Est. 1841 | YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY

Reason, Matthew and Schuitema, Karian (2021) Theater for Children and Young People. In: Montgomery, Heather, (ed.) Oxford Bibliographies in Childhood Studies. New York, Oxford University Press

Downloaded from: https://ray.yorksj.ac.uk/id/eprint/5535/

The version presented here may differ from the published version or version of record. If you intend to cite from the work you are advised to consult the publisher's version:

Research at York St John (RaY) is an institutional repository. It supports the principles of open access by making the research outputs of the University available in digital form. Copyright of the items stored in RaY reside with the authors and/or other copyright owners. Users may access full text items free of charge, and may download a copy for private study or non-commercial research. For further reuse terms, see licence terms governing individual outputs. Institutional Repositories Policy Statement

RaY

Research at the University of York St John

For more information please contact RaY at ray@yorksj.ac.uk

Theatre for Children and Young People

Matthew Reason, York St John University, UK.
Karian Schuitema, Independent Researcher (Art Research Together), The Netherlands.

Introduction
General Overviews
Applied Theatre and Young People
Area Studies
Audiences
Children as Performers
Cultural and Racial Diversity
Disability
Early Years
Education
Festivals
Making Theatre
Political TYA
Storytelling
Queer TYA

Introduction

The relationship between theatre and children has a long and evolving history, mirroring the evolving conceptualisation of childhood itself. Children have featured as performers, or had a presence within audiences, far earlier than the emergence of anything specifically labelled as theatre for children. For much of the 19th and early 20th centuries, whether a performance was for children was rarely clearly delineated. For example, while J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* is now considered the most famous single piece of 'theatre for children' it is contested as to whether it was specifically intended for children when first performed in 1904. In the modern guise of theatre for children (often also titled theatre for young audiences or TYA) there exists a central tension, echoing that in literature for children, in the work being made *for* children, but created, performed and written by *adults*. Amongst other elements, this often results in theatre for children having a close educational ethos or moralistic focus, reflecting and reinforcing adult conceptualisation of childhood and adult/child social relationships. Over the last couple of decades, however, theatre for children and young people has entered a period of increased vitality in which some of these relationships have started to change. This vitality is manifested in professionalization, the growth of festivals, dedicated venues and the commitment of innovative artists

who have sought to develop the practice in new directions, including through participatory and applied theatre practices that seek to give voice to and explore the lived experiences of young people. Accompanying these developments, over the last couple of decades the field has also received far greater critical and scholarly attention. Historically the study of theatre for children has struggled to assert a strong independent identity, often subsumed into literary studies. What is emerging today, however, is something much broader and more vibrant, often interdisciplinary and embracing performance and literature studies, education and child development, psychology and politics. It engages with the core issues of our times, including a growing focus on inclusivity, whether in relation to race, sexuality or disability. Nonetheless, theatre for children has a lot of work to do to decolonize and decentre itself from white and western dominances. There is also a strong thread of research interest in audiences, which seeks to understand children's lived experiences of theatre, and in creative and participatory research methodologies. Finally, and interconnecting all these elements, theatre for children is often political and frequently deeply ambitious, driven by a strong sense of idealism that is perhaps childlike in the very best of senses.

General Overviews

While diverse in their focus and approach, the works in this section all share a desire to address historic omissions of theatre for children from scholarly consideration and position it as a vital and independent area of practice and research. Manon van de Waters 2012, for example, writes in the introduction to *TYA, Culture, Society* that the book was produced in response to a concern that 'despite enormous artistic output, serious research […] in the field of theatre for children and youth was in short supply.' Similar statements are found in other outputs here, with works such as England 1990, Schonmann 2006 and Reason 2010 all asserting the importance of establishing theatre for children as an endeavour distinct from both theatre for adults and from being considered as a predominantly educational endeavour. If there is one prominent theme across these books, it is that theatre for children needs to be understood and considered as an art form in its own right. Consequently, the books included within this section have significantly shifted the seriousness, specificity and rigour with which theatre for children has been investigated. These publications can be usefully considered in three categories. The first are books that have been written with a practitioner focus: whether Goldberg's 2006 collection of essays drawing on personal experiences as a writer and director; England's 1990 focus on play scripts; or Bennett's 2005 collating of the voices of practitioners prominent in TYA in the UK. These resources provide insights from the adult practitioners involved in performance making. The second category are edited collections, which largely shift authorship from the practitioner to the academic scholar and researcher. Two ASSITEJ publications are included here, van de Water 2012 and Wartemann et al 2015, along with Maguire and Schuitema's 2013 critical handbook and Gubar's 2012 special issue of the journal *The Lion and the Unicorn*. All draw together diverse and international authors in order to strengthen and internationalize the field. These books are valuable for the range of voices, contexts, perspectives and insights they provide.

The final and smallest category are single-authored, book-length interrogations of theatre for children, which draw on rich historical and theoretical scholarship to frame TYA within an academic context. Schonmann 2006 was the first full-length academic text in this area; Reason 2010 shifts scholarship towards young people themselves in the analysis of the meanings and impact of theatre for young audiences; van de Waters 2012 examines social and cultural aspects through global and diverse case studies.

Bennett, Stuart, ed. *Theatre for Children and Young People*. London: Aurora Metro. 2005.

This publication brings together some of the main figures involved in creating theatre for young audiences in the UK. It has a practice and practitioner orientated focus and includes issues such as writing for young audiences, adapting material for performances, building specialist theatres, theatre for special audiences and educational theatre. Published in 2005 the book captures the moment when TYA in the UK was accelerating in prominence and creativity.

England, Alan. *Theatre for the Young*. Basingstoke: Palgrave. 1990.

This is one of the first studies into theatre for children in the UK and focuses on stage plays written and produced specifically for young people. England draws upon interviews with directors, actors and writers, along with what he describes as 'considered reviewing,' to interrogate theatre for teenagers and children and assert the need for this work to be considered as a distinct phenomenon in its own right.

Gubar, Marah. ed. 'Children and Theatre'. Special Issue. *The Lion and the Unicorn*. 36. 2. 2012.

Edited and with an introduction by Marah Gubar, this special issue focuses on various aspects of theatre and performance particularly in the context of children's literary studies and from historical perspectives. Papers range from staging the book *Little Women*, children performing in historical productions of *Peter Pan* and child actors in 19th Century theatre.

Maguire, Tom and Karian Schuitema, eds. *Theatre for Young Audiences: A Critical Handbook*. Stoke: Trentham. 2013.

An edited collection bringing together a diversity of chapters with a range of approaches and conceptual orientations. Includes contributions by authors featured elsewhere in this bibliography – such as Jeanne Klein, Matthew Reason and Tim Webb – and chapters focusing on specific audiences, such as children with profound disabilities, non-verbal audiences and teenagers.

Moses, Goldberg. *TYA: Essays on the Theatre for Young Audiences*. Louisville, KY: Anchorage Press. 2006.

A collection of personal essays from US playwright and director Moses Goldberg, author of the 1974 (out of print) book *Children's Theatre: A Philosophy and a Method*. It is divided into three sections considering in turn the politics, art and business of theatre for young audiences.

Reason, Matthew. *The Young Audience: Exploring and Enhancing Children's Experiences of Theatre*. Stoke: Trentham Books. 2010.

This book uses a draw-and-talk methodology to address fundamental questions regarding children's experiences of theatre. It is divided into three parts: the first contextualising chapters on education, audience development and cultural rights; the second focusing on the theatrical experience; and a final section that advocates how children can become active and self-reflective audience members. It is an important moment in the engagement of theatre for children with empirical audience research.

Shifra, Schonmann. *Theatre as a Medium for Children and Young People: Images and Observations.* Dordrecht: Springer. 2006.

A significant and extensive investigation that at the time of publication was the only book-length academic engagement with theatre for children. Schonmann's text includes a recurring focus on the intersections between educational and theatrical settings – a theme accompanied by the assertion of the importance of theatre for children not defining itself as an educational endeavour. Other key discussions include aesthetic distance, catharsis/moral narrative and children's understanding of theatrical conventions.

van de Water, Manon, ed. *TYA, Culture, Society: International Essays on Theatre for Young Audiences*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang. 2012.

Published by ASSITEJ through its International Theatre for Young Audiences Network, this book is possibly the first scholarly publication in TYA that is truly international in scope. Chapters range from discussion of the conceptualisation of childhood in Nigerian theatre, to virtual puppetry in video games, to staging the Holocaust. The book is part of ASSITEJ's endeavour to profile diverse and critical voices engaging with theatre for children.

van de Water, Manon. *Theatre, Youth and Culture: A Critical and Historical Exploration.* Basingstoke: Palgrave McMillan. 2012.

This book explores TYA globally, from the US to Russia to the Netherlands to Western Europe, from theory to history to theatre for the very young to issues of diversity. As such it stands out because of its range and international scope. It was awarded 2013 American Alliance for Theatre and Education Distinguished Book Award.

Wartemann, Geesche, Tülin Saglam and Mary McAvoy, eds. *Youth and Performance: Perception of the Contemporary Child*. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag. 2015.

A second publication from ASSITEJ and ITYARN, this book draws together papers responding to the theme of the 'contemporary child.' Chapters examine the role of children as participants, experts and audiences within theatre for children. As with other ASSITEJ publications, the book has a consciously international and diverse flavour, combining both academic and practitioner voices.

Applied Theatre and Young People

The term applied theatre embraces a wide variety of practice that engages people through performance and creativity with issues relevant to their lives. Using methods such as forum, verbatim or playback theatre to work with communities, practitioners often move away from traditional theatre spaces to work in community centres, museums, hospitals, schools and on the street. The participants involved are as varied as the practice, but applied theatre projects frequently focus on creating work for and with children and young people, particularly those from marginalized communities. The prospects associated with informing, empowering and transforming young generations, ~~are~~ often ~~seen to~~ move beyond the individual child to have a lasting impact on societies. Moreover, theatre is regarded as an educative tool that has the potential to support deep learning on any kind of subject. However, publications which mention a specific educational orientation have been placed under *Education*.The examples presented here have been selected to give an overview of the breadth of work written about applied theatre specifically for the young, with a focus on work taking place in public, community and informal contexts. For example, using participatory theatre at a heritage site as discussed by Tzibazi 2014, or gathering and addressing the lived experiences of undocumented migrant youth in South Africa by Opfermann 2020. Kumar 2013 discusses 'platform children' in India and Salami and van Beers 2003 focus on street children in Nigeria. Gesser-Edelsburg et al. 2017 highlights the use of theatre to start an intergenerational dialogue to prevent sexual abuse, and the paper by Perry et al. 2002 is an example of several studies that look at using theatre to promote healthy eating. Indeed, health is one of the recurrent themes in this section and also relevant to Chivandikwa et al. 2019, who argue for the importance of using traditional drama games in Zimbabwe to engage young people on the subject of mental and physical wellbeing. Sextou 2016 and Walsh and Ledgard 2013 both focus on applied theatre in hospitals. Hammond 2015 provides a detailed discussion of forum theatre, addressing the child's social and emotional wellbeing.

