



Introduction to special issue: artist development: class, diversity and exclusion

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Introduction to special issue: artist development: class, diversity and exclusion

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ABSTRACT

This is the introduction to the Special Issue, Artist Development: Class, Diversity and Exclusion. It offers an introduction to the Incubate Propagate research network that is the project that this special issue has developed from, and an overview of reports that evidence the decline of socio-economic diversity in the field of theatre and the Creative and Cultural Industries more widely. It also offers a rationale for the structure of the special issue and introduces each of the articles.

KEYWORDS

UK theatre industry; cultural policy; class; politics; diversity; access

Context

This special issue reflects on, and further extends, insights from the AHRC-funded research network, *Incubate Propagate: Towards Alternative Models for Artist Development in Theatre and Performance*.¹ The network operated across 2018–19 and was initiated through a recognition that, despite policies such as Arts Council England's 2011 'Creative Case for Diversity' and the funded projects that had emerged from that,² inequalities in contemporary theatre persisted, especially in the support and development of emerging artists from more challenging socio-economic backgrounds (Brook, O'Brien, and Taylor 2018). It is worth noting that while this special issue is published in the wake of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, its contents were written prior to the potentially catastrophic disruption to the theatre sector that may be forthcoming. Yet, however, the situation evolves, the attention paid by the contributors to previously existing inequalities will doubtless continue to hold currency, perhaps greater currency than before, even if the proposed solutions to the problems identified here may have to adapt to a much-changed cultural and economic climate in the future.

The *Incubate Propagate* network was convened to consider the challenges and opportunities for emerging artists from low-income and culturally diverse backgrounds, who may be less able to take advantage of platforms and networks that are made widely available to arts students and graduates, as identified in our initial scoping workshops (see Tomlin 2017). Notwithstanding the hurdles faced by students and graduates from working class backgrounds, the network chose to focus on the challenges for emerging artists with no experience of university education precisely because the lack of such

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education remains the primary barrier to careers in theatre, with the Warwick Commission reporting that 80% of those employed in theatre had received specialist training at HE level (Warwick Commission 2015, 48). This statistic underpins issues of exclusion, because the social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds that arts graduates come from remains disproportionately narrow and privileged.

The network thus picked up the challenge identified in the Arts Council England report, *Analysis of Theatre in England* which cites an independent producer who argues that 'You need to go to university to get into theatre . . . This system is excluding a lot of people'; and a director who notes the demise of 'small-scale colleges, courses' and 'open-access' opportunities to ask 'where does the next alternative talent . . . come from' (Arts Council England 2016, 91–92). How, we asked, might opportunities for professional artist development that are currently targeted at the arts graduate community be extended to better serve a more diverse cohort of emerging artists? And what new approaches and research into artist development in the context of socio-economic deprivation might be required to bring about real and lasting change in the sector?

The *Incubate Propagate* network operated through a series of three workshops held across the UK and hosted by the University of Leeds (26 September 2018), the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (8 February 2019) and the University of Glasgow (19–20 June 2019) with over 70 people taking part. Although the Glasgow workshop included invited speakers from France, Ireland and the Netherlands, the focus throughout the project was on the UK context, predominantly the English context, an emphasis that is reflected in this special issue. The contributions from France and Ireland underpinned a sense that conversations on class diversity within the UK may be moving faster than in some other contexts where race and gender remain the principle terms of reference, suggesting that this special issue may offer starting points that would be useful beyond its immediate national context.

The constituency of each workshop was designed to include perspectives and experiences of those who are rarely brought into conversation: producers who are key players in the selection, development and profiling of early career theatre artists, representatives of funding and policy-making bodies, and academics in theatre and cultural industries disciplines whose work addresses social exclusion, cultural diversity and participation.³ Culturally-diverse artists also attended, but for the main part speaking as those who produced work by others. This enabled the network to focus on the structures of access to professional development, rather than an in-depth engagement with the artistic practice itself. Throughout the workshops, we aimed to surface systemic issues and consider the ways in which the various constituent parts of the theatre ecology might respond. Crucially, we sought to foster ways forward – strategies and models that could influence policy and practice as well as future research – through the exchange of experience and understanding of artists, academics, funders and producers.

