

Restaging the Sixties



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In the volatile period of the late sixties and early seventies, several theater groups came to prominence in the United States, informing and shaping activist theater as we know it today. "Restaging the Sixties" examines the artistry, politics, and legacies of eight radical collectives: the Living Theatre, the Open Theatre, the Performance Group, the San Francisco Mime Troupe, El Teatro Campesino, At the Foot of the Mountain, the Free Southern Theater, and Bread and Puppet Theater. Each of the specially commissioned essays is from a leading theater artist, critic, or scholar. The essays follow a three-part structure that first provides a historical overview of each group's work, then an exploration of the group's significant contributions to political theater, and finally, the legacy of those contributions. The volume explores how creations such as the Living Theatre's "Paradise Now" and the Performance Group's "Dionysus in 69" overlapped with political interests that, in the late 1960s, highlighted the notion of social collectives as a radical alternative to mainstream society. Situating theatrical practice within this socio-political context, the book considers how radical theaters

sought to redefine the relationship between theater and political activism, and how, as a result, they challenged the foundations of theater itself. James M. Harding is Associate Professor of English at Mary Washington University. His other books include "Not the Other Avant-Garde: The Transnational Foundations of Avant-Garde Performance." Cindy Rosenthal is Associate Professor of Theatre Studies, Hofstra University. "" "A useful introduction to an eclectic period of experimental theater, providing portraits of the major political theaters and engaging with new vigor many of the era's familiar aesthetic and ideological concerns. The writers offer a provocative history of theater's attraction to (and occasional anxiety over) activism." --Marc Robinson, Yale University

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