

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

“Crossing Borders: Contemporary Anglophone Theatre in Europe”, Paris, October 11-12, 2018. Organised by Paris 13, Lyon 2, University Grenoble-Alpes, RADAC

Call for Papers

The privileged position enjoyed by contemporary Anglophone theatre goes unquestioned. Since the end of the Second World War its creativity, inventiveness and originality have brought it to prominence throughout Europe. Writers such as Samuel Beckett, Edward Bond, Harold Pinter or Sarah Kane, whose voices are so distinctive that critics find it hard to classify them, have left their mark; plays that critics and scholars have categorised as representative of social or political movements (state of the nation plays, epic theatre, ethnic theatre) or aesthetic movements (theatre of Cruelty, conceptual theatre) and plays which reflect a specific historical context (kitchen-sink or in-yer-face theatre) are regularly performed.

Scholars, however, have only limited information as to the playwrights and types of plays which are of particular interest to audiences, theatre practitioners and writers throughout the different European countries.

To have a map of the influence of contemporary Anglophone theatre on European stages would be a precious tool for scholars both in the field of English studies and in theatre studies. It could also be useful to professionals such as theatre programmers or critics. Our ultimate objective is then to set up a European research network focusing on Anglophone theatre.

To launch this project and celebrate its 40th birthday at the same time, RADAC is organising an international conference entitled: “Crossing Borders: Contemporary theatre in English” at the Maison des Sciences de l’Homme in Saint Denis, near Paris, October 11-12, 2018.

We invite all scholars and theatre practitioners working in the field of Anglophone theatre in Europe to participate in this conference. The confrontation of the different approaches and readings will enrich our field of research and make us question our assumptions by looking at Anglophone theatre from across its borders in the light of other European cultures and other production conditions.

Four themes have been selected and time will also be set aside to allow participants to discuss the feasibility of setting up a **European** theatre research network.

1. Anglophone theatre's socio-cultural impact on the non-Anglophone countries of Europe

Which playwrights, plays or movements, characteristic of contemporary Anglophone theatre, have been embraced by such or such a country and which have been the object of neglect or rejection?

What form does this enthusiasm or rejection take and what are the factors which explain it? Is it possible to establish general criteria which will determine the reception of a work? Or, on the contrary, does the reception of a work relate only to the particularities of a country, its culture and language, its historical, economic or sociological circumstances?

2. Rewriting sources/adaptations

Which Anglophone playwrights or plays are most frequently used as sources for contemporary works? What sources coming from other European cultures have been used in contemporary Anglophone theatre? Which productions based on Anglophone theatre sources have had the most impact in recent years? Are there certain directors who turn more systematically to sources in English? Can we identify a tendency for adapting such sources for other media (plays originally in English adapted for the cinema or TV, digital productions or other forms)?

3. Translations

Which English-language playwrights or plays are translated or retranslated into the other languages? Are there certain types of play or a particular period which give rise to more translations than others? On the contrary, are there playwrights or works which are completely neglected? Are some writers more difficult to translate than others and, if so, why? Who does the translation (academics or professional translators)? What is the place of literary translation on the curriculum in universities and in the professional training given to translators? Are non-Anglophone writers in Europe influenced by English-language theatre and, if so, which ones?

4. Practitioners, programmers, audiences

- a) **Practitioners:** Is access to Anglophone theatre easy or difficult in the non-Anglophone nations of Europe? Do directors and actors choose works in English or works that have already been translated? What are their motivations?

- b) **Programmers:** What criteria do individual countries apply when programming plays in English? How easy is it to put on plays which deal with political or subversive topics? Are there places (such as festivals) which are more appropriate for this type of programming?
- c) **Audiences:** Which productions based on works written in English have had most impact on critics and audiences in recent years? What culturally specific reasons could be given for this?

The conference proceedings will be published in a special issue of our journal *Coup de Théâtre* to appear in 2019.

Please send your proposals for papers (500 words max.) with a short biography by January 1, 2018 to:

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