

THEATRE BEYOND THE HUMAN. INTERSPECIES RELATIONS IN ECOTHEATRE IN LATVIA

The aim of the paper is to analyze econarratives in productions of ecotheatre in Latvia looking for interconnections, represented in various forms and on various stages, between humans and non-human entities, whether plant, animal, biotope or any other form of life. Paper highlights how do theatre practitioners in Latvia represent care for nature – emotional and also physical – that goes beyond the human meanwhile turning ecotheatre into environmental activism. One of the major environmental challenges nowadays is the biodiversity loss. The world of theatre has long been human-centred: so far non-human entities in performing arts mostly were used as metaphores and symbols of the wild rather than actants with their own identities to be accepted. The theatre studies scholar Una Chaudhuri proposes term zoosis referring it to discourse of species in art, media and culture looking how animal is constructed, represented, understood and misunderstood. With the development of ecodramaturgy (May, 2005) and ecodirecting (Cless, 2010), turning anthropocentric point of view to the ecocentric, non-human entities are becoming bioperformative. In late years theatre practitioners in Latvia put at the spotlight non-humans: bees, trees, plants, birds, river, forest, even mycelia. That requires not only overcoming of the physical boundaries of actors but also new artistic strategies which comes together with new forms.

Keywords:

ecotheatre, ecodramaturgy, interspecies relations, non-human, zoosis, sitespecific theatre, theatre in Latvia

Biography

Kitija Balcare (Mg.sc.hum.) is a theatre critic for major performing arts periodicals and online media in Latvia; as a journalist specializes in sustainability and environmental issues. Main research interests are posthumanism, ecocriticism, particularly – ecotheatre, econarratives and sustainability in the performing arts. Currently working on a PhD degree in environmental humanities at the University of Latvia. Member of Latvian Theatre Union.