Chivandikwa, Nehemiah, Ruth Makumbirofa and Itai Muwati. 'Traditional Games and Child-centred Development: Affirming Disabled and Female Bodies in Applied Theatre Projects in Zimbabwe'. *South African Theatre Journal*. 32. 3: 272-284. 2019.

Exploring how applied theatre projects engage with children in Zimbabwe, the authors focus on the importance of traditional/indigenous games in child-centred development. Using Africana Womanism and Critical Disability Theory, they analyse the practice of adapting traditional games to engage

disabled children on the topic of public health. The authors highlight the need of subverting imposed ableist and gendered hegemonies and give examples of traditional games as sites of social change.

Gesser-Edelsburg, Anat, Taila Fridman and Rachel Lev-Wiesel. 'Edutainment as a Strategy for Parental Discussion with Israeli Children: The Potential of a Children's Play in Preventing Sexual Abuse'. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*. 26. 5: 553-572. 2007.

This journal article focuses on the use of plays in the prevention of sexual abuse. Using the concept of 'edutainment' it presents a qualitative study into how a play, as a form of media, can alter the attitudes and behavior of consumers. By interviewing parents who attended the Israeli play *Yael Learns to Take Care of Her Body*, the research aims to uncover how intergeneration dialogues can be stimulated.

Hammond, Nick. *Forum Theatre for Children: Enhancing Social, Emotional and Creative Development*. London: Trentham Books. 2015

This book is dedicated to forum theatre and has been written with the aim of supporting a range of practitioners – such as teachers, therapists, and social workers – to use this form of theatre to deal with issues in young people's lives. Giving many examples of forum theatre in practice, it highlights how theatre can address and support the child's social and emotional wellbeing.

Kumar, Sanjay. 'Performing on the Platform Creating Theatre with India's Platform Children'. *TDR: The Drama Review.* 57. 4. 2013.

This journal article discusses the work of 'Pandies Theatre' as they engage with young people named 'platform children' who have run away from their families and use the Indian railway network to travel and live while forming new communities. The publication features a discussion of the methods of the company and how it aims to connect with the young participants.

Opfermann, Lena. "'If you can't beat them, be them!" – Everyday Experiences and "Performative Agency" among Undocumented Migrant Youth in South Africa'. *Children's Geographies*. 18. 4: 379-392. 2020.

Drawing on practitioners taking part in theatre-based case studies, this article focuses on the lived experience of undocumented migrant children in South Africa. The aim is to show how these children's lives are affected by legal inconsistences and hostile attitudes towards foreigners. The article describes how participants apply 'performative agency', both onstage and in their everyday lives, whereby the undocumented participants can challenge perceived biases and foster integration.

Perry, Cheryl, Marguerite Zauner, Michael Oakes, Gretchen Taylor and Donald Bishop. 'Marguerite Evaluation of a Theater Production About Eating Behavior of Children'. *The Journal of School Health*. 72. 6: 256-261. 2002.

This paper presents a study of a short play, alongside supporting materials for teachers and parents, to change children's attitudes towards healthy foods. Using Social Cognitive Theory, this study involved 4093 American children who were asked in questionnaires before and after a theatre production about their eating behaviors. The authors concluded that professional theatre productions have at least a short-term effect on changing children's eating behavior.

Salami, Irene and Henk van Beers. 'Nigerian "Shade Tree Theatre" with Street Children'. *Children, Youth and Environments*. 13.1: 334-359. 2003.

Shade Tree Theatre (STT) uses theatre to provide an enriching experience for often illiterate Nigerian street children while enabling them to understand their circumstances. This paper details the various stages in the development of a STT project and shows how children have the primary expertise and knowledge to address their own personal problems.

Sextou, Persephone. *Theatre for Children in Hospitals: The Gift of Compassion*. Bristol: Intellect. 2016.

Sextou presents a detailed overview and in-depth discussion of the importance of applied theatre in clinical spaces. The idea of theatre providing an 'antidote' to clinical stress takes a central position in the book and discussions focus on the aesthetic qualities of theatre for children in hospitals. The book presents and examines examples of bedside theatre practice alongside research projects on this subject.

Tzibazi, Vasiliki. 'Primary Schoolchildren's Experiences of Participatory Theatre in a Heritage Site'. *Education*. 42. 5: 498-516. 2014.

Heritage sites also draw on theatre to ensure that a visit is engaging and educative for children and young people. In this journal article Tzibazi presents a theoretical framework to encourage greater insight into the child's learning experience when participating in theatre at a heritage site. It discusses a participatory research project at a historic house in Northern England where children were asked to actively share their perceptions.

Walsh, Aylwyn and Anna Ledgard. 'Re-viewing an Arts-in-Health Process: For the Best'. *RiDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*. 18. 3: 216-229. 2013.

This article looks at the innovative work of an artist-in-residence at the Evelina Children's hospital that would subsequently form the basis of a production titled *For the Best*. By highlighting intimate moments that emerge through working with young people undertaking the stressful process of dialysis, the article reflects upon how applied theatre can produce images that represent and frame the uncanny and can stimulate moments of reflection for the audience.

Area Studies

The International Guide to Children's Theatre and Educational Theatre, written in 1989 by Lowell Swortzell, illustrates how theatre for children is a phenomenon found around the world. Swortzell approached centres associated with ASSITEJ, the international organisation for theatre for young people, to report on theatre in different geographical areas, translating material where possible to include as many countries as possible. This Oxford bibliography also presents sources published in the English language which leads to the difficulty of underrepresenting the diversity found within this field in other languages. There are, of course, many more non-English texts written about local theatre scenes, practice and research from all around the world. There are a variety of texts that look at theatre practice outside of English-speaking countries and feature academics and practitioners from different backgrounds, where possible these have been categorized according to thematic topics rather than place them in categories connected to different geographical locations (such as continents). This particular section 'Areas Studies', focuses on sources that explicitly aim to review theatre for children in relation to a particular city or country or that provides a general overview of a specific area. Reading across texts in this section highlights the different aims and benefits ascribed to theatre for the young in different contexts and how these are perceived by academics and practitioners. For example, the work by van de Water 2000 on theatre in the US and Ogunleye's 2004 examination of theatre for the young in Zimbabwe are almost in opposition. Van de Water provides a sharp criticism of those dominant narratives which defines theatre for children in the US to what it is not – adult theatre. She argues that this marginalizes theatre for young audiences, stripping it of histography, artistic merit, and reducing it to being simply defined as an educative pursuit. On the other hand, Ogunleye celebrates the educative potential of theatre in Zimbabwe where it can provide the mental wellbeing and practical skillsets needed to succeed in modern life. The special issue edited by Hunter and Milne 2005 showcases theatre for young audiences in Australia and New Zealand, where the child's active role in the creation and research of theatre is regarded as particularly important. The special issue edited by Schroeder-Arce 2015 focuses on theatre in the Americas, while van de Waters 2006 presents a comprehensive study of theatre in Moscow. The book chapter by Maguire 2018 highlights the development and contemporary practice of theatre in Ireland and the PhD thesis by Lee 2020 features an extensive study of theatre for the young in Singapore.

Hunter, Mary Anne and Geoffrey Milne, eds. 'Young People and Performance in Australia and New Zealand'. Special Issue. *Australasian Drama Studies*. 47: 3-13. 2005.

Emphasizing diversity, indigenous and immigrant populations, as well as contemporary urban realities, this special issue provides an overview of the way in which theatre for young audiences has changed in Australia and New Zealand. It provides an insight into how theatre in these two countries create platforms for educational aesthetic engagement, career development, as well as fostering development and the ability for young people to understand and express their experiences.

Lee, Caleb. ‘Theatre for Young Audiences in Singapore: Dimensions of Creativity’. PhD diss., Royal Holloway, University of London. 2020.

This PhD thesis looks at Theatre for Young Audience in Singapore and focuses on the intersection of education, politics, and market forces in the city-state. Drawing on interviews, performance analyses and archival studies, the thesis argues that theatre has the potential to engage young audiences through innovative practice. The importance of Singapore’s ACE! festival is also examined with special attention to the cultural narratives this brings to the city.

Maguire, Tom. ‘Theatre for Young Audiences in Ireland’, in Jordan, Eamonn and Eric Weitz, eds. The *Palgrave Handbook of Contemporary Irish Theatre and Performance*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. 151-164. 2018.

This chapter focuses on the development of Theatre for Young Audiences in Ireland and traces its roots from educational theatre in the 1970s to contemporary practice. It highlights local engagement with children and young people but also international influences. The chapter focuses on elements such as festivals, the effects of the border in terms of TYA organizations and the sectors’ rejection of ‘Irishness’ as a globalized commodity.

Ogunleye, Foluke. ‘Zimbabwe's Theatre for Young People: Personal Development and Social Responsibility’. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*. 10. 2: 219-233. 2004.

This article champions the idea that theatre for the young can be a progressive and practical force for good within Zimbabwean society. It does so by discussing the concept of Theatre for Development and putting forward six detailed case studies outlining the work of different non-for-profit Zimbabwean theatre companies. The case studies also highlight potentially detrimental issues like the relationship between funding and influence.

Schroeder-Arce, Roxanne. Special Issue. *Youth Theatre Journal*. 29. 2: 125-127. 2015.

This special issue coalesces around the need to break down linguistic boundaries between English speaking North America and the predominantly Spanish speaking South Americas. It follows a conference of the American Alliance for Theatre and Education (AATE) and the articles reflect on various aspects of theatre education and innovative practice across the Americas.

Swortzell, Lowell. ed. *International Guide to Children’s Theatre and Educational Theatre: A Historical and Geographical Source Book*. Westport: Greenwood. 1989.

