

MADE BY PERFORMANCE STUDIES: HANS-THIES LEHMANN'S POST-DRAMATIC THEATER

Though Hans-Thies Lehmann mentions "performance," in the sense of "performance art" fleetingly in the English translation of "Postdramatic Theatre" (Routledge, 1999) many of the concerns of performance studies and performance art are among his leading criteria, for instance the body, presence, ritual, media, what he calls the "irruption of the real," and others. This presentation will trace the genesis of Lehmann's thinking through the 1980s curriculum of the Giessen Univ. Institute for Applied Theater Studies, where he was associate director under the leadership of Andrzej Wirth--whose own thinking was much shaped by American performance in the 1970s. Richard Schechner himself lectured at Giessen. Many of the German "postdramatic" theater directors came out of the Giessen program, creating an American-influenced style in German theater that could be seen as a hybrid of contemporary German classicism and "performance." Yet Lehmann clearly places his thinking in the dramatic lineage of Aristotle, Hegel, and Szondi. If performance studies 'dare not speak its name' in postdramatic theory, one reason may be the history of tension between the fields of theater studies and performance studies, much reduced in recent years. Historicizing Lehmann's theory by placing it in the context of an emerging field of performance studies should serve to create further common ground.

About the Author

Elinor Fuchs has published five books, including *The Death of Character*, which won the George Jean Nathan Award for dramatic criticism; *Land/Scape/Theatre* /with co-editor Una Chaudhuri, which earned the ATHE "Excellence in Editing" award; and her family memoir, *Making an Exit*. Her essays have appeared in numerous anthologies, reference works, and journals. Her theater criticism has appeared over many years in *American Theatre* and *The Village Voice*. Her documentary play, *Year One of the Empire*, co-authored with feminist historian Joyce Antler, won the *Drama-Logue* "Best Play" award for its Los Angeles premiere in 1980 and was produced at New York's Metropolitan Playhouse in March, 2008. She has taught at Emory University, Columbia, Harvard, and the Free University of Berlin. Since 1997 she has been a faculty member of the Yale School of Drama, where she is a professor of Dramaturgy and Dramatic Criticism. Last summer she won the Betty Jean Jones Outstanding Teacher of American Drama award given by the American Drama and Theatre Society. She was recently elected to the Executive Committee of the American Society for Theatre Research.