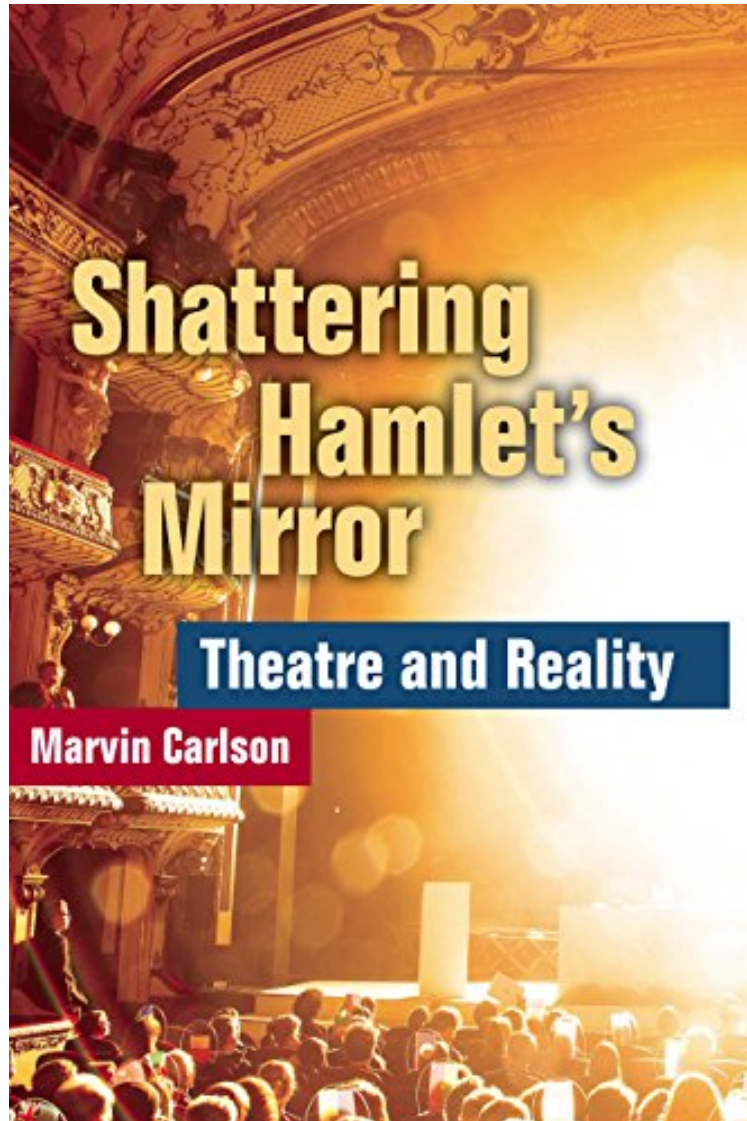


(Ebook pdf) Shattering Hamlet's Mirror: Theatre and Reality

## Shattering Hamlet's Mirror: Theatre and Reality

*Marvin Carlson*

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**Marvin Carlson : Shattering Hamlet's Mirror: Theatre and Reality** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Shattering Hamlet's Mirror: Theatre and Reality:

Theatrical playing, Hamlet famously averred, holds a mirror up to nature. But unlike the reflections in the mirror, the theaterrsq;s images are composed of real objects, most notably bodies, that have an independent existence outside the world of reflection. Throughout Western theater history there have been occasions when the reality behind the illusion was placed on display. In recent years theaters in Europe and North America have begun calling attention to

the real in their work—presenting performers who did not create characters and who may not even have been actors, but who appeared on stage as themselves; texts created not by dramatic authors but drawn from real life; and real environments sometimes shared by actors and performers and containing real elements accessible to both. These practices, argues Marvin Carlson, constitute a major shift in the practical and phenomenological world of theater, and a turning away from mimesis, which has been at the heart of the theater since Aristotle. *Shattering Hamlet's Mirror: Theatre and Reality* examines recent and contemporary work by such groups as Rimini Protokoll, Societas Raffaello Sanzio, the Gob Squad, Nature Theatre of Oklahoma, and Foundry Theatre, while revealing the deep antecedents of today's theater, placing it in useful historical perspective. While many may consider it a post-postmodern phenomenon, the "theater of the real," as it turns out, has very deep roots.

A pleasure to read... the prose has Carlson's usual clarity and force. While previous critics have noted the incursion of 'the real' into avant-garde performance, to my knowledge Carlson is the first to see this as a key driver of theatrical developments since the eighteenth century. One of the book's virtues is that it integrates French, German, and Russian theatre history on the one hand, and developments within the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries on the other, to our understanding of the historical avant-garde and more recent European and American experimental theatre." - Andrew Sofer, Boston College  
About the Author Marvin Carlson is Sidney E. Cohn Distinguished Professor of Theatre, Comparative Literature, and Middle Eastern Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center, USA.