This collection edited by Lowell Swortzell features 44 different countries. In alphabetical order it discusses different theatre scenes while focusing on the history and contemporary provision for children and young people. It mentions particular companies, directors and influential dramatists but also features publications and other sources of reference. However, while it is arguably the most

extensive geographical review, it was published in 1989 and no longer captures the innovation of the field.

van de Water, Manon. 'Constructed Narratives: Situating Theatre for Young Audiences in the United States'. *Youth Theatre Journal*. 14. 1: 101-113. 2000.

Through its focus on the historical development of children's theatre and theatre for young audiences in the United States, this essay interrogates the dominant narratives and accepted truths that have subsequently developed within the academic field of theatre for the young. It progresses the need for theorists and practitioners to recognize their own biases and frames of reference within the field and care enough to deconstruct and write anew.

van de Water, Manon. *Moscow Theatres for Young People: A Cultural History of Ideological Coercion and Artistic Innovation, 1917–2000*. Basingstoke: Palgrave. 2006.

This monograph provides a very thorough discussion of the historical development of Russian theatre for young audiences. The book highlights how theatre for young spectators in the former Soviet Union was an important institution and was often used to teach (political) ideology. With a focus on theatre companies in Moscow, van de Water lays out the pedagogical influences and aesthetic innovation that developed between 1917 and 2000.

Audiences

Consideration of audiences brings many of the fundamental challenges of theatre for children immediately to the surface. This is a medium largely made and performed by adults but *for* children and young people. As a scholarly discipline it is also one almost exclusively written about *by* adults. The omission and exclusion of young people from not only the processes of production, but also evaluation and academic analysis, seems complete and the paradox of theatre for children is exposed. Addressing this omission underpins audience research in this context, providing a space for the voices, perceptions and experiences of young people themselves. The manners by which the child audience is constructed by various adult stakeholders is examined by Johanson and Glow 2011, who identify recurring instrumental objectives such as child audiences as the recipient of educational outcomes or conceptualized as the adult audiences of the future. While the educational context of children's theatre is a recurring theme, audience research often reveals that it is far from a straightforward process. Tulloch 2000 examines ways in which adolescent spectators subvert their school experiences of canonical texts – most noticeably Shakespeare – through introducing vernacular, populist and counter-cultural readings. This perspective is joined by Reason 2014 and O'Toole et al 2014 in stressing how the limits and potential for such independent and active readings are prescribed by a range of circumstances, including social class and education. While similar themes do exist in research into younger, pre-adolescent audiences, the focus largely shifts to seeking to understand meaning-making processes. The younger the

child the greater the developmental and cognitive gap between the nominal subject and the adult author-researcher – and consequently the greater the need for careful and methodological appropriate research. A recurring theme within this work, as discussed by Mor and Shem-Tov 2020, is that of theatrical literacy, while Watermann 2009 examiner the interplay and collective creativity between audience and child audience. A number of researchers recur in work in this area, including Klein and Reason (see also Reason 2010 under *General Overviews*), both of whom use a range of creative and participatory empirical approaches to examine meaning-making processes and affective experiences. Klein 2005's focus is to align an understanding of 'children's aesthetic' with stages in child development. Reason's 2013 is to examine ideas of interpretative 'pleasure', and the importance of supporting young people in becoming critical, active and self-reflective spectators.

Johanson, Katya and Hilary Glow. 'Being and Becoming: Children as Audiences.' *New Theatre Quarterly*. 27.1: 60-70. 2011.

This article examines the reasons given by policy makers for funding the provision of theatre for children. It describes the frequent dominance of education or learning imperatives, but suggests these are increasingly challenged by more intrinsic, aesthetic and rights-based understandings.

Klein, Jeanne. 'From Children's Perspective: A Model of Aesthetic Processing in Theatre.' *Journal of Aesthetic Education*. 39.4: 40-57. 2005.

One of a number of publications by Klein examining children as spectators, this article is her most sustained articulation of a developmental model of understanding 'children's aesthetics'. Its focus is on processes of meaning making and interpretation.

O'Toole, John, Ricci-Jane Adams, Michael Anderson, Bruce Burton and Robyn Ewing eds. *Young Audiences, Theatre and the Cultural Conversation*. Dordrecht: Springer. 2014.

Based on research conducted in Australia, this book presents insights from an investigation of unusual scope and scale, with its focus on adolescent audiences also of significant distinctiveness and value. It examines how interlinked factors – of literacy, confidence and etiquette – often serve to exclude adolescent audiences from attendance and representation within a nation's cultural conversation.

Mor, Smadar and Naphtaly Shem-Tov. 'Theatrical Competence, Communication and "Cargo" among Young Audiences: How do they figure it out?,' *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*. 26.2: 247-67. 2020.

A qualitative case study investigation into how young children (aged 5-6) acquire and develop 'theatrical competency'. Proposes a model of the socio-cultural, emotional and cognitive 'cargo' which inform children's reception processes.

Reason, Matthew. 'The Longer Experience: Theatre for Young Audiences and Enhancing Engagement', in Radbourne, Glow and Johanson eds. *The Audience Experience: A Critical Response to the Intrinsic Needs of Audiences in the Performing Arts*. Bristol: Intellect. 97-111. 2013.

This chapter applies the concepts of active spectatorship and the longer experience to theatre for young audiences. Reason argues for the importance of children being supported in becoming critically self-aware and articulate spectators, and stresses the intrinsic pleasure that comes from processes of meaning making and imaginative interpretation.

Reason, Matthew. 'Young Audiences and Live Theatre, Parts 1 and 2.' *Studies in Theatre and Performance*. 26 & 27. 2014.

Two interlinked articles which take a participatory approach to understanding how teenage audiences respond to and value the 'liveness' of theatre performances. Discusses adolescent spectators' acute awareness of other people within the venue and the significance of educational and cultural capital in determining responses.

Tulloch, John. 'Approaching Theatre Audiences: Active School Students and Commoditized High Culture,' *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 10.2: 85-104. 2000.

This article examines how adolescent audience's engagement with 'canonical' theatre is framed through the school experience, presenting an intersection between 'expert' and 'lay' interpretative processes.

Wartemann, Geesche. 'Theatre as Interplay: Processes of Collective Creativity in Theatre for Young Audiences,' *Youth Theatre Journal.* 23:1, 6-14. 2009.

This article takes a theoretical approach to considering the relationship (or 'interplay') between actors and audience in theatre for children, which it describes as one of co-presence and collective creativity which is being continually negotiated. These concepts are applied to observations of a performance that constructed an 'experimental ground' (experimentierfeld) through which to examine children's understanding of theatre.

Children as Performers

The overall heading of this Oxford Bibliographies entry reads 'Theatre for Children and Young Audiences'. That proposition 'for' denotes all sorts of things, concerning power, authorship, agency and an overarching conceptualisation of childhood. More specifically it also signals a more pragmatic relationship: performances *for* children, typically *by* adult actors, dancers or musicians. The entries in this section focus on the exceptions, and what happens when children become the performers for a largely

adult audience. Three of the entries in this section – Gubar 2012, Klein 2012, Varty 2007 – focus on the late nineteenth-century theatre world of the UK and USA, examining a period when children as performers was a common and prominent form of entertainment. Using historical research these publications examine questions relating to the training and competence of child actors, fraught debates concerning objectification and eroticisation, the dawning of incoming labour laws and how fears over exploitation would eventually lead to the banishment of children from the stage and to the audience. A common thread through these texts is how in the nineteenth century there existed much less age stratification, with a more fluid intermixing of adult and child worlds before the universalisation of compulsory formal education. Gubar's concept of 'age transvestism' – children performing adults; adults performing children – represents a useful critical tool of much wider application. As Klein 2012 observes, unlike in film and television made for children, child actors are seldom present in theatre for young audiences. Critical exploration of more recent appearances of children as performers are therefore rarer. The examples here examine very different theatrical forms. Freshwater 2012 discusses the marketing and presentation of child performers within the popular *Billy Elliot* musical; Chapman 2000 the contestation of female identity within US high school theatre. In contrast Senior 2016, Austin 2019 and Maguire 2020 examine instances of contemporary performance practice, where adult theatre-makers have used child performers to address adult audiences. The critical territory of both these articles reflects recurring concerns about power, agency and the (in)visibility of children within contemporary theatre and culture. What is unfortunately missing from this category are non-western explorations of children as performers, an area that it would be vital to see in further research and scholarship.

Austin, Sarah. 'Towards an Ethical Practice: Child Performers in Contemporary Performance for Adult Audiences.' *Australasian Drama Studies.* 74. 189-216. 2019.

This article identifies an increase in the presence of child performers in contemporary and experimental theatre for adult audiences. It contextualizes this through a brief history of the presence of children in theatre, before examining two Australian-based case studies.

Chapman, Jennifer. 'Female Impersonations: Young Performers and the Crisis of Adolescence.' *Youth Theatre Journal*. 14:1. 123-131.

The article examines adolescent female identity as enacted and observed with US high school theatre. Chapman locates her work within the context of a crisis of adolescence, specifically the contested value surrounding female identity. She argues that the experience of performing on stage provides teenage girls opportunities to gain knowledge – positive and negative – about their gender identities.

Freshwater, Helen. 'Consuming Authenticities: Billy Elliot the Musical and the Performing Child.' *The Lion and the Unicorn*. 36.2: 15-73. 2012.

Included within a special issue of *The Lion and the Unicorn* on 'children and theatre', this article examines how the hugely successful musical adaptation of *Billy Elliot* traded upon and marketed the authenticity of its 'real life Billy Elliot' performers. Problematizing the concept of authenticity in relation to both childhood and child performers, the article is a rare analytical exploration of the contemporary world of children as performers.

Gubar, Marah. 'Who Watched *The Children's Pinafore?'* Age Transvestism on the Nineteenth Century Stage. *Victorian Studies*. 54.3: 410-26. 2012.

In this article Gubar coins and defines the term 'age transvestism', in the specific context of performances in nineteenth-century theatre for child actors playing adult roles (and vice versa). She examines and rejects prominent narratives of child actors being enjoyed for their ineptitude, proposing a counter argument that they often presented highly competent performance that blurred age distinctions.

Klein, Jeanne. 'Without Distinction of Age: The Pivotal Roles of Child Actors and their Spectators in Nineteenth Century Theatre.' *The Lion and the Unicorn*. 36.2: 117-35. 2012.

This article examines the integral part child actors (and spectators) had within nineteenth-century theatre culture. Klein presents a rich and often untold history of child performers, from young vaudevillians to 'baby ballets', arguing that operating before strict age stratification such popular performances 'invented' children's theatre well before the twentieth century.

