



reign of Louis XIV, Stedman (Univ. of North Carolina) argues for re-periodization of the rococo and reaffirmation of its fundamental values of nonconformity and tolerance. She posits that the relationship of the rococo with the classical-baroque is dialectic rather than sequential and that its origins lie not in the plastic arts and Versailles but rather in hybrid literary productions from social constructs as diverse as salons, convents, prisons, and print shops. This fascinating approach sheds light on authors such as Montaigne, Corneille, de Visé, d'Aulnoy, Lhéritier, Murat, and Durand, whose eagerness to experiment opened new frontiers, encouraged readers to take pleasure in generically heterogeneous literary creations, and ultimately led to the most important intellectual and political currents of the Enlightenment. By focusing on innovative publishing strategies and texts celebrating individual creativity rather than absolutist values, the author reinvigorates the field of early modern studies. Her perceptive analysis of the rococo as a 17th-century phenomenon that celebrated freedom in an era of growing authoritarianism invites scholars today to adopt the same independent spirit in their approach to other areas of history and literature. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. ★★★ Lower-division undergraduates and above.—*C. B. Kerr, Vassar College*

Slavic

50-5483 PG3015 2012-19022 CIP
Costlow, Jane T. **Heart-pine Russia: walking and writing the nineteenth-century forest.** Cornell, 2013. 270p index afp ISBN 9780801450594, \$36.50

Costlow (environmental studies, Bates College) opens this erudite study of the Russian forest in 19th-century literature and art with a vignette (set in the 1970s) about Russian authorities bulldozing a boulevard of linden trees associated with writer Ivan Turgenev. Weaving similar vignettes through her analyses, the author argues that the forest holds a particularly mythologized place in the Russian cultural imagination. Each of the book's six chapters addresses a different author or artist. In the first chapter, Costlow offers a close reading of a short story by Turgenev, arguing that Turgenev's presentation of woodlands is both meditative and fraught, and that even in the mid 1800s the writer was aware of the dire consequences of deforesting the Russian empire. In addition to Turgenev, the author treats less familiar writers—for example, Pavel Mel'nikov-Pechersky, who wrote an encyclopedic novel about Old Believer communities living in the northern forests since the late 17th century. Mel'nikov's woods too are shaped by tradition and imagination, in this case by medieval pagan culture and monastic mythology. This look at the Russian forest in literature and the arts is overdue. As an added plus, it includes ample reproductions of 19th-century paintings in both color and black and white. **Summing Up:** Recommended.★★ Upper-division undergraduates and above.—*A. J. DeBlasio, Dickinson College*

Performing Arts

50-5484 GV1785 2011-50163 CIP
Garval, Michael D. **Cléo de Mérode and the rise of modern celebrity culture.** Ashgate, 2012. 265p bibl index afp ISBN 9781409406037, \$104.95

In this engaging book, Garval (French, North Carolina State Univ.)

extrapolates from a case study of Parisian dancer Cléo de Mérode (1875-1966) a significant meditation on the origins of the modern cult of celebrity. Mérode achieved international star status long before Hollywood cornered the market on celebrity. Her fame hinged on stories and pictures in the illustrated press and an explosion of visual culture that Garval traces to the 1890s. Mérode's carefully fabricated persona circulated internationally, thanks to the power of mechanically reproduced imagery. Her success, the author demonstrates, hinged as much on what she concealed from view (her ears!) as what she revealed; "her carefully cultivated appearance of high virtue collided with suggestions of shocking licentiousness." A good read, a critical frolic through virtually forgotten chapters of the history of performance and celebrity, this wonderfully illustrated book models techniques for the critical sustained investigation of ephemeral popular imagery. It is a serious study that illuminates celebrity culture, from Hollywood to Andy Warhol to the online personae of today's virtual celebrities. A resource for those interested in visual culture, French culture, performance history (especially dance), and the history and psychology of celebrity. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. ★★★ All readers.—*J. E. Housefield, University of California, Davis*

50-5485 PN2062 2012-35499 MARC
Piven, Joyce. **In the studio with Joyce Piven: theatre games, story theatre, and text work for actors,** by Joyce Piven and Susan Applebaum. Methuen Drama, 2012. 216p index ISBN 9781408173879 pbk, \$24.95