For this special issue, we invited contributions in the first instance from all those who attended the workshops. In order to maintain the inclusive and discursive practice of the research network, we enabled participants to contribute as they preferred, through short provocations, longer articles, case studies or reports on their own practice or through interviews conducted by Jessica Bowles, a member of the core project team and course leader of the MA/MFA in Creative Producing at Central School of Speech and Drama. We then extended the same invitation more widely through the networks of the

participants to enable additional voices to contribute to the project as a whole. In this way, we have been able to bring together contributions that offer a wide range of perspectives on some key issues and practices around the challenges and opportunities for fostering increased socio-economic diversity in theatre and performance. In the curation of this special issue, we have sought primarily to retain accessibility and relevance for a broader than usual readership, welcoming diverse registers and experiences – academic, institutional and personal – in order to reflect the ethos of the network and the value we placed on fostering dialogue within an ecology of artist development.

Class and diversity

Throughout this special issue, as was the case throughout the *Incubate Propagate* project, questions of socio-economic discrimination intersect with broader concerns around unequitable privilege and differential access to professions in the arts that continue to challenge, in particular, people of colour and those with disabilities, cohorts which are often over-represented in constituencies of socio-economic disadvantage. Nonetheless, this special issue reflects the project's aims in that it will focus explicitly on socio-economic class origin as a common marker of privilege and exclusion. There will doubtless be some readers, particularly in the wake of the revived and widespread Black Lives Matter protests following the murder of George Floyd in June 2020, who may remain sceptical of an approach to socio-economic disadvantage that, while seeking to be inclusive of first-hand accounts of further discriminations experienced by artists of colour within this category, frames such experiences primarily through a lens of class that focuses on the commonalities of socio-economic deprivation rather than the specifics of intersectional difference. Yet, this is an approach that is a conscious political intervention into the complex relationship between race and class, rather than unconscious oversight.

Class is an anomaly in the field of intersectional characteristics and this has resulted, historically, in a relative lack of attention being paid to class discrimination in the theatre industry, as indeed in the cultural and creative industries more widely. This is partly because the contemporary idea of a classed identity is itself ambiguous, contested and inconclusive, without any fixed features or markers that can be universally applied and accepted. Furthermore, it is, as conceived by dominant sociological definitions, something that can be altered on changing profession and, as conceived by narratives of social mobility, less a protected characteristic than an undesirable one that should be discarded at the earliest opportunity. As Beverley Skeggs argues, 'middle-class taste and positioning' are consistently branded in mainstream culture as 'the means by which being working-class can be overcome and eradicated' (Skeggs 2004, 99). Thus, while there have been significant arts council initiatives to increase professional opportunities for artists of colour, and artists with disabilities, in recent years, people from lower socio-economic backgrounds have been targeted mainly as participants and audiences, rather than as potential artists in their own right, as Tomlin discusses further in her article in this issue.

Class discrimination is furthermore vital to spotlight, given that class as a characteristic does not sit alongside, but runs through, all the communities that are defined by protected characteristics such as race, gender and disability, and so requires, at certain times and in certain contexts, to be prioritised as a state of disempowerment that is shared collectively, if not equally, by its various constituent parts. Without this

emphasis, as became clear to us during the project, in particular through contributions from artists of colour and those with disabilities, initiatives that were directed at increasing opportunities for professional artistic engagement among artists of colour or artists with disabilities without any concurrent consideration of class, would result in those opportunities being substantively and repeatedly grasped by artists within those communities who enjoyed the highest levels of socio-economic advantage. Given that class discrimination *within* such target constituencies fell under the radar of such initiatives we were attentive to foregrounding it in our network, whilst remaining careful to maintain a plurality of voices and experiences within that remit.

