

Canadian Theatre Review (Winter 2023)

Editors: Marilo Nuñez, Jamie Robinson, Marlis Schweitzer, with Yasmine Amirkhani, Liam Lockhart-Rush, and Zoe Marin

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 - b. Editors' Introduction: Casting Calls/ Call for Change
2. Liam Lockhart-Rush, "Glossary" [following intro and interspersed throughout]
To ground this issue's examination of historical and contemporary casting practices, Liam Lockhart-Rush presents a Glossary of key terms.
3. Jamie Robinson and Zoe Marin, eds. "The Artist and the Activist."
Jamie Robinson and Zoe Marin edit panel conversations from the (Re)Setting the Stage: The Past, Present, and Future of Casting in Canada symposium, held in late spring 2021. Here, 14 actors, directors, and playwrights speak about their experiences with casting and issue calls for transformation.
4. Cheryl Thompson, "Casting Blackface in Canada: Unmasking the History of 'White and Black' Minstrel Shows"
Cheryl Thompson challenges the myth of Canadian innocence with respect to racism, documenting the popularity of blackface minstrel performance in the nineteenth century.
5. Jamie Robinson, "The Conscious Casting Conundrum"
Reflecting on his experiences as an actor, director, and educator, Jamie Robinson ponders the complexity and the promise of conscious casting practices for contemporary Canadian theatre.
6. Marcel Stewart, "The Scarcity Mindset Has a Deathgrip on Casting"
Marcel Stewart shares important insights on what happens inside the audition room and identifies simple adjustments that can create a more inclusive experience for performers.
7. HRH Anand Rajaram, "Lightly casting a light on casting; or, A note on auditions By an actor-director"
Writing about his experience auditioning performers for a Summer 2022 production of As You Like It, Anand Rajaram models a new approach to casting.
8. "There is no such thing as colour-blindness": Artistic Directors on Culturally Specific Casting
In this collection of mini-essays, Artistic Directors from culturally specific companies across Canada offer their thoughts on casting.
 - a. Santiago Guzmán, "Culturally Specific Casting: A Double Edge Sword"
 - b. Rahul Varma, "The Blindness of Colourblind Casting"
 - c. Pam Patel, "Auditions: What Are They Worth?"
 - d. Ari Weinberg, "Casting Jewish Theatre: An Opinion"

- e. Colin Wolf, “Casting Has Always Been Culturally Specific and the Culture is Changing”
 - f. Mercedes Bátiz-Bennét, “Theatre as a Bridge Between Cultures”
9. Sadie Berlin, “Outcast: Limits and Possibilities in Casting Black Performers in the Age of Granular Dramaturgy”
Sadie Berlin demonstrates how a deft use of conscious casting can enhance the aesthetic complexity of canonical plays, yet cautions against a dogmatic approach that privileges artistic results over the mental well-being of Black artists.
10. Signy Lynch, “Casting Audiences: How Theatre Passe Muraille’s ‘Black Out Nights’ Challenge Conventional Approaches to Audience”
Signy Lynch analyzes the recent phenomenon of the “Black Out Night,” special events for Black audiences that simultaneously expose and complicate dominant practices used by mainstream theatres to “cast” audiences.
11. “Transformation is imperative”: Play Selection and Casting in Canadian Training Institutions
Educators from six theatre training institutions from across the country address questions of play selection and casting for student productions.
- a. Courtenay Dobbie and David Hudgins, “Studio 58 Current Practice”
 - b. Shannon Blanchet, “Drama Department at the University of Saskatchewan: Compelling and Ethical Theatre”
 - c. Sue Miner, “Challenging the Notion”
 - d. Jamie Robinson, “York University’s Season Building Committee”
 - e. Jani Lauzon, Quincy Armorer, and Alisa Palmer, “Contemplating racial casting at NTS”
 - f. Roberta Barker, “Commissioning for a Class”
12. Marilo Nuñez, “Writers and Race: Why Playwrights of Colour Should Write Themselves into Their Plays”
Marilo Nuñez draws on her own experiences as a playwright as well as an interview conversation with playwright Marie Barlizo to urge playwrights of colour to engage with race when creating new characters for the Canadian stage.
13. Plays
- a. Marie Barlizo (excerpt), *Lucky*
In these excerpts from Marie Barlizo’s Lucky, the Filipino student Nina meets the skinhead Sylvain, with devastating results.
 - b. Tabia Lau, *The Antigone Play*
Tabia Lau adapts Sophocles’ tragedy, Antigone, for the twenty-first century, centering her story around the frustrations of a young woman whose cherished family recipes are being exploited for commercial gain.
14. Online Feature: Yasmine Amirkhani and Liam Lockhart-Rush, “Culturally Specific Theatre Companies”

Yasmine Amirkhani *and* Liam Lockhart-Rush *celebrate some of Canada's leading culturally specific theatre companies.*