

From Performance to Proto-Performance and Back: The Performance-Text of Three Israeli-Palestinian Mothers

In this paper I present the revolutionary concept of *the theatrical event*, as created by Schechner in the early 1970s and which shook the discourse on the boundaries of theatre. I discuss the contribution of this concept to the understanding of the interface between performance, theatre, play and life. I focus on the central place of this concept in my own professional biography, and describe how this concept encouraged and enabled me to elaborate the "closed circle" as a model of community-based theatre among the disabled elderly; and how it generated my ongoing research on community-based theatre. Finally, I demonstrate how the concept became the cardinal interpretative key in my most recent study of a community-based performance by three Israeli-Palestinian mothers living in Jaffa.

About the Author

Shulmith Lev-Aladgem is a senior lecturer, researcher and practitioner, chair of the Faculty MA Program of Expressivity and Creativity in the Arts and head of the community-based theatre studies in the Theatre Department of Tel-Aviv University, Israel. She is also a trained actress who uses her acting experience in both her research and teaching. Lev-Aladgem's main interests include play theory, performance studies and cultural studies and their relation to community-based theatre, educational drama, drama therapy and feminist theatre. Her research on these subjects has been published in numerous leading journals in the US, Europe and Israel.