There is particular political value, as Sivamohan Valluvan argues, in insisting on a singular definition of working class that is ethnically inclusive, as one way of countering the populist rhetoric that seeks to pit the ‘beleaguered “white working class”’ (2019, 39) in opposition to the working class racialised ‘other’ in order to fuel nationalist projects on the left and the right. Such strategic racial categorisations operate today in ways that permit mainstream evocations of *the* ‘working class’ to be both intended and taken to imply a solely ‘white working class’ rather than a working class that is inclusive of all those who are oppressed, and could potentially make common cause, under the neoliberal economic structures of capitalism. Valluvan argues that an insistence on the possibility of working-class solidarity between races offers hope for a genuinely multicultural anti-nationalist project. In the same way, we aspired that the *Incubate Propagate* research network might engage diverse multicultural perspectives to tackle the class discrimination and socio-economic disadvantage that were common to all.

Thus, the decision taken by the research network, and further developed in this special issue, to foreground class across and above all its intersectional manifestations, was neither a careless omission nor lack of regard for these intersections or their specificities of need. Rather, it grew out of the real sense of solidarity that arose from the workshop discussions that suggested, in this particular context, that the concerns arising from class discrimination, while potentially compounded in different ways by artists with varying intersectional characteristics, could nonetheless be shared productively, with gains won by particular constituencies, or challenges encountered by others, able to inform the less-developed policy discourse on class discrimination to drive forwards the shared aims of the project.

Exclusion

The historical omission of initiatives to address class discrimination – both in the wider field of the cultural and creative industries and in the sub-field of theatre – is reflected in a number of recently published reports, detailed below, that suggest a resurgent interest in the question of class discrimination and an urgency to address its implications at this moment in time. It is beyond doubt that in the years of austerity in the UK, following the policies of the Conservative/Liberal Democrat Coalition Government in 2010, initiatives and organisations that existed to support access to the arts and culture for those from backgrounds of socio-economic disadvantage had been eroded to the point of crisis. Such policies would include, among countless others, cuts to free pre-school education initiatives such as Sure Start, reduced access to artistic activities for children attending state schools,⁴ significant rises in university tuition fees (in England), the removal of means-

tested grants for undergraduate students and educational maintenance allowances for 16–18 year olds in further education or training, and catastrophic cuts to arts council and local authority funding that in turn resulted in the closure of libraries, arts and community centres.

In a briefing report published in 2019 by the Cultural Learning Alliance and Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the authors assert that ‘arts education is a social justice issue’ and argue that the reduction of arts provision in state schools will further exacerbate the inequality of opportunity between state and privately educated children (Cultural Learning Alliance 2019, 1). As the authors of the Warwick Commission also caution, ‘[w]ithout educational intervention we are in danger of allowing a two-tier system in which the most advantaged in social and economic terms are also the most advantaged in benefitting economically, socially and personally from the full range of cultural and creative experiences’ (Warwick Commission 2015, 47). While the focus of the Cultural Learning Alliance briefing report is on the importance of arts education to social mobility and personal well-being more broadly, an introduction to the arts through school-based activities is clearly a vital access point for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds who may have the potential to forge a career in the arts but who are less able to benefit from the lived-experience of the arts through family-based activities.⁵

The erosion of this initial access point might partly explain the growing scarcity of those working in the cultural and creative industries who have working class origins. The *Panic: It’s an Arts Emergency* report draws on data collated during a project initiated by Create London in 2015, which included a nationwide survey of artists and creative industries workers and follow up interviews. This report breaks down the creative and cultural industries (CCIs) workforce into different subsections, with theatre being situated in the category of Music, Performing and Visual Arts. Within this category, only 18.2% of the workforce were identified as being of working-class origin, whereas around a third of the UK population would fall into that category (Brook, O’Brien, and Taylor 2018, 12). In their analysis of the 2014 British Labour Force Survey, O’Brien et al. concluded that, ‘those from working-class backgrounds are significantly under-represented within the CCIs’ (2016, 117) and that such findings ‘clearly puncture romantic notions of the CCIs as an exemplar of merit and accessibility and instead point towards a sector dominated by the children of managers and professionals’ (123).