Maguire, Tom. 'Watching Girls Watching: Hetpaleis's *Hamilton Complex*.' In Manon van de Water, Ed. *Diversity, Representation, and Culture in TYA*. Vrygrond, South Africa: ASSITEJ. 2020.

The chapter provides a close analysis of Belgium TYA company Hetpaleis's *Hamilton Complex*, performed by thirteen thirteen-year-old girls. Maguire explores the construction of girlhood and of female adolescent sexuality, examining the tension between the commodification or objectification of watching and production's desire to assert the performers' agency.

Senior, Adele. 'Beginners on Stage: Arendt, Natality and the Appearance of Children in Contemporary Performance.' *Theatre Research International*. 41.1: 70-84. 2016.

The focus of this article is the appearance of children as performers within two examples of contemporary performance for adults. Presenting an ethical consideration of the nature of the relationship between the child performer and adult spectator – including responsibility, power, protection and authority – it poses questions about the agency and visibility of children within the public domain.

Varty, Anne. *Children and Theatre in Victorian Britain: 'All Work, No Play'*. Basingstoke: Palgrave. 2007.

A book-length examination of the wide-spread employment of children in the London theatre industry at the end of the nineteenth-century, including chapters on training child actors and the performing child as erotic subject. These are presented alongside discussion of the growing narratives of exploitation. A meticulously researched and detailed examination of theatre history at a vital point of transition for theatre for children.

Disability

A commonly shared sentiment in the field of theatre for children and young people is that it should be for *all* children. This includes disabled young audiences who, for example, may use wheelchairs or have other physical impairments, have learning disabilities, autism or are hearing impaired. The term disability can be understood according to various models (such as the medical, social and charity models, amongst others), which impacts the way disabled people are treated, supported and included. The social model is increasingly prominent for advocates of disability rights, and advocates that people are disabled because society does not meet their individual access needs, for example there is no ramp to get into the theatre building or a production contains strobe lightning making it unsuitable for people with epilepsy. In this sense, the term disabled does not convey shame but is used by people to advocate for their right to be fully included and represented in every aspect of society, including the performing arts. There is a growing number of theatre practitioners and researchers that aim to find ways in which theatre can be adapted to include and accommodate specific needs and interests of disabled young audiences. At the time of writing, published literature is only catching up with the innovative practice within this field. Goodley and Runswick-Cole 2011 highlight that theatre and other artistic activities are often framed within medicalised or educational discourses when they target disabled young audiences. There is also an emerging trend in theatre for and with autistic children and young people. May 2017, Trimingham and Shaughnessy 2016, Maas 2021, Beadle-Brown et al, 2018 and Mattaini 2020 all look at various aspects of performance for, and with, autistic children and young people. Trowsdale and Hayhow 2015 focus on embodied learning and suggest that a new, mimetic, approach can have significant impact on children and young people with learning difficulties, particularly within special school settings. The PhD research by Brigg 2013 and the book edited by Brown 2012 focus on companies creating theatre for young audiences diagnosed as having profound and multiple learning disabilities.

Beadle-Brown, Julie, David Wilkinson, Lisa Richardson, Nicola Shaughnessy, Melissa Trimingham, Jennifer Leigh, Beckie Whelton and Julian Himmerich. ‘Imagining Autism: Feasibility of a Drama-based Intervention on the Social, Communicative and Imaginative Behaviour of Children with Autism’. *Autism*. 22. 8: 915-927. 2018.

This article details the outcomes of a research intervention, titled ‘Imagining Autism’, in which both children with autism and drama practitioners engaged through participatory play and improvision. This engagement took place in a themed multi-sensory ‘pod’. Suggesting that there is broad value in

exploring the potential of drama techniques as a way of engaging people with autism, the article showed that intervention was successful across three different schools.

Brigg, Gillian. 'Theatre for Audiences Labelled as having Profound, Multiple and Complex Learning Disabilities: Assessing and Addressing Access to Performance'. PhD diss., University of Nottingham. 2013.

This thesis is based on a collaborative research project between the University of Nottingham and Roundabout Education at Nottingham Playhouse. Starting with the child's right to access cultural activities such as theatre, the project examined how barriers to meaningful participation can be overcome for a PMLD young audience. By creating a performance, the author examined issues such as emotional narratives, safe ethical frameworks and the engagement of three theatre spectra.

Brown, Mark. *Oily Cart: All Sorts of Theatre for All Sorts of Kids*. Stoke on Trent: Trentham. 2012.

Oily Cart were established in 1981 and have a world-leading reputation for their work for very young children and, in particular, their pioneering theatre for young people with severe learning disabilities. The company were led by founder and artistic director Tim Webb until 2018. Brown presents a 'celebration' of three decades of Oily Cart in the form of a source book that includes chapters, interviews, scripts and critical responses. www.oilycart.org.uk

Goodley, Dan and Katherine Runswick-Cole. 'Something in the Air? Creativity, Culture and Community'. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*. 16. 1: 75-91. 2011.

Using Oily Cart's work, the article analyses the extent to which a theatre production can support disabled children's well-being and challenge disablism in their lives. With a clear discussion of disability and creativity, the argument focuses on the ability of performing artists to engage with children. This is not for therapeutic or rehabilitative reasons, but to actualise disabled children's rights to be active participant in exciting and transformative art.

Maas, Christene. 'Improvisational Theatre and Occupational Therapy for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder'. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*. 68. 1: 10-25. 2021.

This article looks at theatre arts and improvisational techniques as a way of understanding and addressing social participation of individuals with autism. By analyzing the emerging literature, the article shows how improvisational theatre can act as a community-based program that meets the needs of children with ASD. It offers occupational therapists and other health practitioners ways to provide children with better support.

May, Shaun. ‘Autism and Comedy: Using Theatre Workshops to Explore Humour with Adolescents on the Spectrum’, *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance.* 22.3: 436-445. 2017.

Taking as a starting point the idea that autistic people have an impaired sense of humor, which is prevalent within the phycological literature, the paper shows how so-called negative traits can be rethought in terms of disclosing their comic potential. This paper draws upon work conducted in comedy theatre workshops, utilizing a stand-up comedian and clown, to reframe anxiety (and social awkwardness), literalness, and repetitive patterns of behavior.

Mattaini, Molly. ‘Creating Autistic Space in Ability-inclusive Sensory Theatre’. *Youth Theatre Journal*. 34. 1: 42-54. 2020.

This article argues that some theatre companies offer young audiences sensory friendly performances that tend to avoid triggers and in doing so they limit the sensory elements and aesthetic experimentation. Ability-Inclusive Sensory Theatre (AIST), in contrasts, offers a different approach because by focusing on sensory elements it places the aesthetic experience at the center of a production and creates an autistic space informed by the audience.

Trimingham, Melissa and Nicola Shaughnessy. ‘Material Voices: Intermediality and Autism’. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance.* 21. 3: 293-308. 2016.

This article puts forward the idea that utilizing ‘intermediality’ offers a potential holistic pedological approach that educators can embrace and develop. The article argues, via two case studies, that media (puppetry, costumes, cameras, and so on) is integral to experience and that an intermediality approach helps us to understand how children with autism create meaning; and draws attention to the role of bodily interaction with the surrounding environment.

Trowsdale, Jo and Richard Hayhow. ‘Psycho-physical Theatre Practice as Embodied Learning for Young People with Learning Disabilities’. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. 19. 10: 1022-1036. 2015.

This article takes issue with the lack of attention given to embodied learning approaches, particularly in dominant Western tradition and within the discipline of education. It examines interactive, non-verbal, psycho-physical theatre practice – named ‘mimetics’ – which has been developed with children and young people with learning disabilities. The article highlights the challenges but also opportunities of developing embodied learning and employing it more widely.

Cultural and Racial Diversity

Childhood is regularly presented as a universal concept. For example, the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child asserts that everyone under the age of 18, regardless where she or he is born, has rights such as education, protection, play and relaxation. Furthermore, research has mapped the child’s development

according to typical stages that are understood as being universally applicable. However, defining and subsequently understanding a child by age or stages of biological development may overlook the culturally different interpretations of what it means to be a child, not just globally but also within and between local communities. Childhood studies, in contrast, does not consider the child to be a universal concept or homogeneous group but shifts the paradigm to understand how social and cultural dialogues inform young lives and how they are perceived. Here the focus is on how a child is influenced by a range of factors such as gender, ethnicity, religion, culture, class, disability, sexuality and their social economic backgrounds. In the 21st Century cultural and racial diversity has become an important concept and this is reflected in theatre for children. Schuitema 2015 asserts that the global interconnectedness of the UK means that young audiences are per definition culturally diverse. In her article she highlights that there is a history and a rich contemporary practice of representing diversity on stage. However, research in this area remains underdeveloped particularly when it comes to highlighting the child's own perspective and experiences. With separate sections for *Disability* and *Queer TYA*, cultural diversity, racism and gender studies are particularly lacking in the field. The book edited by van de Water 2020 suggest that there is a growing interest in exploring this topic. Here contributions from around the world focus on various issues coalescing around diversity in theatre for the young. The article by Maloney and Ngo 2020 details the creation of a youth production in the context of the Black Lives Matter and the civil rights movement. Grady 2000 focuses on pluralistic perspectives within drama practice and her paper with Zarrilli 1994 is one of the first papers to focus on the practice of interculturalism for young audiences. Garcia 2015 examines the importance history and cultural memory in productions for young audiences relevant to Latino communities in the US. Scott-Papke 2017 relates the history of the Harlem Children's Theatre Company (USA) and its relation to the Black Arts Movement of the mid 60s and 70s.

Garcia, Lorenzo. 'From Memory to Action: Teatro Dallas's Production of Pizcas'. *Youth Theatre Journal*. 29. 2: 105-111. 2015.

This 'brief meditation' looks at the play Pizcas, as well as the activities immediately following the production. With specific focus on the Latino community in the US, but engaging more widely with the concept of latinitad, the discussion analyses the nature of cultural memory, history, and identity and uses the production and subsequent activities to locate feelings of investment and sites of empowerment within the Latino community.

Grady, Sharon A and Phillip B Zarrilli. "...It Was like a Play in a Play in a Play!" "Tales from South Asia" in an Intercultural Production'. *The Drama Review*. 28. 3: 168-184. 1994.

This essay details the staging of a production with South Asian content for a mixed child/adult audience. The authors highlight three theoretical and practical issues: 1) assumptions and myths associated with performances for the child, 2) issues of representation and enactment when

performing content from another culture, and 3) how to create a production that is pleasurable, exciting, and educational for all sections of the audience.

