University of Birmingham

Dr Liz Tomlin

Senior Lecturer

Department of Drama and Theatre Arts

Contact details

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About

I moved to the Department in 2006 from the position of Research Fellow in Performing Arts at Manchester Metropolitan University. From 1997 - 2009 I was also a founder member and the associate director of the Open Performance Centre in Sheffield, where I co-founded the theatre company, Point Blank, and wrote and directed a number of nationally touring productions, as well as running schools and community performance projects across South Yorkshire.

Qualifications

I graduated with a first class honours degree in English Literature with Drama from the University of Sheffield, before completing an MA in Theatre Studies at the University of Leeds. I returned to Sheffield to take my doctorate which focused on the politics of Howard Barker's theatre.

Biography

My first academic appointment was Research Fellow in Performing Arts at Manchester Metropolitan University which I held from 1997-2006. During this time I was also founder member and associate director of the Open Performance Centre in Sheffield, where I co-founded the theatre company, Point Blank, and directed a number of schools and community performance projects across South Yorkshire.

I was the founder member and co-artistic director of Point Blank Theatre from 2000-2009. In this time I wrote and directed *Dead Causes, Operation Wonderland* and *Roses & Morphine,* wrote, directed and performed in *Nothing to Declare,* and acted as producer and dramaturgical advisor for *An Evening with Psychosis.* All productions toured nationally, and further details can be found at **www.pointblank.org.uk** in the past productions archive. Selected performance texts and critical articles on the company's work are published in *Point Blank* (Intellect, 2007).

Teaching

My research is in the area of contemporary theatre and performance, political and cultural theory, performance and devising techniques and new writing for theatre.

I regularly teach on second year modules Theatre Praxis, Theatre Lab and Collaborative Strategies, and the third year advanced practical intensive, Contemporary Practice. My study options include Political Performances and Contemporary Theatre and Performance when these are running

Postgraduate supervision

I welcome informal enquiries from any potential applicants with an interest in undertaking practice-based research or doctorates by thesis within my areas of specialism. I am currently supervising two practice-based playwriting PhDs and have recently supervised a doctorate by thesis on contemporary adaptations of Greek Tragedies.

Research

My research is in the area of contemporary theatre and performance, political and cultural theory, performance and devising techniques and new writing for theatre.

My most recent monograph, *Acts and Apparitions: Discourses on the Real in Performance Practice and Theory 1990 – 2010* was supported by AHRC funding and has now been published by Manchester University Press. I am currently editing the third volume of a series on post-war British Theatre Companies for publication by Methuen in 2015, focusing on the years between 1995 – 2013.

My most recent practical research project, *The Pool Game,* was funded by Arts Council England and undertaken in association with artistic collective Geiger Counter in 2012. Full documentation of the production can be viewed at

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zUDs6oCddm4&feature=plcp

Research interests

- Contemporary performance in its cultural and political context
- Performance techniques, text, narrative and devising strategies in contemporary performance and new writing
- 20th and 21st century political and critical theory and philosophy

Research groups

Political Performances Working Group – *International Federation of Theatre Research*
Avant Garde Working Group – *American Society for Theatre Research*
Performance and Philosophy Working Group – *Performance Studies International*

Other activities

I am Senior Admissions Tutor for the School of English, Drama and American and Canadian Studies, and the Admissions Tutor for the Department of Drama.

I am associate editor for the international journal *Performing Ethos,* and a member of the AHRC peer-review College. I am external examiner for the BA programme at Liverpool John Moores, and for the MA in playwriting at Kingston University.

Publications

Books:

- *Acts and Apparitions: Discourses on the Real in Performance Practice and Theory 1990 – 2010* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013)
- '*Point Blank: Nothing to Declare, Operation Wonderland, Roses & Morphine*' (Bristol: Intellect, 2007).

Articles/Chapters in books:

- '"Make a Map, not a Tracing": Contextual Dramaturgies and New Writing' *Contemporary Theatre Review,* 23:2 (2013)
- 'A 'Political Suspension of the Ethical': *To be Straight with You* (2007) and *An Evening with Psychosis* (2009)' *Performing Ethos* 1:2 (2010)
- 'Beyond Representation: Re-membering the 'Ghosts' of Recent History in Contemporary Performance' in *Critical Stages* vol 2 (2010) [www.criticalstages.org/criticalstages2/18]
- 'And their stories fell apart even as I was telling them: Poststructuralist Performance and the no-longer-dramatic playtext' in *Performance Research,* vol 14 (1) (2009)
- 'Beyond Cynicism: Contemporary Performance and the Sceptical Imperative' in *Contemporary Theatre Review,* vol 18 (3) (2008)
- 'A New Tremendous Aristocracy: Tragedy and the Meta-tragic in Barker's Theatre of Catastrophe' in *Theatre of Catastrophe*, ed. Karoline Gritzner and David Ian Rabey (London: Oberon, 2006) p109-123.
- 'Innocent Tourists? Neo-Colonialist Narratives in Contemporary Performance' in *Contemporary Theatre Review on Globalization and Theatre*, ed. Dan Rebellato and Jen Harvie (Vol 16, 1, 2006) p23-30.
- 'English theatre in the 1990s and beyond' in *Cambridge History of British Theatre* – Volume 3 ed. Baz Kershaw (London: Cambridge University Press, 2004) pp 494 - 508.
- 'The Politics of Catastrophe' in *Modern Drama* vol XLIII, no 1, (2000) pp.66-77.
- 'Transgressing Boundaries: Postmodern Performance and the Tourist Trap' in *TDR* 162, (1999) pp.136-149.

Expertise

Contemporary theatre and performance, including playwrights such as Howard Barker, Caryl Churchill and Martin Crimp; verbatim and documentary performance and interactive and immersive performance; production of new work, the Arts Council and new work promoters.

Alternative contact number available for this expert: **contact the press office**

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