

American Theater in the 2000s: Themes, Perspectives, Trends

Julia Listengarten

In an increasingly complex world of polarized politics, ethnic conflicts, environmental crises, and religious intolerance, American theatre of the 2000s explored a variety of themes dealing with war on a global scale, racial politics, gender perspectives, and sexual identity. This essay focuses on a wide range of transformative artistic practices in early twenty-first century American Theatre, including key developments in musical theatre, new trends in playwriting, and the theatre artists' responses to the 9/11 terrorist attack.

Fabulous Creatures Spin Forward: Jewish Humor, Camp and the Fabulous in *Fabulous in Angels in America*

Anna Ferrari

The article deals with Tony Kushner's play *Angels in America*, focusing on the employment of humor and camp in addressing the AIDS epidemic. The analysis moves from the influence of Jewish black humor on a new form of camp shaped during the epidemic, to the relationship between this "AIDS camp" and the concept Kushner calls the "Fabulous". Considering not only the text, but the film as well as different stage productions, the paper investigates how the intersection of AIDS camp and the Fabulous makes of *Angels in America* the turning point in AIDS literature.

Theater as Historical Revisionism: Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl

Alessandro Clericuzio

The past few decades have witnessed the emergence of a Pacific Theatre that, with the aid of historical sources, has renegotiated the colonial and post-colonial past. One of the most prominent voices in this dramaturgy is that of Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl, who began playwriting in the late 1980s. This essay investigates how she has engaged her Hawaiian, Samoan and Caucasian heritage to address issues of cultural loss, gender politics, literary representation, and hegemonic historiography.

Women, War, and Arab-American Theatre: Betty Shamieh's *The Black Eyed* and Heather Raffo's *Nine Parts of Desire*

Cinzia Schiavini

Female subjectivities, the war(s), and/ or on the stage: this essay investigates the transnational dimension of Arab-American contemporary theatre focusing on two of its most important dramas - Betty Shamieh's *The Black Eyed* and Heather Raffo's *9 Parts of Desire*. After outlining female transnationalism and Arab culture, the essay focuses on the "engendering" of the War on terror, its relation to bodies and voices, and the construction of individual and collective identities in these playwrights' performances.

Postbellum: African-American Gay Drama and the Nightmare of History*Vincenzo Bavaro*

This essay's premise is that there is currently a gay Black renaissance in the American theater. After a brief overview of some of the most acclaimed playwrights, the essay focuses on what seems to be a recurring theme in many dramatic works, both for the stage and for cinema and television: the return of the antebellum past in plays that are instead set in the present time—a return that is often framed as a nightmare the characters struggle to confront. The second half of the essay analyzes two plays, *Insurrection: Holding History*, by Robert O'Hara, and *Slave Play*, by Jeremy O. Harris, exploring the interplay between sexuality, slavery, and historiography.

The Rise and Fall of Donald J. Trump*Fabrizio Tonello*

Will Donald Trump end his political career in jail or will he make a comeback in 2024, winning the presidency again? This paper looks at the rise and decline of Donald J. Trump political fortunes, at his grip over the Republican party and at the deep polarization of the American electorate. The essay also examines the political equilibria in Congress, where Democratic majorities are at risk in the midterm elections of November 2022.

Participation and Polarization: United States Presidential Election, 2020*Marco Morini*

This article illustrates the results of the 2020 US presidential election and it reflects on its major underlying political

dynamics: participation and polarization. The primary focus is on the battleground states and on the electoral behavior of American citizens. Donald Trump voters have predominantly been male, white, and rural; while Joe Biden has prevailed among women, urban voters, and all racial and religious minorities. Which issues mattered most? Exit polls suggest significant polarization about the pandemic, its economic fallout, and the state of the economy in general.

Chicano Trade Unionism and Mexican Migrants: The Maricopa County Organizing Project (MCOP) in Arizona*Claudia Bernardi*

The article investigates the peculiar history of farmworker unions in Arizona, and their relation with Mexican migrant workers. Since the bilateral agreement for the importation of workers from Mexico to USA in 1940s, a strong opposition to Mexican migrants developed and progressively fragmented the "color line" that was supposed to unify the community of Mexican descendants. The introduction of the "wet line", the political practice of the *chicano* union UFW, led to the final split of the labor movement in 1970s. As a result, the Maricopa County Organizing Project (MCOP) was founded to develop new strategies and political practices of labor organization that would generate the most massive work stoppage of migrant workers in the history of Arizona. The article analyzes the transformation of the MCOP farmworkers movement into a non-profit organization supporting projects of culture, education and health for *chicanos*, and indigenous and undocumented communities till today.

Mapping the Makandal Text Network
Kate Simpkins and Laura Johnson

François Makandal d. 1758, who was an African enslaved on a sugarcane plantation in pre-revolutionary Haiti, was known as a healer who had knowledge of herbal medicine that European scientists could not explain. The fetishes he made, called makwanda, were the source of his powerful medicine as well as his name. After losing his arm to the sugar mill's running cylinders designed for extraction of the juice from cane, he became a maroon and led a long-term campaign of resistance against the plantocracy by using his knowledge of plants to poison and terrify the colony. He was captured and executed in 1758, but news of the events was reproduced in the letters of planters and scientific treatises as well as plays and novels. This article gives an account of the process and theory behind creating a digital exhibit meant to illustrate this effect, The Makandal Text Network. Developed through collaborative scholarship with the Early Caribbean Digital Archive, we attempt to decolonize Makandal from the epistemological suspicion through which Enlightenment science frames non-European knowledge ways. Makandal was an active agent of counter-colonial knowledge production and his story is embedded within the great and brutal engine of scientific knowledge production that French agronomy monetized on the same soil. Our article suggests ways that digital scholarship, with West Central African knowledge culture as an integrating subject and presence across archives, contributes to interdisciplinary interest in the relationship of the early Caribbean to American studies.

Networking Haiti in *Freedom's Journal*
Sonia Di Loreto

Freedom's Journal, the first black periodical published in the U.S. (1827-29), was a cultural and political engine with an international scope and the clear intent to influence the vision of American polity. When focusing on one of the nodal points of this publication – Haiti and its recent revolution – a complex network of texts emerges, showcasing a set of revolutionary figures such as Toussaint Louverture and Masaniello, and militant fictional characters, such as Theresa and Maria de Carmo. This network provides the subtext, cautionary tales, and historical foundation for the anti-slavery and anti-colonial struggles that the black press is envisioning for the present time and the future.

Beyond the Color line? Identity Construction in Nat Love's Autobiography
Daniele Curci

The autobiography (1907) of Nat Love (1854-1921), slave, cowboy and Pullman porter, is one of the rare cases in African-American literature where the color line problem is not present; Love's focus is on patriotism and the image of a high achiever. Through two interpretative prisms, one referring to Walt Whitman, the other to Frederick Jackson Turner's "Frontier thesis", the article focuses on the construction of Love's identity and his strict relationship to patriotism. The article then reads Love as a follower of Booker T. Washington's thinking, and lastly, analyzes Love's view on slavery and his use of racist tropes.