

THE  
TWENTY-FIRST  
CENTURY  
PERFORMANCE  
READER

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# THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY PERFORMANCE READER

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# THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY PERFORMANCE READER



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AND NOEL WITTS

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION STATEMENT

This edited book is the follow-on text from *The Twentieth-Century Performance Reader* (Routledge, 2013) which Brayshaw and Witts also co-edited. Brayshaw curated the 'In Their Own Words' introductory chapter and co-wrote the introduction, as well as curating contributions from 73 international practitioners, companies and collectives (dance, theatre, music, live/performance art, activism).

The Reader addresses the following research questions: How might the practice of contemporary performance makers across the world at the beginning of this century be viewed as a single performance culture? What are the recurring themes, insights, working-practices, and contexts that contribute to the development of said culture? What are the common languages/vocabularies/rhetorics of those artists making and writing about their practice?

Dissemination of the Reader was supported by a live, durational performance: *In Their Own Words*, which offered a different 'practice' of reading whereby the editors read, played, interviewed, debated, and engaged in dialogue/conversation with each other, some of the artists represented in the book and audience members.

The performance further elucidated key themes in the Reader such as: In writing about their practice, how do artists engage in dialogic speech to represent a multiplicity of voices/variety of perspectives on their own work? How might a durational performance practice of reading further extend dialogic speech and contribute to shared understandings of a contemporary performance culture?

The Reader produced increased knowledge and insights of common and unique working practices and performance languages of performance artists/makers at the beginning of the 21st Century. The innovative durational performance practice further interrogated the languages of writing and reading. Together they posit dialogism as the central artistic strategy of writing, making, performing and reading in contemporary performance practice.

Performances included the Edinburgh Festival (21-24 August, 2019, Summerhall), Esmae, Porto (12 January, 2020), and the ACT Festival, Bilbao (November 2020).



*The Twenty-First Century Performance Reader* combines extracts from over 70 international practitioners, companies, collectives and makers from the fields of Dance, Theatre, Music, Live and Performance Art, and Activism to form an essential sourcebook for students, researchers and practitioners.

This is the follow-on text from *The Twentieth-Century Performance Reader*, which has been the key introductory text to all kinds of performance for over 20 years since it was first published in 1996. Contributions from new and emerging practitioners are placed alongside those of long-established individual artists and companies, representing the work of this century's leading practitioners through the voices of over 140 individuals. The contributors in this volume reflect the diverse and eclectic culture of practices that now make up the expanded field of performance, and their stories, reflections and working processes collectively offer a snapshot of contemporary artistic concerns. Many of the pieces have been specially commissioned for this edition and comprise a range of written forms – scholarly, academic, creative, interviews, diary entries, autobiographical, polemical and visual.

Ideal for university students and instructors, this volume's structure and global span invites readers to compare and cross-reference significant approaches outside of the constraints and simplifications of genre, encouraging cross-disciplinary understandings. For those who engage with new, live and innovative approaches to performance and the interplay of radical ideas, *The Twenty-First Century Performance Reader* is invaluable.

**Book Blurb**

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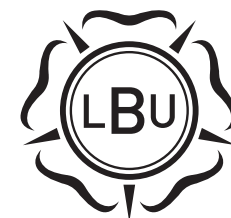
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