valentina Bari and Phoenía Veloz's Argentinian publication *Descubrir el vestuario en las artes espectaculares* [Figuring out the Costume Design in Spectacular Arts] (EUDEBA) focuses on costume scenography in an all-round way, documenting the practices, processes, and contexts with beautiful photographs and insightful commentary from a wide range of perspectives. The Irish artist and scholar Néill O'Dwyer's *Digital Scenography: 30 Years of Experimentation and Innovation in Performance and Interactive Me-*

dia (Bloomsbury, Methuen Drama) theorises digital art in performance over the past three decades, when it exploded creatively and transformed the field, through avant-garde theory and technological philosophy as well as through a scenographic reading. *Lighting Dance: A Study of Technical, Philosophical, and Psychological Shadows* (Routledge) by Brazilian dancer, choreographer and lighting designer Flaviana Xavier Antunes Sampaio brings together uniquely the two heterogenous art forms that work most closely together – dance and light scenography. Her book provides a rigorous historical, theoretical as well as practical guide to the art of working with light, shadows, and moving bodies.

Several books look at practices, such as the British scenographer, performer, and scholar Louise Ann Wilson's elegant *Sites of Transformation: Applied and Socially Engaged Scenography in Rural Landscapes* (Bloomsbury), a book built upon a variety of public scenographic and performative interventions that brought together audiences and participants in unexpected places and unexpected ways. The Australian artist-scholar Tanja Beer's *Ecoscenography: An Introduction to Ecological Design for Performance* (Palgrave Macmillan) is a much-needed and much-valued contribution to the world we live in and looks at ways in which scenographic practices can help avert or counter the ongoing climate

disaster. The Norwegian publication *10 Together: Performances by Longva+Carpenter 2010–2020* (PABlish Forlag) is a beautiful and even moving account documenting and reflecting on a decade of collaborative work between artists Laurel Jay Carpenter (USA) and Terese Longva (Norway) that they realised across half a dozen countries in the Northwestern sphere.

Catalina Devia and Pía Gutiérrez's Chilean publication *Álbum de archivo: Documentos teatrales de Sergio Zapata Brunet* [Archive Album: Theatrical Documents of Sergio Zapata Brunet] (Oxímoron) pays tribute to the Chilean scenographer Sergio Zapata (1934–2016). The book is a beautiful piece of art in its own right, with fine attention to a variety of documents, theatre materials (threads, pieces of fabric), sketches, and colours.

Two publications reflect on scenography in a holistic and rigorously theoretical way. Both have one name in common: the leading Polish theatre scholar Dariusz Kosiński. The monumental 3-volume work *Zmiana ustawienia* [Change of the Setting] (Theatre Institute Warsaw) edited by Dorothea Buchwald and Dariusz Kosiński presents studies by dozens of interdisciplinary scholars who trace the changing setup of scenography over the last 100 years or so. The three volumes are impressively filled with illustrations and contextual materials that trace the development of scenic art within the public sphere (mostly Polish) hand in hand with history, philosophy, and politics. Zoltán Imre and Dariusz Kosiński edited a thought-provoking volume *Reclaimed Avant-Garde: Spaces and Stages of Avant-Garde Theatre in Central-Eastern Europe* was published by 5 houses from 5 different countries. The volume's chapters reflect on Avant-garde performance spaces

across an impressive 11 countries from Central and Eastern Europe. Both publications embrace scenography as critical to political, social, artistic transformation, through spaces and bodies within broader philosophical standpoints and reflect on social and environmental responsibility while advancing methodologies that expand scenographic potentialities.

We are excited to see such a diversity of research interests and directions represented in the shortlist. It is worthy of note that the topics explored not only embrace themes traditionally associated with scenography and theatre making but also intersect with specific political and social contexts. We believe that these are inseparable from the performance making process, if not art in general. Of particular importance are the works that examine feminist, postcolonial, decolonial, intercultural and ecological perspectives, given the current state of affairs. Furthermore, the presence of practice-based publications, such as *10 Together*, *Sites of Transformation*, *Digital Scenography*, *Descubrir el vestuario*, *Lighting Dance*, or *Ecoscenography* in the 'Competing' list, alongside academic works, is equally significant. This inclusion has the potential to foster a more equitable environment and horizontal space, demonstrating to non-academic practitioners, including some of us, how to reflect on, contextualise, and advocate for their personal practice.

The 9 shortlisted publications are truly rare in more than one way. They cross borders between countries, cultures, and times; they bring fresh insights into diverse scenographic practices; and they are beautiful artefacts in their own right.

A special category 'Non-Competing' is dedicated to publications that have direct

links to Prague Quadrennial, for instance in containing work by one of the curators, organisers, or jury members. Since the publication of the longlist, another two beautiful titles have joined this sub-list: a delayed publication on the Slovak-Czech scenographer Ján Zavarský, who passed away before the book saw the light of day; and a remarkable book of Ukrainian Theatre Costume Sketches of the 20th and 21st centuries (*Український театральний костюм XX–XXI століть. Ескізи* [Ukrainian Theatrical Costume of 20th–21st Centuries. Sketches]).

