

Gender and Power

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The second issue of the International Journal of Scottish Theatre focuses on a key theme of many theatre communities over the last twenty years, the interaction of gender issues and power, political, theatrical or both together. In Scottish theatre, for a variety of reasons, this twenty years marks also a period when the work of women playwrights has been seen more powerfully and pervasively on the stage than before. While such post-war figures as Ena Lamont Stewart, Joan Ure or Ada F. Kay achieved substantial work, it would be to falsify the picture to suggest that their work was widely presented. It often represented a critical success far more than a permanent addition to the repertoire. The famous revival of Lamont Stewart's seventies revision of her *Men Should Weep* by 7:84 in 1982 marked, for example, a revival of a remarkable piece of theatre which had been professionally neglected for decades. Lamont Stewart's own theatre career had foundered in the mid fifties, only to have a partial revival in a Scottish Society of Playwrights season at the Netherbow Theatre in 1975 with two new short plays, *Walkies Time for a Black Poodle* and *Towards Evening*.

Against this background the surge of achievement since 1980, sustained and developed by many women playwrights, is remarkable. The list is too lengthy to complete here, but it would include, to name but a sample of ten, Lara Jane Bunting, Catherine Lucy Czerkawska, Anne-Marie Di Mambro, Anne Downie, Marcella Evaristi, Sue Glover, Joy Hendry, Liz Lochhead, Sharman Macdonald and Rona Munro. The presence of this work has altered and enriched the nature of the dramatic oeuvre of Scottish and British theatre. Certainly, it has enhanced the diversity of Scottish drama.

The articles contained in this issue each in different ways address aspects of gender and power, not only in the work of women, but of men, and not only in this century, but in the last. John Ramage et al address issues of theatrical translation and languages, working between Scots and Welsh, with regard to a modern version of the Antigone story. In doing so, they draw attention to issues of social and political hierarchy and the ways in which the selection of a language for the dramatic text carries important implications with regard to power structure in society, within both the world of the play and the world at large. Barbara Bell and John Ramage provide us with a historical perspective on issues of the representation of gender on stage with a re-evaluation and reconstruction of the work of the real Mackay in cross-dressed performance in the nineteenth-century theatre. David Pattie's article examines the position of men in three recent plays in the light of a review of changing perceptions of masculinity in Scottish society as mediated in the work of contemporary male novelists and playwrights. Ksenija Horvat's article focuses on the work of three key contemporary playwrights, Marcella Evaristi, Sue Glover and Liz Lochhead, and sets the use of language in their playwriting in the context of recent work on the implicit hegemonies of language. In this issue's forum article, Kathleen Gilmour offers insight into the life and career of a legendary doyenne of twentieth century Scottish theatre, Sadie Aitken, whose work demonstrates the effect of sustained and powerful vision in theatre management. Kathleen Gilmour places this work in the broader context of often-neglected aspects of her life, her work within the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Community Drama Association.

The response to the [first issue](#) of IJOST has been very positive and the editors are grateful

for the many supportive comments they have received. Plans are now under way for the next four issues, although as yet their exact format is to be determined. We continue to welcome contributions on 'all aspects of theatre in Scotland and on the (re)presentation of Scotland and Scottish theatre on the international stage'. All contributions follow our double blind review process and we remain grateful to the generosity and rigour of our [International Advisory Board](#) whose contribution to the success of IJOST is immeasurable.

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