

The increasing tendency for editorships of academic journals to rotate every few years seems to me mistaken. Far wiser, I think, to pursue the policy which *NTQ* follows, albeit by happenstance, of finding two or three distinct personalities who can mould a journal not by taking turns, as if tactfully chairing a department, but by a process of synthesis, even symbiosis.

It occurs to me that maybe nobody in their right minds would have come up with the combination of Maria Shevtsova and myself as likely to be able to work in that way – except, that is, for Maria Shevtsova and myself. Somehow we produce a journal which, we believe, speaks with its own distinctive voice. What we could not have done is to write an editorial with a single voice, for our individual voices are different. Also, where I have largely been speaking of the past and events leading up to the present, it is appropriate that Maria, in her own voice, puts the emphasis on the future. Over to you, Maria.

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Maria Shevtsova

An Editor's Wish List

WHEN Simon Trussler suggested that we should take the opportunity in these editorials to give a personal view, at first I balked, since I reserve what I consider to be personal for my family and friends. However, my personal commitments and viewpoints are embedded in my research writing, teaching, supervision of research, and mentoring, which also occurs in my editing (and even copy-editing) work on *New Theatre Quarterly*. They underlie, and are sometimes explicit, in my publicist activities – programme notes, public talks, public interviews, occasions when I am interviewed – and in related professional engagements, at home and abroad. The personal in all these instances is, of course, indirect. It is mediated by my choice of subjects, materials, methods, and contexts, and also by the

purposes of the work undertaken; and it is mediated though the particular demands of the working process in hand.

My 'personal' as regards my co-editorship of *New Theatre Quarterly* will here be expressed as a wish list of areas that are important to theatre and performance studies and could fill the journal's pages in the future. The 'list' is by no means exhaustive, nor does it attempt to identify the variety of questions within the areas that I name; nor, for that matter, does it try and second-guess what might come into being as practitioners and scholars develop their research. It is the journal's contributors who help to make and define the field overall, and their role in the journal's project is thus crucial.

New Theatre Quarterly has always been an eclectic journal, drawing from a wide range of interests, favouring none, but welcoming all to whom the living practice of theatre is a vital concern. This was so for its preceding incarnation as *Theatre Quarterly*, which is why I chose it before other journals to submit my earliest articles. Indeed, *Theatre Quarterly* gave me a voice in much the same way as *New Theatre Quarterly*, from 1985, set out to give voice to early-career scholars, new as well as prominent practitioners, and those who are under-heard or barely heard at all. I noted this trend during the years I was on the journal's Editorial Board, refereeing articles as part of my responsibilities.

When I became Simon's co-editor – now for seven years – we consolidated *New Theatre Quarterly's* unwritten policy of casting its net wide, but with its eye on the performance work of individuals, groups, or companies, whether contemporary or of the near or distant past: we include, as any reader can see, historical perspectives and documentation. The collaboration between directors and actors/performers – one of my own research emphases – is integral to the idea of 'performance work', as I see it, as is analytical discussion of their productions or devised constructions. What we do not do are textual studies and pure theory as such (regardless of my personal taste for theory), although we do publish articles that significantly draw on theories, and certainly publish articles on

playwrights that take a theatrical rather than literary approach.

My role as co-editor was pretty clear to me right from the start. I wanted more of what *New Theatre Quarterly* was doing well, but with several twists, taking it, also, in new directions. I wanted, first of all, to step up its international dimension and to focus on work beyond Britain (without excluding Britain, needless to say). Linked with this was my wish to embrace, as well, writers for whom English was not their first language, which we have done. This entails a particular kind of editorial skill, but we have published writers from Korea, Japan, Indonesia, China, Bangladesh, Nigeria (among other African nations), Russia, Poland, Hungary, France, Germany, and more.

My hope is that future contributors will respond to the fact that the journal's world-class status is also connected to our sense of the world as a big place. As a researcher of Russian theatre – and here is my 'personal' – I hope to see more on Russian theatre in our pages, as I hope to see more on contemporary theatre in all of Eastern Europe. This is not altogether a personal predilection, since the quality and excitement of much Eastern European theatre makes its own compelling argument for inclusion.