Grady, Sharon. *Drama and Diversity: A Pluralistic Perspective for Educational Drama*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann Drama. 2000.

This book looks at educational drama and offers a pluralistic perspective to innovate practice and offer children and young people the space to develop their own identities. Using examples from practice as well as drawing on multicultural, postcolonial, ethnographic, feminist and disability theory, the author engages with the concept of difference the presence of unconscious biases is particularly addressed and the book promotes methods to create inclusive classroom environments.

Maloney Leaf, Betsy and Ngo, Bic. “Fear of what we don’t know”: Grappling with diversity in a youth theatre program’. *Youth Theatre Journal*. 34. 1: 78-94. 2020.

This article follows a diverse group of young cast members and adult artistic staff as they confront issues of diversity and difference while rehearsing, staging and performing a play about Ruby Bridges (the first African American student to attend an all-white school). The article uses a broad ethnological approach to show how the young cast members developed critical consciousness through artistic practice in an out-of-school (non-institutional) context.

Schuitema, Karian. ‘A provocation: Researching the diverse child audience in the UK’. *Participations*. 12. 1: 175-190. 2015.

This journal article argues that the child’s voice is often dismissed in debates surrounding multiculturalism and interculturalism on the stage. Offering a brief history of the representation of cultural diversity, the article suggests that the child is often presumed as a passive audience member who is a bystander in the face of adult political and ideological concerns. Practical research, it is further argued, can highlight and empower the child’s voice.

Scott-Papke, Jacqui. ’Aduke Aremu’s Harlem Children’s Theatre Company,’ *Youth Theatre Journal*, 31.2: 129-39. 2017.

This article provides a history and analysis of the work of the Harlem Children’s Theatre Company, which emerged under the leadership of Aduke Aremu during the period of the Black Arts Movement between 1965-1975. Drawing on interviews with Aremu, the article describes how the company sought to make work that would be attended and enjoyed by whole families, and which communicated a fusion of art and politics in relation to Pan-Africanism and Black consciousness.

van de Water, Manon, ed. *Diversity, Representation, and Culture in TYA*. Vrygrond, South Africa: ASSITEJ. 2020.

This collection of 12 chapters has its origins in a 2017 ITYARN conference in South Africa focused on culture and diversity in TYA. The contributions include a diverse range of approaches to considering diversity, including through applied theatre, trauma studies and spectatorship. A varied collection resists any single focus, but clear themes include questions of representation across race, gender and disability.

Early Years

Also known as theatre for babies or the very young, theatre for early years is typically defined as performances made for or with children under three years old. A recurring theme within publications in this context is the need to defend and explain the existence of making theatre for babies in the first place. In different ways each of Fletcher Watson et al 2014, Goldfinger 2011, Schneider 2009 and Young 2004 all seek to address this existential objection – why make anything as elaborate or formal as theatre for children so young they will neither remember nor recognize it as an art form at all? The research responds to this criticism by arguing for the aesthetic complexity and richness of the form and analysing how theatre-makers respond to and engage with the specific developmental needs of their audience. While largely unknown before the first decade of the twentieth century, theatre for early years is now a well-established and growing area, most dramatically demonstrated in the work of organisations such as Starcatchers 2006-present, Glitterbird 2003-6, Small Size (2007-present) and La Baracca (2014-present) in commissioning, curating and presenting performance for young children. More recent research has responded to the established nature of the form and, no longer taking the need for self-justification as a starting point, has increasingly explored different kinds of questions. These range from the aesthetic, such as Hovik's 2019 examination of affect and presence, to the ethnographic in Miles's 2018 consideration of young children's engagement with the theatrical event, to the psychological in Cowley et al's 2020 consideration of the potential for theatre for babies to aid father-child bonding. Theatre for early years now represents a dynamic area of innovative performance practice and scholarship, particularly in terms of the potential for research that engages with both child developmental and aesthetic considerations.

Cowley, Brenda, Anusha Lachman, Elvin Williams and Astrid Berg. '"I Know That It's Something That's Creating a Bond": Fathers' Experiences of Participating in Baby Theater With Their Infants in South Africa.' *Front Psychiatry*. 2020.

This interdisciplinary article draws upon psychiatry and occupational therapy to examine the potential for theatre for babies to create a bond between father and child. The approach is qualitative, presenting the fathers' subjective accounts of the experience as educative and enjoyable.

Fletcher-Watson, Ben, Sue Fletcher-Watson, Marie Jeanne McNaughton and Anna Birch. 2014. 'From Cradle to Stage: How Early Years Performing Arts Experiences Are Tailored to the Developmental Capabilities of Babies and Toddlers.' *Youth Theatre Journal*, 28.2: 130-46. 2014.

This article provides a useful narrative for the growth of theatre for early years, before examining how performance makers tailor their work to the developmental needs of their audiences. The authors divide the period from birth to three into three age profiles, analysing exemplar performances designed for each age range. The focus on developmental milestones is a key contribution and of use to both scholars and performance makers.

Glitterbird. Art for the Very Young. Oslo University College. www.dansdesign.com/gb/. 2003-06.

Involving participation from six European countries, Glitterbird was a three-year project that produced and presented art for children under three. This was accompanied by a series of international seminars presenting both academic and practitioner orientated papers. The Glitterbird website documents the project, with downloads available of all outputs.

Goldfinger, Evelyn. 'Theatre for Babies'. In Schonmann, Shifra ed. *Key Concepts in Theatre/Drama* Education. Dordrecht: Springer. 295-99. 2011.

The chapter addresses the recurring challenge asked of theatre for babies: given very young children can be entertained or distracted by virtually anything, why do they need theatre? Is theatre made for babies actually theatre? Goldfinger presents a short reflective discussion examining some of the recurring debates in response to these questions.

Hovik, Lise. 'Becoming small: Concepts and methods of interdisciplinary practice in theatre for early years.' *Youth Theatre Journal*, 33.1: 37-51. 2019.

Drawing upon the author's interdisciplinary performance practice, this paper articulates a series of recurring approaches to making work for early years: play, improvisation, performer presence, musical communication, participation and interactivity. It argues for the value of the concept of affect in allowing us to think about the arts encounters of the very young.

La Baracca – Testoni Ragazzi. Bolgona, Italy. www.testoniragazzi.it. 2014-present

Founded in 1976, La Baracca produce work for young people of all ages. They have also led two European Commission – Creative Europe programmes focusing on early years. 'Small Size, Performing Arts for Early Years' (2014-18), which is now an ongoing network. 'Mapping – A Map on the Aesthetics of Performing Arts for Europe' (2018-22), which incorporates 18 partners across Europe focused on developing sensory theatre for very young children.

Miles, Emma. 'Bus journeys, sandwiches and play: young children and the theatre event.' *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 23.1: 20-39. 2018.

This article draws upon a series of visits by the same group of young children (aged three or four) to a series of performances by Polka Theatre, UK. Miles utilizes an ethnographic approach to consider theatre for early years as a 'theatrical event' incorporating not just the performance but everything that surrounds the experience, from the journey to the venue to their sense of agency within the theatre building.

Schneider, Wolfgang, ed. *Theatre for Early Years: Research in Performing Arts for Children*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang. 2009.

The only book-length publication in the field of theatre for early years, this work is organized into reflections, reports and experiences. The majority of the authors are theatre practitioners, with a geographical spread from South America, the USA, Europe and Australia. The book has a practical orientation, asking questions about audience, aesthetics and education in relation to theatre for early years.

Small Size Network. www.smallsizenetwork.org. 2007-present.

Small Size is an international artistic network aiming to develop performing arts for early year, which they define as 0-6. The network host annual 'small size days', which incorporate performances, workshops and presentations.

Starcatchers. Scotland's National Arts and Early Years Organisation. Edinburgh, Scotland. www.starcatchers.org.uk/. 2006-present.

Originally launched as an arts-led investigation into making performance work for babies (aged 0-3), Starcatchers has developed into an internationally recognized leader in work for early years. They have commissioned a series of groundbreaking arts projects for young children and offer a rich set of resources for both scholars and practitioners.

Young, Susan. '"It's a bit like flying": Developing Participatory Theatre with the Under-twos: A case study of Oily Cart.' *RiDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*. 9. 13-28. 2004.

Published in 2004, this article is perhaps the first academic consideration of theatre for early years, and is focused on the work of UK theatre company Oily Cart (see also Brown 2012 *Disabilities*). Young uses observation, interviews and participation to examine the nature of the experience for very young audiences and their carers. The central argument concerns the dyadic nature of theatre for early years, addressing, engaging and interacting with both the young and adult spectator.

Education

Pedagogical and didactic aspects form a central motif in the origin and development of theatre for the young audiences, indicative of how children are often perceived as in need of nurture, instruction and moral guidance. In the Romantic tradition, and influenced by writers such as Rousseau and William Blake, the child as 'innocent' is placed in direct opposition to the knowledgeable 'experienced' adult. Historically this idea of childhood as a separate category in life gave rise to literature, theatre and entertainment specifically designed for young minds. Material aimed at children had to protect them from the hard reality of the adult realm as well prepare them to become responsible moral citizens through education. Some of these sentiments have prevailed and debates in theatre for children regularly focus not only on what is appropriate for young audiences but also to what extent theatre should pursue pedagogic and educational aims. Theatre's connection to education is a twofold dynamic: it is considered a great tool for active learning, but through showcasing this aspect, practitioners and companies can tempt those spending money (adults) to bring their children to the theatre. In this selection, both Winston 2003, Falconi 2015 and Eluyefa 2017 focus on how pedagogical and artistic aspects can be married in theatre for the young. While Nicolson 2011, Lazarus 2012, Jackson 2013 and van de Water et al. 2013 focus on the benefits and the need for theatre and drama in educational settings. A recurrent theme here is the need for innovation within this field, ensuring that the ever-changing needs of young people are met, and that practice reflects the social and political context of their environment. Prendergast 2004 and Reason 2008 discuss educational strategies of enhancing the child's experience and engagement with theatre, whereby emphasis is placed on children learning to be an audience and to cognitively engage with what is presented in a theatrical production. Finally, the paper by Bebek et al. 2020 shifts the focus even further by looking at how performance can encourage the child's voice to challenge and disrupt spaces that are dominated by the narratives of adults, such as education and academia.

Bebek, Carolin, Kate Katafiasz, Karian Schuitema and Benjamin Weber. 'On (In)security: A conversation on Education and Intergenerational Dialogues'. *Performance Philosophy*. 5. 2: 349-368. 2020.