Many theater books explore the joys and benefit of theater games. Other books explore the practice of stage rehearsal and performance. Piven (a master teacher) and Applebaum (who trained with Piven and teaches at her workshop) have created a book to bridge these two islands by sharing their creative process, which was 30-plus years in the making. The authors have a great writing style—clear and light, a true pleasure to read—and they acknowledge that any reader might pick up this book and search out specific parts of the book that the theater practitioner might need. So the text is a bit of a buffet line—one can pick up what one is hungry for at the moment. The first two chapters, describing the history and ideology of the process, are vital: they explain the rest of the work. This book contains *lots* of good games, improv exercises, and an entire section on workshops. The workshop section helps move from gaming into actual production practice—answering the question that almost all grad students have asked themselves in a theory class: "Does this apply to stage work?" This a great read with good exercises for classroom and stage practice. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. ★★★ Lower-division undergraduates; graduate students, faculty, professionals.—*E. C. Skiles, Lone Star College-Kingwood*

50-5486 PN2270 2012-25917 CIP
Warner, Sara. **Acts of gaiety: LGBT performance and the politics of pleasure.** Michigan, 2012. 263p bibl index afp ISBN 9780472118533, \$55.00; ISBN 9780472028757 e-book, contact publisher for price

"A zap, or zap action," Warner (performing and media arts, Cornell) explains in her terrific study of lesbian performance from the 1950s to the present, is a "nonviolent mode of social protest that uses guerilla theater, irony, and satire to expose the ruses of power and catalyze public response to political events." *Acts of Gaiety* is a zap action in book form. It documents and reanimates the mirthful, pleasurable, and even giddy performances by and for LGBT audiences that have unified, empowered, and politicized this community for a half century. The



introductory section defines terms, provides history, and establishes Warner's thesis, which is that homo-liberalism—"a conservative program of social assimilation"—historically stultified this work as antithetical to its political agenda. Warner employs ethnographic thick description to reclaim and celebrate the politico-performative antics of Valerie Solanas (whom she dubs "the preeminent lesbian feminist dramatist of the sexual revolution"), Jill Johnston, and the Five Lesbian Brothers, among others, and she devotes a chapter to *Hothead Paisan*, a musical comedy of terrors, which Warner heralds as an important and representative failure of dyke terrorist performance. Excellent notes and bibliography round out the volume. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. ★★★ Upper-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals; general readers.—*M. S. LoMonaco, Fairfield University*

Film

50-5487 PN1999 2012-44136 CIP
Diversity in Disney films: critical essays on race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and disability, ed. by Johnson Cheu. McFarland, 2013. 307p filmography index afp ISBN 0786446013 pbk, \$45.00; ISBN 9780786446018 pbk, \$45.00

Studies in cultural diversity in the media too frequently reduce subjects to predictable stereotypes (e.g., "coons," patriarchy, privilege, otherness, and so on) in which one can identify the transgressions of the past. This issue raises its racist head in this volume, the first two sections of which delve into concerns articulated in the subtitle. Subsequent sections offer fresh, often fascinating theoretical insights; contributors dissect physical and intellectual disability (e.g., Hunchback, Dopey, Gus) and animated depictions. Two essays stand out as particularly worthwhile and praiseworthy: Tammy Berberi and Viktor Berberi's "A Place at the Table," a comparative analysis of three beauty and the beast folktales, and William Verrone's "Is Disney Avant-Garde?," in which he contrasts the Disney version of *Alice in Wonderland* with experimental filmmaker Jan Svankmajer's surreal adaptation *Alice*. Most of the essays offer good, but not groundbreaking or provocative, readings of the Disney texts, from their silent days to the newer multicultural iteration. Other scholars of animation are absent—Paul Wells and Karl Cohen, Annalee Ward (*Mouse Morality*, CH, Apr'03, 40-4440), and most notably Eleanor Byrne and Martin McQuillan (*Deconstructing Disney*, CH, Apr'00, 37-4263).