We would not like to disqualify publications just because of their connection with PQ; at the same time, it could also be seen as unfair to have them compete.

We have agreed, as a jury and as members of the PQ team, that we will promote these books but exclude them from the chance to win an award. All the submitted publications – whether selected in the longlist, or not – will be promoted on the PQ Knowledge Exchange Platform (<https://pq.cz/pqplatform/knowledge-exchange-platform/>).

As the PQ Best Publication Jury 2023, we would like to thank everyone who has submitted a publication, and we hope that our programme and the submitted publications will inspire and enrich scenographic aficionados all over the world, just like it has impressed us.

PQ Best Publication 2023 Jury: *Donatella Barbieri, Pavel Drábek, Aziza Kadyri.*

Shortlist

- ANTUNES SAMPAIO, Flaviana Xavier. 2021. *Lighting Dance: A Study of Technical, Philosophical, and Psychological Shadows* Abingdon/New York: Routledge, 2021.
- BARI, Valentina and Phoenía VELOZ. 2021. *Descubrir el vestuario en las artes espectaculares* [Figuring out the Costume Design in Spectacular Arts]. Buenos Aires: EUDEBA, 2021.
- BEER, Tanja. 2021. *Ecoscenography: An Introduction to Ecological Design for Performance*. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021.
- BUCHWALD, Dorota and Dariusz KOSIŃSKI (eds.). 2020. *Zmiana ustawienia* [Change of the Setting], 3 vols. Warsaw: Theatre Institute Warsaw, 2020.
- LONGVA, Terese and Laurel Jay CARPENTER. 2022. *10 Together: Performances by Longva+Carpenter 2010–2020*. Brattvåg: PABlish Forlag, 2022.
- DEVIA, Catalina and Pía GUTIÉRREZ. 2021. *Álbum de archivo: Documentos teatrales de Sergio Zapata Brunet* [Archive Album: Theatrical Documents of Sergio Zapata Brunet]. Santiago: Oxímoron, 2021.
- IMRE, Zoltán and Dariusz KOSIŃSKI (eds.). 2018. *Reclaimed Avant-Garde: Spaces and Stages of Avant-Garde Theatre in Central-Eastern Europe*. Warsaw: Zbigniew Raszewski Theatre Institute, 2018.
- O'DWYER, Néill. 2021. *Digital Scenography: 30 Years of Experimentation and Innovation in Performance and Interactive Media*. London: Bloomsbury, 2021.
- WILSON, Louise Ann. 2022. *Sites of Transformation: Applied and Socially Engaged Scenography in Rural Landscapes*. London: Bloomsbury, 2022.

Non-Competing

- WIENS, Birgit E. (ed.). 2019. *Contemporary Scenography: Practices and Aesthetics in German Theatre, Arts and Design*. London: Bloomsbury, 2019.
- WEISS, Maureen and Sibyl WICKERSHEIMER (eds.). 2023. *Scene Shift: U.S. Set Designers*. New York: Routledge, 2023.
- PANTOUVAKI, Sofia and Peter MCNEIL (eds.). 2021. *Performance Costume: New Perspectives and Methods*. London: Bloomsbury, 2021.
- BRANDESKY, Joseph (ed.). 2019. *Jaroslav Malina in Scenography and Painting Prague*: Karolinum 2019.
- KOUBSKÁ, Vlasta and Radomíra SEDLÁKOVÁ. 2022. *Antonín Heythum*. Prague: Institut umění – Divadelní ústav, 2022.
- PALINHOS, Jorge, Josefina GONZÁLES CUBERO and Luísa PINTO (eds.). 2021. *Dramatic Architectures: Theatre and Performing Arts in Motion*. Porto: CEEA, 2021.
- HANNAH, Dorita. 2018. *Event-Space: Theatre Architecture and the Historical Avant-garde*. Oxon: Routledge, 2018.
- HOWARD, Pamela and Pavel DRÁBEK. 2022. *The Art of Making Theatre: An Arsenal of Dreams in 12 Scenes*. London: Bloomsbury, 2022.
- ALLSOPP, Ric and Serge von ARX (eds.). 2021. *Our Gruesome Cultural Heritage: Reframing Memory*. Halden: Østfold University College, 2021.
- KOVALCHUK, Olena, Liliia VOLOSHYNA, Tetiana RUDENKO and Bohdan POLISHCHUK (eds.). 2021. *Український театральний костюм XX–XXI століть. Ескізи* [Ukrainian Theatrical Costume of the 20th–21st Centuries. Sketches]. Lviv/Kyiv/Kharkiv: Oleksandr Savchuk, 2021. Available online at <https://uartlib.org/shop/ukrayinskyj-teatralnyj-kostyum-hh-xxi-eskizy-knyga/>.
- PODMAKOVÁ, Dagmar (ed.). 2022. *Ján Zavarský*. Brno: Větrné mlýny/JAMU, 2022. Available online at <https://www.vetrnemlyny.cz/jan-zavarsky/p1085>.