In response to the way adult voices dominate academia, this article looks at ways in which educational settings and familial structures may be able to make spaces for children's voices. It presents a Q&A conversation held at a performance philosophy conference after three practice-based contributions. The presentation itself were staged as interventions using drama and performance and asked a range of questions about the liberation of (neurodiverse) children as learners.

Eluyefa, Dennis. 'Children's Theatre: A Brief Pedagogical Approach'. *ArtsPraxis*. 4. 1: 79-93. 2017.

This article asks what is children's theatre? It does so to explore the way in which education can be an intrinsic aspect of children's theatre without devaluing it as an art form or diminishing its entertainment value. The article argues that children can learn about social and ethical issues from theatre, and practitioners should see themselves as entertainers and researchers and seek to collaborate with children.

Falconi, María Inés. ‘Theatre for Children and Youth: Art or Pedagogy?’ *Youth Theatre Journal*. 29.2: 159-165. 2015.

This essay discusses differences between artistic and educational approaches to theatre for children, suggesting that there is an entrenched assumption that theatre for children must have a message and/or pedagogical value. It points out that children’s theatre must risk leaving the safe space attributed to adults and connect to the audience through the unstable artistic space of questioning. This fosters collaboration and brings together aesthetic values alongside the learning process.

Jackson, Anthony and Chris Vine. eds. *Learning Through Theatre: The Changing Face of Theatre in Education.* Abingdon: Routledge. 2013.

After the first edition appeared in 1993, this edited collection has been extensively used by those working in the field of Theatre in Education (TiE). This edition highlights the changes in education but also the blurring of the line between TiE and other forms of (applied) theatre. The focus on learning through theatre is shared throughout the book and contributions include practice from India, Southern Africa and Norway.

Lazarus, Joan. *Signs of Change: New Directions in Theatre Education*. Bristol: Intellect. 2012.

This book focuses on the necessity of change within theatre education. Discussing secondary education in America, the author offers a strong argument for evolvement and what is needed to continue to assure best practice. The book gives many examples of learner-centered practice, socially engaged work and integrated arts education. The revised and extended edition also features invited essays of critical thinkers in the field.

Nicholson, Helen. *Theatre, Education and Performance*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. 2011.

Nicholson’s monograph offers a detailed discussion of theatre education and features an historical and contemporary overview of practice. Focusing on professional theatre practitioners and their contribution to the education of young people, it traces the influence of social and educational reforms in the UK. The book discusses issues such as globalization, national identity, and cultural exchanges, and maps the changes in the practice to adapt to new young audiences.

Prendergast, Monica. ‘Theatre Audience Education or How to See a Play: Toward a Curriculum Theory for Spectatorship in the Performing Arts’. *Youth Theatre Journal*. 18. 1: 45-54. 2004.

This article focuses on what is required to attend, watch and study a performance. It puts forward an audience-in-performance curriculum theory whereby the audience is considered to be active rather than passive. This curriculum delivers a series of questions that stimulate audience members to think

about their place and role within a performance, as well as promoting dialogue between performers and the audience.

Reason, Matthew. 'Enhancing Children's Theatrical Experiences Through Philosophical Enquiry'. *Childhood and Philosophy*. 4. 7: 115-145. 2008.

This article explores the potential of using Philosophical Enquiry for Children (P4C) as a framework within which children's engagement with theatre can be deepened and enhanced. It is informed by research involving primary school children attending theatre productions, after which several teacher-led philosophical discussions were observed. The article details the complexities of the P4C approach and the need for children to be provided with the language of theatrical enquiry.

van de Water, Manon. McAvoy, Mary and Hunt Kristin. *Drama and Education: Performance Methodologies for Teaching and Learning*. Abingdon: Routledge. 2015.

This book addresses neuroscientific research to argue for the essential role of drama in creative and contextual learning. It provides a historical and theoretical overview of drama as a tool for teaching and learning and sets out specific methodologies including drama for social justice, process-oriented drama and performance art. The book has been written as a text book for students and teachers on applied and theatre and education courses.

Winston, Joe. 'Playing on The Magic Mountain: Theatre Education and Teacher Training at a Children's Theatre in Brussels,' *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 8.2: 203-16. 2003.

La Montagne Magique – The Magic Mountain – is a theatre venue for children in Belgium, founded in 1995 by Roger Deldime and Jeanne Pigeon. Drawing upon a residency at the venue and interviews with members of the team, Winston describes the unique qualities of the company including how it positions theatre as a 'third space' between art and education. See also Deldime and Hamza Fassi-Fihri, *La montagne magique An 15: Ode à la rencontre du théâtre avec l'éducation* (2001). www.lamontagnemagique.be

Festivals

Festivals play a significant role across the performing arts, providing audiences and professionals alike with opportunities to experience new work and network. The role of festivals is perhaps particularly pronounced with theatre for children, an art form that otherwise largely takes place at a small scale, in low profile venues, getting little media attention. When performances typically take place in school halls or community centres, the role of the festivals in garnering attention, sharing practice and making connections – including internationally – has particular significance. While it is impossible to be

comprehensive, the examples presented here aim to give some sense of breadth, diversity and significance of children's theatre festivals. The majority of festivals are curated, featuring selected performances invited by a committee or artistic director. A prominent and unique exception is Denmark's April Festival, which is unique in being uncurated and 'open' whereby everything and anything may appear. While many are attached to particular host cities, the eldest festival, the ASSITEJ World Congress, is held in a different city every three years. It is, however, only with the growth of mass, affordable international travel that children's theatre festivals have taken on their current significance within the sector. Increasingly the most prominent international festivals host visiting delegates, who are there to witness and book productions. This in turn has started to impact and shape children's theatre practice in subtle, small, but important ways. Examples include the implicit promotion of an 'internationalism,' manifested in the selection and promotion of productions that might tour easily across boarders due to a lack of cultural or linguistic specificity. During the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020-21, festivals developed hybrid or online programmes, which increased accessibility and attendance. ASSITEJ provide a comprehensive listed of its member's festivals, examples here are indicative only.

ASSITEJ World Congress. International. www.assitej-international.org/en/

ASSITEJ is the international association of theatre for children and young people, consisting of international members, national centers and professional networks. Amongst other activities – including publishing an annual magazine and hosting events – every three years ASSITEJ holds a world festival of performance for children and young people. First hosted in 1966, the location moves on each occasion with recent hosts being Cape Town (2017), Warsaw (2014) and Copenhagen/Malmo (2011).

April Festival. Denmark. www.teatercentrum.dk/

Founded in 1971, Denmark's April Festival is the largest children's theatre festival in the world. It operates as a 'open', rather than selective festival, with audiences attending for free. Moving to a different municipality each year, the April Festival operates as a shop window for theatre companies who perform in a variety of venues without direct payment. The festival is organized by Teater Centrum, who also act in an advocacy and advisory role for Danish children's theatre.

Augenblik Mal! Germany. https://augenblickmal.de.

Founded in 1991, Augenblik Mal! Is a curated festival of theatre for young audience that takes place in Berlin. The festival has a commitment to improving accessibility, including through developing a virtual festival.

Cradle of Creativity. South Africa. www.assitej2017.org.za.

Originally part of the first ASSITEJ festival hosted in Africa in 2017, Cradle of Creativity will now take place every two years in different locations across South Africa.

Haifa International Children's Theater Festival. Israel. www.haifa-art.org.il/en/

Founded in 1982, the Haifa children's festival is a selective festival, which also includes a Festival jury awarding prizes in categories such as playwriting, directing, acting, set design and more. A central and distinct element of the festival is the prominence given to open air street theatre, featuring artists and performers from around the world.

Edinburgh International Children's Festival. Scotland. www.imaginate.org.uk/festival/

Founded in 1990, Edinburgh's children's festival is a curated programme that stages one of the most prominent showcases for international performance for children and young people. The festival takes in May/June, rather than during Edinburgh's main summer festival period. Outside of the festival, organizers Imaginate have year-round significance commissioning new work, developing artists and pushing at the boundaries of theatre for children and young people through research and creative collaborations.

IPAY. USA. https://ipayweb.org/

The International Association of Performing Arts for Young, IPAY's is focused on supporting key stakeholders (such as artists, agents and presenters) in children's theatre in north American. A central part of this is an international showcase, first presented in Chicago in 1979.

Korean International Summer Festival. Korea. http://assitejkorea.org/

The ASSITEJ Korean International Summer Festival has been running each year since 1993. A distinctive feature is an annual focus each year on one international country, with the objective of Korean young people discovering that country's culture and society through the performing arts.

ricca ricca*festa. Japan. https://riccariccafesta.com

Also known as the International Theater Festival Okinawa for Young Audiences, the ricca ricca*festa first took place in 1994 and has been an annual event since 2005. The festival also incorporates networking programmes, symposiums and workshops for TYA practitioners.

Visioni. Italy. https://visionifestival.it

Visioni is an international festival of theatre and culture for early years organised by La Baracca – Testoni Ragazzi. The festival incorporates performances, training activities, workshops for children and practitioners, along with talks and other events.

Making Theatre

Creating and staging work for children and young people can be discussed with an emphasis on the practical aspects of production or as theoretical inquiry into the creative process. This section features the book written by playwright David Wood in collaboration with Janet Grant 1997, which details the process of writing and creating theatre for young audiences. A clear example of a practical guide to making theatre, it also highlights a process that is very much shaped by the adult practitioner. This is also the case in Schuitema 2011, which focuses on stage adaptations of Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* tribology. The other sources in this section shift from a focus on the adult practitioner creating work for children, to inviting and including children to participate in the creative process and performances. The book edited by Taylor, Warner and Bolton 2006 focuses on the work by practitioner Cecily O'Neill who promoted the use of process drama to create performative learning opportunities together with children and young people. Anderson 2020 looks at the way actors create theatre with and for children and use specific skills related to voice, movement, improvisation and clowning to interact and connect with young audiences. Glarin 2020 discusses how young people can share their narratives through ethnodramas created through a collaborative process. Her article particularly reflects upon the authorship and ownership of work created in this manner, arguing that there are important ethical considerations and power dynamics that need to be negotiated. These performative collaborations between the adult and child also often form the basis of practical research projects aiming to develop a greater understanding of young audiences, and/or to create work that is innovative. Lundberg 2016 focuses on an interactive research project which has collaborated with children and young people to create two performances. Lundberg uses feminist translation theory and work on norm-critical pedagogy to provide a close reading of a scene of the play *Love Machine*. Similarly, the articles by Gattenhof and Radvan 2009 and Peters 2013 highlight how theatre can employ performative environments to collaborate with children to research a range of different subjects. This research is an example of the creation of a new theatre in which both adults and children can work together to gain new insights into the world around them.

