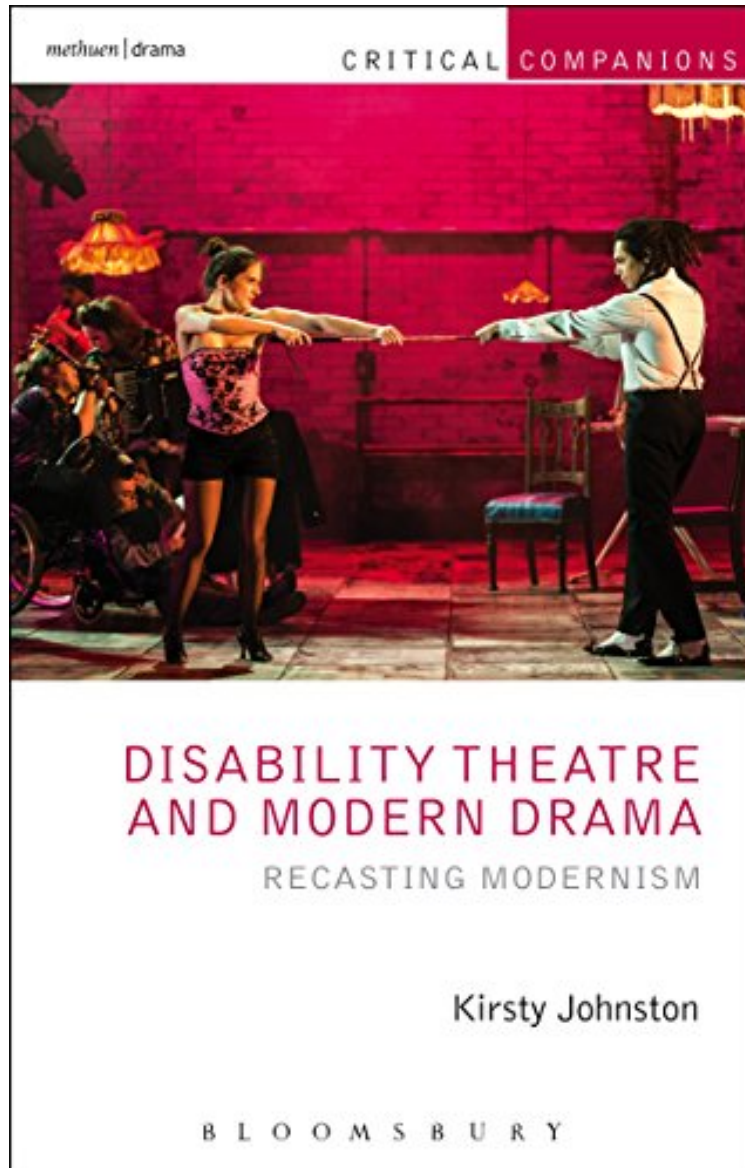


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Disability Theatre and Modern Drama: Recasting Modernism (Critical Companions)

Kirsty Johnston

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Kirsty Johnston : Disability Theatre and Modern Drama: Recasting Modernism (Critical Companions) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Disability Theatre and Modern Drama: Recasting Modernism (Critical Companions):

Bertolt Brecht's silent Kattrin in *Mother Courage*, or the disability performance lessons of his Peachum in *The Threepenny Opera*; Tennessee Williams' limping Laura Wingfield in *The Glass Menagerie* and hard-of-hearing Bodey in *A Lovely Sunday for Creve Coeur*; Samuel Beckett's blind Hamm and his physically disabled parents Nagg and Nell in *Endgame*; these and many further examples attest to disability's critical place in modern drama. This Companion explores how disability performance studies and theatre practice provoke new debate about the place of disability in these works. The book traces the local and international processes and tensions at play in disability theatre, and offers a critical investigation of the challenges its aesthetics pose to mainstream and traditional practice. The book's first part surveys disability theatre's primary principles, critical terms, internal debates and key challenges to theatre practice. Examining specific disability theatre productions of modern drama, it also suggests how disability has been re-envisioned and embodied on stage. In the book's second part, leading disability studies scholars and disability theatre practitioners analyse and creatively re-imagine modern drama, demonstrating how disability aesthetics press practitioners and scholars to rethink these works in generative, valuable and timely ways.

"A valuable, generative book; Johnston has written a book of interest to students, theatre practitioners, scholars, and people who reflect on representation in critical ways or who are interested in considering disability and theatre in tandem; Johnston's work demonstrates the benefits of thinking creatively about how to navigate ableist attitudes and structures. Throughout, she makes a convincing case that disability has a historical role in modern theatre and that attentiveness to disability theatre practices offer creative, compelling choices within this art form. The creative impact of a sustained inquiry into disability theatre is apparent throughout this work; often, the political reverberations are evident as well." -Comparative Drama
In *Disability Theatre and Modern Drama*, Kirsty Johnston and her collaborators provide indispensable contributions to both theatre studies and disability studies. They incisively demonstrate how attention to disability enriches enduring contestations of both the "modern" and the "dramatic" of "modern drama"; *Disability Theatre and Modern Drama* is a timely contribution, remarkable for both its breadth and its depth, including Johnston's impressive integration of disability theory from Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia. Individually and collectively, the book's chapters are exceedingly teachable and should find their way to classes in modern drama, disability studies, and performance studies. Moreover, historians and theorists of disability theatre and performance, as well as scholars of modern drama more broadly, would do well to heed the book's numerous prompts for further inquiry.
About the Author
Kirsty Johnston is associate professor in the Department of Theatre and Film at the University of British Columbia, Canada. Her publications include the monograph *Stage Turns: Canadian Disability Theatre* (2012) and she has also published in such journals as *Modern Drama*, *Theatre Topics* and *The Journal of Medical Humanities*.