

Editorial: A New Colossus

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Emma Lazarus' epochal words are never far from my mind. She lived and died just four blocks from where I now sit. A few times a week, I walk past the rowhouse in which she lived; I pause and think about her brief time there. Her family had just moved into the residence at 18 West 10th Street when she set sail for Europe—on a journey that happened to overlap with an art exhibition to raise funds for the completion of what would become the Statue of Liberty. For the occasion, Lazarus wrote:

*Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles.* (Lazarus, 1883)

It seems we've gone far-afield from that intention, haven't we? And in light of the intense pressure to close doors and seal borders, we can get caught up in a culture that mollifies itself with dreams of the Mother

of Dragons. And while I too take time to indulge in *Game of Thrones*, we must get back to work. We again must forge a new colossus—but this time, what we need is a colossus of the mind. Let it be our art. Let it be our ideas. Our ideals. Our vision for what the world ought to be—one where we ask more questions; where we do not accept no for an answer; where we promote empathy; where we listen more; where we encourage; where we engage. Let our work stand as a beacon to all, drawing them in from the dark of night.

IN THIS ISSUE

Our contributions in this issue come from artists, educators, and activists—all working towards bringing light to dark places. We begin with two theoretical frameworks from different parts of the world; one at the start of her scholarly work and the other following a solid career of contributions to the field. **Xiaojin Niu** explores the interaction between theatre and modern power with an examination of sexuality study. **Roger Wooster** revisits an old question at a new time: whether we should draw a distinction between theatre-making and drama as a learning medium.

As applied theatre practitioners continue to engage in theatre practices with diverse populations, we have three contributions interrogating powerful topics. **Jennifer Wong** looks at the importance of being an outsider, pondering the strengths that come from this positionality; **Sarah Woodland** looks to aesthetics, navigating an approach to support incarcerated participants in truth-telling; and **Julie Rada** gains a deeper understanding of a familiar drama strategy, asking participants to witness each other while in prison.

The final sequence of articles takes a close look at how theatre educates. **Rivka Rocchio** recounts her time using drama to teach English in Samoa, revealing ways in which drama can level the playing field between insider and outsider. **Mark Branner** and **Mike Poblete** document successful iterations of theatre for babies and outline a list of characteristics for this emerging field. **Manjima Chatterjee** defines material theatre as an aesthetic experience that promotes democracy in the performance space. Finally, Jennifer Essex wrestles with two categories of audience participation in children's interactive dance theatre: 'interactors' and 'non-interactors,' defining and problematizing each.

LOOKING AHEAD

Having recently concluded another thought-provoking dialogue at the 2019 NYU Forum on Theatre and Health, our next issue ([Volume 6, Issue 2](#)) will focus on articles under that same heading. Contributions have been accepted from Forum participants and other practitioners who are engaged in this transformative and necessary work. That issue will publish in the fall. Thereafter, look to the Program in Educational Theatre at NYU for the [2020 Forum on Humanities and the Arts](#), the [Verbatim Performance Lab](#), and [Volume 7, Issue 1](#) of [ArtsPraxis](#) which will feature articles on the three categories of our work: drama in education, applied theatre, and theatre for young audiences.

SUGGESTED CITATION

Jones, J. P. (2019). Editorial: A new colossus. *ArtsPraxis*, 6 (1), i-iv.

REFERENCES

Lazarus, E. (1883). [The new colossus](#).

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Jonathan P. Jones is a graduate from the Program in Educational Theatre at New York University, where he earned both an M.A. and a Ph.D. He conducted his doctoral field research in fall 2013 and in spring of 2014 he completed his dissertation, *Drama Integration: Training Teachers to Use Process Drama in English Language Arts, Social Studies, and World Languages*. He received an additional M.A. in English at National University and his B.A. in Liberal Arts from the NYU's Gallatin School of Individualized Study. Jonathan has conducted drama workshops in and around New York City, London, and Los Angeles in schools and prisons. He is certified to teach English 6-12 in the state of California, where he taught Theatre and English for five years at North Hollywood High School and was honored with The Inspirational Educator Award by Universal Studios in 2006. In 2008, he was awarded a fellowship through the National

Endowment for the Humanities and participated in the Teaching Shakespeare Institute at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. Currently, Jonathan is an administrator, faculty member, coordinator of doctoral studies, and student-teaching supervisor at NYU Steinhardt. In addition to his responsibilities at NYU, he teaches Fundamentals of Speech and Introduction to Theatre at The Borough of Manhattan Community College.

Jonathan's directing credits include *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, *Julius Caesar*, *Elsewhere in Elsinore*, *Dorothy Rides the Rainbow*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *The Laramie Project*, *Grease*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, and *West Side Story*. Assistant directing includes *Woyzeck* and *The Crucible*. As a performer, he has appeared at Carnegie Hall, the Metropolitan Opera, Town Hall, The Green Space, St. Patrick's Cathedral, The Cathedral of St. John the Divine, The Southbank Centre in London UK, Bord Gáis Energy Theatre in Dublin, and the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. Production credits include co-producing a staged-reading of a new musical, *The Throwbacks*, at the New York Musical Theatre Festival and serving as assistant production manager and occasionally as stage director for the New York City Gay Men's Chorus since 2014, most recently directing *Quiet No More: A Celebration of Stonewall* at Carnegie Hall for World Pride, 2019.

Recent publications include *Paradigms and Possibilities: A Festschrift in Honor of Philip Taylor* (2019) and *Education at Roundabout: It's about Turning Classrooms into Theatres and the Theatre into a Classroom* (with Jennifer DiBella and Mitch Matteson) in *Education and Theatres: Beyond the Four Walls* (edited by Michael Finneran and Michael Anderson; 2019).