

Flags and Masts

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The launch of IJOST marks the seventieth year of Queen Margaret University College's Drama Department, the oldest drama department and senior conservatoire in Scotland. It celebrates its role as one of the U.K.'s leading departments with its strong foundation in both historical/theoretical research and practice-as-research.

The launch also celebrates the solid achievement of research into Scottish Theatre of recent decades. Just as there has been a resurgence of creativity in Scottish theatre both at home and abroad over the last thirty years, there has slowly developed a formidable cohort of critics and researchers. These are interested not only in the wide recent variety of theatre in Scotland and Scottish theatre internationally, but in all periods of Scottish theatre.

It is a matter of pride to me as Editor of IJOST that my editorial colleagues reflect this in themselves. The Assistant Editors made central and widely admired contributions to *A History of Scottish Theatre*,¹ Bill Findlay as editor and contributor and Barbara Bell as contributor. Meantime, our editorial assistant Ksenija Horvat's arrival from Zagreb via Dublin to begin her successful doctoral research in Edinburgh confirms the growing international interest in Scottish theatre.

The articles contained in this first number mark the range we seek to serve. Tom Maguire offers the first authoritative overview of the career of Wildcat Theatre Company, a company which changed the dialogic frame of Scottish theatre. Katja Lenz's careful analysis, drawing on linguistic techniques, throws light on aspects of the use of Scots language in twentieth century theatre. Martin Bowman analyses, as practitioner and as critic, practical and contextual aspects of translation between Scots and Quebecois French, Edinburgh and Montreal. Donald Campbell offers an authoritative review, as both critic and distinguished playwright, of the dramatic language of George Mackay Brown. These four peer-reviewed articles are complemented by Bill Dunlop's sparkling reflections on the considerations facing the translator/dramatist in providing a modern Scots version of a Greek tragic trilogy. All in all, in one issue it would be hard to cover a wider period of theatre history. To have contributors from four national contexts for our first five articles marks a confirmation, were any needed, of the appropriateness of our ambition in setting out to make our journal truly international.

I am grateful to our distinguished Board of peer-reviewers. Their enthusiasm and willingness to contribute to our double-blind system has allowed us to ensure the high quality of the contributions. I am grateful to contributors who have gladly taken on board our Advisory Board's comments, which in every case have strengthened their articles.

Free access to this journal for at least three years is a by-product of Queen Margaret University College's highly successful 1998 international conference on Scottish theatre since the seventies, *Staging the Nation*. This conference allowed the investment in on-line facilities that will benefit readers world-wide. Further, two of the current articles have been developed from papers at that conference.

Our on-line publication arises from co-operation between Queen Margaret University College's Drama Department and its innovative Information Management Department. The editors are particularly indebted to Dr Virginia Cano for her creative ideas and expertise in shaping and developing our

electronic publication. We are also indebted to Malcolm Moffat, Research Fellow in Information Management, for his expert practical help in preparing the journal for publication.

The launch of this Journal is something in which everyone in theatre, not just Scottish theatre, can take pride. Famously, Alex Reid talked in 1958 of "our hope that Scotland may some day make a contribution to World Drama".² The fact of this journal in this millennium year may suggest his dream is being fulfilled by this generation of practitioners and critics. We nail our flag to the mast of our mission:

to publish papers on all aspects of theatre in Scotland and on the (re)presentation of Scotland and Scottish theatre on the international stage.

¹ Bill Findlay (ed.) *A History of Scottish Theatre* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1998).

² Alexander Reid, "Foreword", *Two Scots Plays* (London: Collins, 1958), pp. xii-xiii.