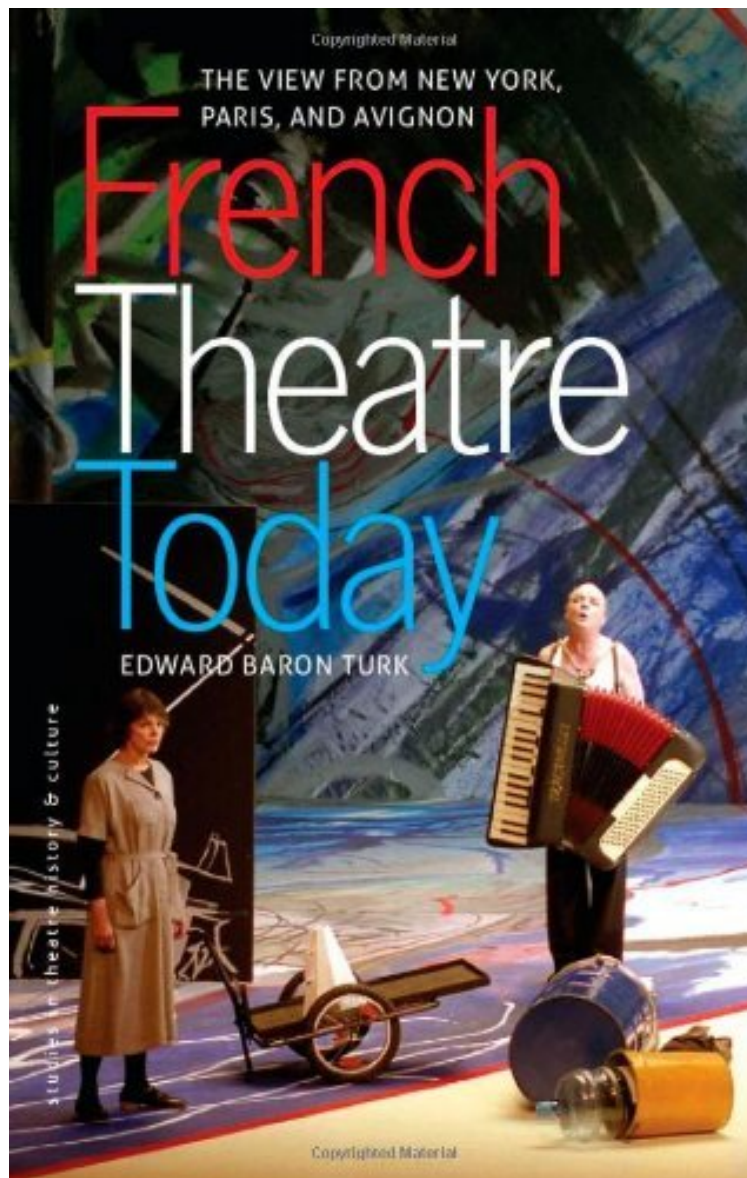


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Edward Baron Turk

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In 2005 literary and film critic Edward Turk immersed himself in New York City's ACT FRENCH festival, a bold effort to enhance American contact with the contemporary French stage. This dizzying crash course on numerous aspects of current French theatre paved the way for six months of theatregoing in Paris and a month's sojourn at the 2006 Avignon Festival. In *French Theatre Today* he turns his yearlong involvement with this rich topic into an accessible, intelligent, and comprehensive overview of contemporary French theatre. Situating many of the nearly 150 stage pieces he attended within contexts and timeframes that stretch backward and forward over a number of years, he reveals French theatre during the first decade of the twenty-first century to be remarkably vital, inclined toward both innovation and concern for its audience, and as open to international influence as it is respectful of national tradition.

Edward Turk succeeds at giving us both a systematic and a personal view of current French theatre. As a keen observer and critic, he presents the subject with empathy and brio; as a seasoned professor, he shows with elegant efficiency how the French stage has opened itself—much more than might be expected—to formal experimentation and minority voices. In granting American readers this special view from the wings, Turk delivers a depiction that the French, too, will find revealing.—Emmanuel Wallon, *Université Paris Ouest Nanterre-La Défense*, and editor, *Le texte en scène*, Europe, *Les petites communes*; and *Le théâtre, fabrique*, Europe