At the same time, I wanted to broaden our range still further to include dance – thus, also ballet – and mime, opera, magic, site-specific performance, and hybrid forms in their many variations. The journal has been successful in its open invitation, even though researchers in dance and opera studies have not yet fully accepted that the 'theatre' of its title beckons to their fields. We have not, to date, had the opportunity to explore inter-medial and other performance practices using new technologies, but, with active encouragement, this is eventually bound to come our way. We have flagged up our interest in Black British theatre and so-called 'multi-cultural' and/or immigrant theatre through the several articles and parts of articles and interviews published in the last couple of years.

Rehearsal processes are notoriously difficult to write about in a systematic as well as

engaging way, as I know from my own research, but my wish list includes this area. Beside it, on my list, are actors and, more generally speaking, performers, not least dancers and choreographers. What do they have to say about their work? What do others say about it? What does 'training' mean for them? How is it done? *New Theatre Quarterly* has always encouraged interest in these subjects, as articles on actors appearing in the past few years, in particular, have re-confirmed; and several forthcoming pieces are similarly meant to indicate the journal's commitment to them in the future.

Interdisciplinary work has been an obsession of mine since before my student years in Paris in the 1970s. The late Claude Schumacher recognized this and asked me, when he was the editor of *Theatre Research International*, to edit a focus issue on the subject for him. I duly complied, offering a collection of commissioned essays with the title *Theatre and Interdisciplinarity*, published in 2001. I would hope that current attention to interdisciplinary practices, artistic as well as academic, well beyond my personal purview, will allow *New Theatre Quarterly* to feature discussions and debates about them.

When I became an editor of *New Theatre Quarterly*, I brought with me my experience of service on various editorial boards, which included a radical social sciences journal whose intellectual curiosity and rigour were an inspiration for a young woman with a great deal to learn. My willingness to be part of that journal's team was tied up with my ideal to establish the sociology of theatre and performance as a viable discipline – one that could not be confused with merely quantitative, sociometric study. I have never stopped developing this discipline, nor adapting its frameworks for research that may not explicitly refer to it. So, although I most definitely do not want to impose a 'line' on *New Theatre Quarterly*, I can express an editor's opinion that there is still much to do in this domain.

Further, *New Theatre Quarterly*, like its predecessor, has always published articles written from social and political angles of perception: this was one of the things it did well. What I am looking towards, I suppose,

is a renewed sense of the 'social' and the 'political' – a tough call in our times of great socio-economic anxiety and political quagmire on a world scale, but one that is all the more urgent because of their destructive effects.

New Theatre Quarterly has never been a theme-based journal. We work, instead, in clusters and threads. This hundredth issue is a good example in that it features a number of pieces grouped around Jerzy Grotowski; an earlier issue (NTQ 87) had a cluster of articles on Russian theatre of which two were on Michael Chekhov. Chekhov was threaded back into NTQ 99, while the Russian thread comes through differently in NTQ 100, in the interview with Anatoli Vassiliev. And the latter, as readers will see, links with the Grotowski grouping.

Sometimes the thread is in closer proximity, going from one issue to the next, and

the next. Of course the thread of British theatre is to be found consistently within the broader international weave, as is appropriate for a journal that must, to some extent, both reflect and contribute to the theatre life of the country of its origin. Readers will observe the patterns emerging when they put issues of the journal together, side by side.

Besides advancing practices and discourses, *New Theatre Quarterly* must also play a commemorative and celebratory role. We have done this consistently. In our hundredth issue, we pay tribute to Augusto Boal, and, in another way again, to the memory of Grotowski in this Year of Grotowski, dedicated to the tenth anniversary of his death. We can seek, solicit, commission and suggest, but, whatever we do and however we do it, we must rely on our contributors to feel the pulse, and to help us to see beyond which frontiers we are to go.