Andersen, Jennifer. 'Understanding the artistry of actors who create theatre with and for children'. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*. 25. 4: 484-497. 2020.

This article looks at the relationship between actor/performer and the child/audience. It approaches this relationship from the perspective of the actors and does so by focusing on a particular moment in a performance. The article shows that 'listening', 'reciprocating', 'imagining' and 'empathizing' are important in terms of the theatrical, pedagogical, and caring relationship between the actor and child.

Gattenhof, Sandra and Mark Radvan. 'In the Mouth of the Imagination: Positioning Children as Co-researchers and Co-artists to Create a Professional Children's Theatre Production'. *RiDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*. 14. 2: 211-224. 2009.

This article focuses on the methodological requirements for including children as equal co-creators and artists within the research process, particularly practice-led research. It details a six-month research project in which the children, researchers and performers worked in a symbiotic relationship within the artistic and aesthetic process. With the aim of adding value to aesthetic outcomes, the article highlights the potential of artistic-led research in developing a creative product.

Glarin, Anna. 'Whose Story Is It Anyway?: Reflections on Authorship and Ownership in Devised Theatre-Making and Ethnodrama with Young People'. ArtsPraxis. 7. 1: 14-24. 2020.

This article looks at the process of researching and writing with young people to create theatrical work that presents the narratives of young people. Giving examples of the creation of ethnodrama, the article looks at competing tensions involving power dynamics and ethical considerations, which the collaborative process brings to the fore. It highlights how authorship could be shared between everyone involved but that the young people should have the ownership of the work during the process.

Lundberg, Anna. 'Beyond the Gaze: Translations as a Norm-critical Praxis in Theatre for Children and Youth'. *Nordic Theatre Studies*. 28. 1: 94-104. 2016.

Detailing an interactive research project carried out in collaboration with a Swedish playhouse for children and youth (ung scen/öst), this article draws on feminist translation theory to look at a specific moment within a performance. The author utilizes a 'close reading' of the scene to highlight meaning-making and negotiations of meaning. This is done by focusing on acts of translation, showing the dynamic nature of meaning and all its transformations.

Peters, Sibylle. 'Participatory Children's Theatre and the Art of Research: The Theatre of Research/Das Forschungstheater 2003-2013'. *Youth Theatre Journal*. 27. 2: 100-112. 2013.

This article presents work by the German Theatre of Research, an initiative where artists, scholars, scientists, and children come together as researchers. The article gives examples of previous work. Furthermore, it discusses the theory that lies behind participatory theatre and focuses on the idea that theatre can reflect experiences but also can operate as a forum which can intervene and change cultural practices outside of theatre.

Schuitema, Karian. 'Staging and Performing *His Dark Materials*: From the National Theatre Productions to Subsequent Productions', in Barfield, Steve and Cox, Katherine eds. *Critical Perspectives on Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials*. London: Jefferson and McFarland and company. 239-266. 2011.

Interviewing two directors – Steward McGill from Playbox Theatre Company and Lee Lyford from the Young People's Theatre – this chapter looks at adapting *His Dark Materials* by Philip Pullman with and for children and young people. It highlights the difficulties and complexities of moving a popular

children's book series to the stage and ~~also~~ discusses the National Theatre's adaptation in 2003, as well as other productions.

Taylor, Philip and Cris Warner, eds. *Structure and Spontaneity: The Process Drama of Cecily O'Neill*. London: Trentham Books. 2006.

This edited book on process drama developed and promoted by Cecily O'Neill highlights how theatre can be created in the classroom through interactions between teachers and children. With her fundamental role in making the practice accessible to educators around the world, this book celebrates O'Neill's achievements while also providing a practical guide for those who want to apply process drama to contribute to the educational development of children.

Whybrow, Nicolas ed. *Blah Blah Blah: Stories of a Theatre Company 1985-1995*. Leeds: Alumnus. 1996.

Theatre Company Blah Blah Blah were formed in Leeds in 1985 and continue to produce participatory theatre with and for children, young people and families. Whybrow's text includes a contextual article, interviews and two play texts by Mike Kenny. www.blahs.co.uk

Wood, David and Janet Grant. *Theatre for Children: Guide to Writing, Adapting, Directing, and Acting*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee. 1997.

This practical guide has been written by one of the UK's most prolific children's dramatists. Although Wood started his career in 1960s and wrote during the strongly political Theatre in Education movement that dominated the field, his own theatre mainly aims to capture children's imagination and entertain young audiences. This book focuses on techniques to capture children's attention and other practical lessons he has learned during a long career.

Political TYA

It can be argued that there is a tension between politics and childhood that can also be found in the field of theatre for the young. The Romantic idea of the innocence 'child' can be traced back to the desire to place the child in a supposedly 'non-political realm,' away from the corruption, power struggles and the severity of social and economic issues adults must deal with. In most countries a person is only allowed to vote from the age of 18 (although in several Latin American countries the age is 16) and even though the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child includes the right to influence those decisions made about their lives, children are routinely denied their active voice. Children, however, can often be seen to be fully engaged in contemporary issues. For example, the School Strike for Climate started by Greta Thunberg, highlighted the passionate social political involvement of young people. The field of theatre for young audiences has often engaged children and young people with a wide variety of political questions. Particularly at the end of the 1960s, theatre groups in Scandinavia, Germany and the Netherlands developed performances that were motivated and influenced by the ideological movements of the time.

The Theatre in Education (TiE) movement which was particularly active in the UK in the 1970s, had strong Marxist and/or Trotskyist influences. However, TiE regularly faced criticism that adults were pushing their own agenda onto the (supposedly non-political) child and that overtly political content prevented aesthetic engagement. The texts in this section highlight the development of this political orientation and illustrate how more current social/political issues range from questions about nationality, diversity and cultural 'ownership'. The ideas expressed in Benjamin 1999 have been embraced by researchers such as Zipes 2003 to argue against theatre that is presented as a spectacle and to argue for theatre that stimulates social change. Brecht has been similarly influential in the field as is highlighted by Brosius 2001. Two special issues, van de Water 2003 and Sibylle 2020, feature a range of texts on the subject of ideology in theatre for the young. Romana 2016 discusses the work of Unga Klara and in doing so charts the development political theatre in Sweden. Schroeder-Acer 2019 looks at the question and politics of diversity in teacher training programmes in the US and Deeney 2007 discusses how citizenship is performed by the National Theatre in the UK. Omasta 2009 examines the power dynamics between adult creators and young audiences, while Wozniak 2016 examines how Shakespeare's work can become sites where young people can explore democratic opportunities.

Benjamin, Walter. 'Program for a Proletarian Children's Theater', in Jennings, Michael W. Eiland, Howard and Smith, Gary. eds. *Walter Benjamin Selected Writings Vol 2, Part 1*. 1927-1930. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 201-206. 1999.

In this essay, which is published in English as part of Benjamin's collected writing, theatre is discussed in terms of its role in bringing up children in a proletarian manner. Using the principles of Marxist ideology, it discusses the need to counter bourgeois education and theatre and sets out the ways in which this can be achieved. Points of focus are children's collectives, the importance of observation and improvisation.

Brosius, Peter. 'Can Theater + Young People = Social Change? The Answer Must Be Yes'. *Theatre*. 31. 3: 74-75. 2001.

This opinion piece written by the director of the Children's Theatre Company argues that theatre should take up a role in bringing social change. It provides a brief overview of the work by the theatre company and mentions Brecht as an influence. Highlighting how children's voices and interests are often dismissed in the United States, Brosius puts forward the idea that theatre helps children to see that there is power in their imagination.

Deeney, John F. 'National Causes/Moral Clauses?: The National Theatre, Young People and Citizenship'. *Research in Drama Education*. 12. 3: 331-344. 2007.

Looking at the relationship between citizenship and young people, this article focuses on two plays that were commissioned by the National Theatre as part of a scheme called 'Connections'. The article

shows that although the NT commissioned plays that might appear to epitomize state-sanctioned paradigms, they also provide an opening through with the relationship between citizenship (traditionally understood) and young people can be redefined.

Lesourd, Sibylle. Ed. Expériences théâtrales et idéologies. Les conditions d'émergence du théâtre pour la jeunesse en Europe / Theatrical Experiences and Ideologies. Conditions for the Emergence of Theatre for Young People in Europe. Ed. (*Strenæ* 16, 2020) https://journals.openedition.org/strenae/4118

This bilingual special issue focuses on the development of theatre for young people in Europe in relation to ideologies of the twentieth century. Taking historical and aesthetic approaches, articles focus on countries such as Russia, Spain, Norway, and France. Some articles focus on specific theatre companies and directors, others focus on topics such as fascism, dogmatic approaches, and the emergence of theatre from the conflict in Northern Ireland.

Omasta, Matt. 'The TYA Contract: A Social Contractarian Approach to Obligations Between Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA) Companies and Their Constituents'. *Youth Theatre Journal*. 23. 2: 103-115. 2009.

This article considers three case studies conducted by the author to understand the social contractual relationship between TYA and constituent bodies. The article seeks to highlight the unequal power relations between the constituents in which each one operates in its own best interests. Omasta seeks ways of leveling relationships between TYA and their constituents, where each is aware of their responsibilities and obligations and priorities are equally met.

Schroeder-Arce, Roxanne L. '(Re)tracing la Pastorela: Performance, Policy, Pedagogy and Power'. *Youth Theatre Journal*. 33. 2: 129-138. 2019.

This article explores the standards being implemented by the Texas State Board of Education, particularly the expectation that students will explore diverse cultures. Championing the need for more diversity in stories and storytelling on theatre teaching preparation programs, and looking at how to incorporate this, the article focuses on a particular play, 'la Pastorela', which has endured in Mexican American communities since the early 1500s.

Švachová, Romana. 'The Childish Unga Klara: Contemporary Swedish Children's Theatre and Its Experimental Aesthetics'. *Brünner Beiträge zur Germanistik und Nordistik*. 30. 1: 51-63. 2016.

This article highlights the 'radical aesthetics of children', drawing our attention to the need for children's theatre to hold attention but in a way that is enlightening and, crucially, apprehensible for the child audience. It does so by focusing on the experimental productions of Unga Klara, which were rooted in the development of political theatre for the child in Sweden in the 1970s.

van de Water, Manon Ed. *Youth Theatre Journal*. 17. 1. 2003.

