



# Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactment

By Rebecca Schneider

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'At last, the past has arrived! *Performing Remains* is Rebecca Schneider's authoritative statement on a major topic of interest to the field of theatre and performance studies. It extends and consolidates her pioneering contributions to the field through its interdisciplinary method, vivid writing, and stimulating polemic. *Performing Remains* has been eagerly awaited, and will be appreciated now and in the future for its rigorous investigations into the aesthetic and political potential of reenactments.' - Tavia Nyong'o, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University

'I have often wondered where the big, important, paradigm-changing book about re-enactment is: Schneider's book seems to me to be that book. Her work is challenging, thoughtful and innovative and will set the agenda for study in a number of areas for the next decade.' - Jerome de Groot, University of Manchester

*Performing Remains* is a dazzling new study exploring the role of the fake, the false and the faux in contemporary performance. Rebecca Schneider argues passionately that performance can be engaged as what remains, rather than what disappears.

Across seven essays, Schneider presents a forensic and unique examination of both contemporary and historical performance, drawing on a variety of elucidating sources including the "America" plays of Linda Mussmann and Suzan-Lori Parks, performances of Marina Abramovic' and Allison Smith, and the continued popular appeal of Civil War reenactments. *Performing Remains* questions the importance of representation throughout history and today, while boldly reassessing the ritual value of failure to recapture the past and recreate the "original."

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### **Review**

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**'Like a blast from the future, *Performing Remains* is a mind-bending, time-tripping exploration of the folds between the live and the mediated, once and again, what is passed through and what is still here. Rebecca Schneider has written a vital and revitalizing book, which will redefine the kinds of questions we can ask with performance and performance studies.'** - Ann Pellegrini, *New York University*

**'This is a strikingly original, meditative study. Taking up the question of re-performance or re-enactment, Schneider ranges widely over the contemporary scene of performance, taking in a quite astonishing range of materials: contemporary plays, disciplinary concerns in the field of performance studies, the work of experimental companies, photography, protest, and more. In the strongest sense, this book presents a richly provocative mimesis of thought, in which a major critic deftly and productively follows important questions where they lead. It's an inimitable performance, but one that will be deeply and gratefully mined by its readers.'** - W. B. Worthen, *Barnard College, Columbia University*

**'Rebecca Schneider's long-awaited book *Performing Remains* offers a major contribution to performance studies discussions and debates around liveness and temporality. Framing her study with re-enactments of the US Civil War (both 'traditional' and contemporary artist-driven), Schneider weaves together extra-theatrical militaristic re-enactments with theatrical performance and re-performance, as well as sculpture and photographic representation, to question rhetorics of performance as disappearance and to consider the archive as a space of performance. Across five chapters, plus a foreword and an afterword, Schneider's wide-ranging intellect and poetic style produce a powerful argument that is a delight to read.'** - Joshua Abrams, *Contemporary Theatre Review*

### **About the Author**

**Rebecca Schneider** is Chair of the Department of the Theatre, Speech and Dance at Brown University. She is the author of *The Explicit Body in Performance* (Routledge, 1997) and co-editor of *Re:direction: A Theoretical and Practical Guide* (Routledge, 2001)

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