When theatre professions alone are considered, the figures look even worse. In the 2016 *Analysis of Theatre in England* report, concern was frequently expressed that ‘social mobility in the sector is not increasing; rather, it may be regressing’ (Arts Council England 2016, 7). In their study of the ‘class ceiling’ in the acting profession, Friedman et al. report that ‘73% of actors in the GBCS [Great British Class Survey] ... come from “middle-class” professional or managerial backgrounds whereas this group constitutes only 29% of the population ... Moreover, only 10% of actors in the GBCS ... have parents who worked in semi-routine and routine employment, or who never worked, compared with 33 per cent’ of a representative data set (Friedman, O’Brien and Laurison 2017, 997). In *The Director’s Voice*, a report commissioned by Stage Directors UK, the National Theatre, RADA and the Old Vic, the authors reported that 79% of the workforce was made up of directors ‘who come from what is categorised as either an upper-middle-class or middle-class background’, in contrast with only 27% of the population as a whole

(Hescott and Furness 2018, 22). In addition, '92.92% of directors surveyed were educated to degree level or higher' (26).

There is some evidence, in the wake of such reports, that policymakers and industry professionals are beginning to respond to the historical deficit in initiatives designed to widen class diversity in the cultural and creative arts more broadly, and theatre in particular. In 2013 Arts Council England rolled out their first wave of Creative People and Places funding (CPP). This is an action research project that seeks to fund the long-term development of artistic and creative activity in places that suffer from the lowest levels of creative engagement (almost always those sitting likewise at the sharp end of socio-economic measures of deprivation). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were thirty ongoing CPP projects across England,⁶ and a further £17.5 m had been awarded to twelve new placemaking projects for the period from 2019 to 2023. The emphasis of CPP is on widening the diversity of cultural participation rather than professional artist development, but it is clear that the former is required to lay the ground for the latter. More pertinent to the *Incubate Propagate* aims was the 2019 launch of two Performing Arts Producing Hub pilots in Derby and Bradford to establish consortia of theatres, arts organisations, social enterprises and community groups to increase the capacity of the local communities to begin producing their own work. These were designed in response to the *Analysis of Theatre in England* report (Arts Council England 2016) and had been granted funding by ACE of £1.5 million each over a three-year period.

In this context, the *Incubate Propagate* project set out to focus on routes to improving socio-economic diversity amongst theatre-makers, stretching the increasing momentum of widening participation in cultural activity to an examination of how those from lower socio-economic backgrounds who became culturally engaged might next become the emerging artists who needed support to develop and produce their own professional creative work. This special issue draws particular attention to the role of the creative producer who is often the first point of support towards a professional theatre-making career, an emphasis that was also notable in the *Analysis of Theatre in England* report. Here, it was observed on several occasions that where Producers, rather than Artistic Directors, headed up large organisations the role became less one of 'delivering a "personal" artistic vision' and 'more as a "curator" of a diverse body of work' (Arts Council England 2016, 56. Also see 43–44). For this reason, in addition to articles which implicitly point to the importance of the role of the 'curator/producer', and articles written by those who are engaged with production, we have punctuated this special issue with interviews given by three creative producers who took part in the project and share here their personal and professional perspectives on the questions we are asking.

Structures of class and feeling

Understanding class as something that runs through all communities, including those that are defined by protected characteristics, has helped us to gain a valuable perspective on some of the deep-rooted problems associated with enabling more socio-economic diversity in the arts, and in theatre in particular. The provocations, articles and interviews in the first section of this special issue, 'Structures of Class and Feeling', are aimed at exploring how class identity operates not simply within terms of economic capital and categorisation based on employment, but also on feelings and a sense of belonging and agency.

In the first of two introductory papers, Dave O'Brien offers a foreword, 'Class and the Problem of Inequality in Theatre' approaching the questions raised by this special issue from a social-sciences perspective. Here, he outlines the mechanisms by which class, and class inequity, can be made visible through criteria based in economic and occupational categorization. However, while positively noting the recent initiative by Arts Council England to begin to audit their National Portfolio Organisations through such mechanisms, O'Brien cautions that an emphasis that focuses solely on demographics and a greater representation of those from working-class origins, may obscure some deeper, more intrinsic, problems with class and cultural power, that the theatre industry might, just as urgently, need to address.