This special issue focuses on ideological forces within theatre for and with young people. It contains articles that offer their own perspectives on the impact of ideology on theory and practice within the field and what research in this area entails and/or is required. Examples include the ideological question of incorporating cinematic simulations into live theatre, and the fundamental (and political/ideological) question of what is a child audience.

Wozniak, Jan. *The Politics of Performing Shakespeare for Young People: Standing Up to Shakespeare.* Bloomsbury: London. 2016

This book uses interviews, performance observations and workshops to look at the ways young people can engage with the work of Shakespeare. Drawing on Jacques Rancière's work and especially the term 'emancipation', the author looks at how Shakespeare is constructed as the ultimate cultural capital, particularly in terms of education. The book argues that when Shakespeare's plays are constructed as theatrical, rather than literary, they could be sites where emancipation can occur.

Zipes, Jack. 'Political Children's Theatre in the Age of Globalisation'. *Theatre*. 33. 2: 3-25. 2003.

Following an economic understanding of globalisation, this article looks at how theatre is turned into a spectacle by global market forces. By way of analysing children's culture in the United States, the author argues that homogenising forces demand an alternative to 'lily-white' middle class entertainment. Using Walter Benjamin's writing and drawing on German experimental theatre groups, the article discusses how plays for young audiences can stimulate social change.

Storytelling

The telling and listening to stories is central to theatre for children, and while 'storytelling' is also an art form in its own right, the two have a close relationship. It is included here both as a vital part of theatre making and for its frequent appearance alongside theatre for children in festivals and other events. As with theatre for children, storytelling grapples with whether it is primarily 'for' or primarily 'by'. Like theatre for children, it also can have a close, sometimes claustrophobic, relationship with educational and pedagogical outcomes. Meanwhile, Storytelling with a capital S is sometimes perceived as an oral folk tradition that can almost vehemently assert that it has nothing to do with theatre at all. For many, storytelling is firmly located within oral traditions and the unscripted retelling of folktales or culturally significant mythologies. Storytelling within educational psychology often has a strong pedagogical focus on language development or literacy, while in literature contexts storytelling is about narrative form and structure – none of these have much to do with theatre for children. In sociological terms storytelling is about how meaning is constructed and shared within a social world, while for Gersie and King 1990 in therapeutic contexts storytelling can have a quasi-spiritual ability to express inner psychic truths. Wilson

1997 relocates this to the schoolyard, to examine the broad repertoire of adolescents' own oral storytelling. Both of these strands are implicit in the current upswing of interest in storytelling with young people as a progressive, political, participatory practice that facilitates young people's liberated self-expression. This movement is well represented in the *Storytelling, Self, Society* journal, which while not exclusively focused on young people, is included here for the valuable work it does in including articles that examine storytelling with, for and by children internationally beyond the west and Anglosphere community. The selection presented here lean towards the more participatory end of this spectrum of possibilities. Jack Zipes 2004 is a pivotal figure in this world, with multiple publications that have been influential in understanding the potential for storytelling as a tool for young people's creative and political empowerment. Howe and Johnson 1992 present teacher-led approaches to storytelling within schools which facilitate educational processes while harnessing the open-ended spirit of oral storytelling. More recent work has tended to be located within traditions of applied theatre, such as Heinemeyer 2020 and Parfitt 2019, and has a stronger focus on the potential of young people as storytellers exploring their own social world.

Gersie, A. and N King. *Story Making in Education and Therapy*. Sweden: Stockholm Institute of Education Press. 1990.

This publication locates storytelling strongly within a therapeutic tradition in which the role of myth is to give voice to fantasy and reality. Within an education context, Gersie and King argue for the role of mythic storytelling in understanding deeply held needs and psychic functions.

Heinemeyer, Catherine. *Storytelling in Participatory Arts with Young People*. Basingstoke: Palgrave. 2020.

This book draws together histories of oral storytelling with young people and the author's own practice-based research in a variety of contexts (including education, mental health, youth theatre). It proposes a 'dialogic' model of storytelling, in which the story enables exchange between teller and listener; between reality and fantasy; or between generations.

Howe, Alan and John Johnson. *Common Bonds: Storytelling in the classroom. The National Oracy Project.* Sevenoaks: Hodder and Stoughton. 1992.

Presents the case and provides practical suggestions for the use of storytelling in schools in order to support young people in making sense of our world.

Parfitt, Emma. *Young People, Learning and Storytelling*. Basingstoke: Palgrave. 2019.

This book examines how young people (aged 12-14) can learn about the social world – such as ethical, behavioural and emotional understandings – through the production and reception of oral

storytelling. The publication draws upon folklore, sociology and storytelling practice within three secondary schools in the UK.

Storytelling, Self, Society: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Storytelling Studies. Wayne State University Press. www.wsupress.wayne.edu/journals/detail/storytelling-self-society

Published twice a year, this journal focuses on storytelling as oral narrative in performance. This includes articles focusing specifically on work with children, across many countries in both formal, educational, family and informal contexts. The international scope and engagement with work from non-Western countries is especially valuable, including storytelling practice with children in cultural, applied and educational contexts.

Wilson, Michael *Performance and Practice: Oral Narrative Traditions among Teenagers in Britain and Ireland.* Aldershot: Ashgate. 1997.

Wilson has published widely on the social and policy applications of storytelling and is a leading researcher in the field. This publication draws upon fieldwork in schools, libraries and youth clubs to examine the oral narratives of teenagers.

Zipes, Jack. *Speaking Out: Storytelling and Creative Drama with Children*. New York: Routledge. 2004.

Hugely prolific and influential, this is one of several books by Zipes that examines the social function of storytelling and its role in revealing and understanding the world around us. This book is based upon Zipes' use of storytelling within inner-city schools in the USA as a tool for developing children's self-expression and creativity.

Queer TYA

While queer and LGBTQ+ writers and themes are prominent within theatre for adults, their presence remains more elusive and unfortunately sometimes controversial in the performing arts for children and young people. There remains a presumption existing in many cultures and countries that children – particularly younger children – are somehow outside of sexuality and that such themes should not be discussed 'in front of the children'. Indeed, several of the texts within this section begin with an observation of the absence, erasure or silencing of queer voices and perspectives in theatre for young audiences. The texts here also assert the vital importance of active resisting what Williams 2020 terms 'adultism', and the importance of theatre in providing representation, visibility and voice for young queer narratives. Giannini 2010 and Simons 2015 examine the presence of queer narratives in plays and productions for teenage (high school) audiences. While welcoming the growing presence of such works, they also critique it for often presenting narrow representations in which homosexuality is deemed always as a problem or state of victimhood. Williams 2020 and Boffone 2020 both examine how queer narratives intersect with race, forming a double invisibility or marginalization. While Boffone follows Giannini and

Simons in focusing on play productions for youth audiences, Williams' describes the need for a radical queer pedagogy of youth theatre participation. It is noticeable that both these texts were published in 2020, and represent a slow growth of work in this area, echoed in the presence of the theme within a growing number of postgraduate theses and its importance for young contemporary researchers. Amer 2016 and MacAskill 2015-17 both focus on the potential of queer narratives for younger audiences, Amer through a critical-analytical focus, MacAskill through a practice-based enquiry. While MacAskill's Gendersaurous Rex project received the perhaps predictable negative news coverage, questioning the appropriateness of combining the topics of sexuality and early years theatre, its prominent development within a leading TYA organisation (see Edinburgh International Children's Festival *Festivals*) indicates that the sector and its artists are increasingly at the forefront of thinking and practice in the representation and presence of queer identities within TYA.

Amer, Lindsay. 'Towards a Queer Theatre for Very Young Audiences in Scotland and the United States.' *Scottish Journal of Performance*, 3.1: 9–28. 2016.

The first critical application of queer theory to theatre for early years. The article draws upon Kathryn Bond Stockton's theories of the queer child and Matthew Reason's work on young audiences to interrogate how theatre productions for very young audiences might offer progressive narratives that challenge stigmas for LGBTQ+ people.

Boffone, Trevor. 'Young, Gay, and Latino: "Feeling Brown" in Emilio Rodriguez's *Swimming While Drowning*. In Boffone T and Herrera C eds. *Nerds, Goths, Geeks, and Freaks: Outsiders in Chicanx and Latinx Young Adult Literature*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi. 145-157. 2020.

This chapter examines how playwright Emili Rodriguez's *Swimming While Drowning* gives subjectivity and voice to gay Latino teens, as outsiders within an already marginalized community. It is a close, critical analysis of the intersectionality of race and sexuality within plays for adolescent audiences.

Giannini, Annie. 'Young, Troubled, and Queer: Gay and Lesbian Representation in Theatre for Young Audiences.' *Youth Theatre Journal*, 24.1: 4-8. 2010.

Examines the presence of gay and lesbian characters in theatre for young audiences in the US, proposing that while a small body of drama does now exist, this largely limits representation to a stereotypical discourse of 'troubled gay youth.' The article advocates for the need to move beyond the presumption that all homosexuality is inherently a source of problems for young people.

MacAskill, Ivor. 'Gendersaurus Rex'. Imaginate, Scotland. https://gendersaurusrex.wordpress.com/blog/. 2015-17.

Gendersaurus Rex was a practice-based research project funded by Imaginate (UK) to explore gender, sexuality and queerness in the context of live performance for children. Consisting of a blog,

workshops and performances, the project asserted the importance of engaging with and exploring sexuality in and through performance for children.

Simons, Sara M. ‘Teaching Tolerance Without Pushing the Envelope: *The Laramie Project* in High School Theatres.’ *Youth Theatre Journal.* 19.1: 62-72. 2015.

First produced by the Tectonic Theatre (USA) in 2000, *The Laramie Project* is a verbatim theatre piece based around the homophobic murder of Mathew Shepherd. It has since become one of the most performed – while still controversial – plays in US high schools. Simons argues that the centrality of the ‘victim narrative’ and focus on tolerance rather than radical change is one reason the play has become acceptable for school productions.

Williams, Sidney Monroe. ‘Learning My True Colors: Race, Sexuality, and Adultism in LGBTQA Youth Theatre.’ *Theatre Topics*. 30.2: 125-32. 2020.

This article examines the intersectionality of race, gender and class in relation to youth theatre. Williams articulates their sense of invisibility produced by the absence of diverse texts and representations within TYA and the dangers of an ‘adultism’ or ‘grown-ups know best’ which silences young people’s self-expression. The article models and advocates for a queer pedagogy within youth theatre involving creative play and self-agency.