Summing Up: Recommended. ★★ With reservations. Graduate students, researchers, faculty.—*T. Lindvall, Virginia Wesleyan College*

50-5488 PN1996 2012-9920 CIP
Fischer, Lucy. **Body double: the author incarnate in the cinema**. Rutgers, 2013. 273p bibl index afp ISBN 9780813554495, \$72.00; ISBN 9780813554488 pbk, \$25.95; ISBN 9780813554501 e-book, contact publisher for price

Where is the author in film? In this book, Fischer (English and film studies, Univ. of Pittsburgh) offers a wide ranging, deeply informed view of the concept of authorship in cinema in all its manifestations. Examining subjects from Abel Gance's self-portrait in his 1923 film *La Roue*, to experimental filmmaker Stan Brakhage's hand-scratched signature titles (visual signatures lodged directly within films), to such diverse figures as Paul Auster, David Mamet, Woody Allen, Julian Schnabel, Hollis Frampton, Robert Bresson, William S. Burroughs, David Cronenberg, and others too numerous to mention, this is a concise,

carefully reasoned volume that deftly moves from one film to the next at an almost breathless pace. This brief review cannot begin to address the multitude of films, scenarists, directors, and films given detailed examination here, but the manner in which Fischer discusses the films and their makers, both literary and cinematic, is authoritative and never less than richly detailed. Offering stimulating discussions of films from *8½* to *Barton Fink* to *Naked Lunch*, with numerous stops in between, this is a bold and adventurous book that repays multiple readings. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. ★★★ Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.—*G. A. Foster, University of Nebraska—Lincoln*

50-5489 PN1995 MARC
Forshaw, Barry. **British crime film: subverting the social order**. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. 248p index ISBN 9780230303706, \$80.00; ISBN 9781137005038 pbk, \$25.00

This is an interesting but flawed study of the British crime film. Concentrating on the period since WW II, Forshaw singles out a number of films that have been unjustly neglected. He organizes his observations by category—such as the heritage crime film (Agatha Christie and Arthur Conan Doyle), sex, London films, regional films, and 21st-century hybrids—and this arrangement, though internally coherent, makes it difficult to see an overall picture. Curiously, Forshaw refers only in passing to three of the seminal British crime films: *The Long Good Friday*, *Mona Lisa*, and *Trainspotting* (in the case of the last, assigning its stylistic impact to the later, and arguably lesser, *Lock, Stock, and Two Smoking Barrels*). A good editor might have removed some of Forshaw's unnecessary asides; for example, a long discussion of an obscure event in Conan Doyle's life is out of place. A good editor might also have toned down the author's inflating adverbs, which he tends to overuse, and made consistent his references to the deceased, some identified as "(late)," others not. For this reviewer, the best part of the book is the chapter on contemporary crime films—a reminder of how much of British cinema goes unseen in the US. **Summing Up:** Optional. ★ Lower-division undergraduates and above.—*W. A. Vincent, Michigan State University*

50-5490 PN1993 MARC
Heise, Tatiana Signorelli. **Remaking Brazil: contested national identities in contemporary Brazilian cinema**. University of Wales Press, 2012. 200p bibl index ISBN 9780708325094 pbk, \$35.00

Focusing on Brazilian cinematic productions from the *retomada* (resurgence) period, Heise (Manchester Univ., UK) analyzes the multiple representations of Brazilian national identity in contemporary films. In part 1 she discusses social theories regarding the origins and dissemination of national consciousness, and attempts by marginalized groups to resist hegemonic socially constructed discourses of national identity. Part 2 examines competing discourses on national identity proposed by Brazilian films produced between 1995 and 2010. Heise suggests four categories for contemporary Brazilian cinema: celebratory films embrace the hegemonic discourse of national identity without deeper critical reflection; reformist films allow social criticism devoid of explicit attacks of social institutions; oppositional films radically address social maladies from a moral perspective (condemning society to a state of hopelessness); and alternative films advocate a pluralistic view of Brazilian society that a "national" model cannot encompass. Common to alternative films is an attempt to address Brazilian national consciousness as a construction of an "imagined community." Heise concludes that despite the unprecedented perspective offered by films considered alternative, the discourse of a homogeneous national identity is not fading in face of social criticism