

Editorial

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Chris Balme, having served as senior editor of *TRI* for three years, has passed over the editorship to me. I really want to thank him for the excellent job he has done during his period as editor, while I have been watching the action from the wings, waiting to step in. At the same time Elaine Aston from the University of Lancaster has joined me as the new assistant editor of the journal. As a person and as a scholar she makes a huge difference, and I am looking forward to working with her. This means that three years from now she will be taking over as the senior editor of *TRI*. Kristina Hagström Ståhl, a graduate student from UC Berkeley, finishing her dissertation as we were working on the final touches for this issue of *TRI*, has joined as editorial assistant and I am very pleased to work with her as well. Finally, I also want to thank Janelle Reinelt, IFTR president, and Brian Singleton, IFTR vice president for publications, for their trust and support.

What do I hope and wish for as I begin my term as editor of *TRI*? First, I want to explore how the relations between the authors, the readers and the editorial team of the journal can be developed and expanded. The International Federation of Theatre Research (IFTR/FIRT), the largest international organization for theatre research, under whose auspices the journal is edited and academically managed, as well as Cambridge University Press (CUP), the publisher and distributor of the journal, also have to be included in this network.

What are the possibilities for building up and developing the channels of communication between these partners in the age of electronic distribution and communication? *TRI*, like most journals today, is available both in a printed version and online, and CUP, who carefully monitor how this combination works, have observed how electronic distribution is gradually becoming more and more preferred by readers, who now download the articles directly from the Internet.

Second, I want the journal to become truly international, with regard to both the authors and the topics dealt with. A quick and perhaps somewhat superficial look at the major English-language journals in the field shows that a large majority of the authors either have English as their first language or are affiliated with English-speaking universities, and in most cases, both. There is, no doubt, an overwhelming anglophone presence in the field of theatre and performance studies, and there are, no doubt, good as well as not so good reasons for this. There is a strong hegemony not only of English as the language of international communication, but also of anglophone research. As a non-native English-speaker working at a non-English-speaking university, I have become

very much aware of the difficulties of publishing in English-language journals. I want to find ways to change this and expand the origins of the articles published in *TRI*.

The topics dealt with in theatre and performance research have no doubt become more international during the last decades, but the English-speaking world still has a large influence in that respect as well, particularly when considering the theoretical background and inspiration of the research.

The present issue of *TRI* certainly has a broad international spread of topics, dealing with theatre cultures in a broad variety of social and ideological contexts, in Africa (one article about South African theatre and one about community theatre in sub-Saharan Africa), in Germany, in Finland, and in Palestine. There is also an article dealing with the important historical and theoretical issue of censorship, and some of the authors do not have English as their first language. Regarding Africa, I hope the two articles in this issue will serve as a trigger for the upcoming IFTR conference at Stellenbosch University in South Africa.

I cannot promise that it will always be possible to sustain such broad international representation, but it is certainly something that I want to strive to achieve. And this depends not only on the editorial policy, but primarily on the willingness of researchers all over the world to respond to this challenge.

At a panel of journal editors at the P*S*i conference at St Mary's College in London, in June 2006, Richard Schechner claimed that theatre and performance studies are presently in an interregnum period, when the 'old' theories no longer work for us and the 'new' ones have not yet been found or invented. Clearly, the addition of 'performance' to the traditional trade of theatre studies, or theatre history, has invigorated all aspects of theatre research, not least the branch of theatre research called 'performance analysis' – the practice of which has been an important component in all issues of *TRI*, even receiving its own rubric.

I have, perhaps somewhat drastically, removed this rubric in this issue of the journal, partly because at least three of the articles included focus on specific productions of plays, on how they have been performed in specific contexts. 'Performance studies' in the sense Schechner and others have given this disciplinary construct is perhaps in a state of crisis, but it is a different crisis from that of 'theatre studies'. During my time as editor of *TRI*, I hope there will be opportunities to take up these issues and the issue of how the two fields or approaches are connected, and I invite all readers of the journal to offer their own views. I promise to make room for them. At the same time, what worries me much more is the crisis of the humanities in universities all over the world today. And there will hopefully be opportunities to discuss this as well.