This foreword is followed by Liz Tomlin's introductory article, 'Why We Still Need to Talk About Class', in which she articulates what some of these deeper problems might be. Here, Tomlin places the aims of the *Incubate Propagate* project in dialogue with contemporary debates around class, including the ongoing tension between class understood in its historical Marxist sense as economic, antagonistic and collectivist; and developments growing out of Pierre Bourdieu's work that seek to locate class as defined as much by social and cultural, as economic, capital, as well as being scored through by intersectional characteristics such as race and gender. Ultimately, Tomlin argues that whatever the complexities of talking about class in the twenty-first century, it is essential that we find ways of so doing, as the absence of straightforward historical categories of class does not mean that class discrimination and class conflict does not continue to exist in theatre and the arts more broadly, and this cannot be challenged or reversed without those in positions of cultural power paying real attention to the inequities of economic, social and cultural capitals that are in play.

In her short provocation, 'Feeling Working-Class: Affective Class Identification and its Implications for Overcoming Inequality', Katie Beswick argues that we need to pay attention to '*class feeling* as an important dimension of understanding how barriers to access and participation operate in theatre contexts'. She draws attention to the disabling feeling of shame provoked by outright class snobbery or by more subtle indicators of class-based othering. This in turn fuels a sense of being an 'impostor' and of not having the 'right to work in theatre'. Beswick's point is borne out in other articles in this issue, especially in the autobiographical accounts contributed by Chris Lloyd and Gemma Connell in 'Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries: Case Studies from a Decade of Supporting the Next Generation of Artists from Lower Socio-economic Backgrounds' and in the interview with Kayza Rose which follows Beswick's provocation.

Kayza Rose is a creative producer, artistic director and activist filmmaker. In her interview with Jessica Bowles, she talks positively about the opportunities afforded to her through Arts Council England's 'Change Maker' initiative and how it gave her the confidence to claim ownership of her creative work, but she also reflects on the classist nature of the arts and the ways she has felt 'not welcome'. One of the ways in which this lack of welcome has made itself felt is in what Rose characterises as the conservative and risk-averse way in which excellence and innovation in theatre and the arts are viewed.

The identification of excellence, as Paul Geary's article 'The Production of Taste: Ecologies, Intersections, Implications' demonstrates, is deeply rooted in structures of social advantage. Geary's article opens out from Bourdieu's notion of taste as the result of socially constructed cultural capital, by considering the development of the sensory taste

of food. Unlike Bourdieu's sometimes deterministic account of taste, for Geary, it is a highly personalised, sensorial, emotional and embodied sedimentation of experience that offers a more fluid and diverse notion of taste acquisition that can shift and change over time. Critically, Geary concludes that 'what is at stake for the arts ecology here is precisely the pervasiveness of taste, its unaccountability while it continues to have a considerable force in decisions around diversity and the support, funding and cultivation of new artistic practices'.

In the final article in this section, 'An Act of Transgression: Performing Arts as a Subject Choice within a Coastal Area of Deprivation', Aly Colman and Geoffrey Colman examine precisely how classed cultural dispositions affect career choices in an area of high unemployment and poverty. Aside from the serious considerations of theatre as an economically precarious career, the participants in this study reflect how their choice can be seen as culturally 'alien' and a betrayal of their family and community.

Structures of artistic development

In the second section of this special issue, we address different approaches to tackling class-based exclusion in theatre and the arts. In all these cases, the need for long-term engagement is key and there are, as Yamin Choudury points out, no 'quick fixes to these huge institutional . . . , societal wide problems.' Furthermore, the initiatives and projects highlighted here all recognise and articulate the importance of going beyond mere participation and of ensuring that emerging artists from all backgrounds are given authorship and agency and empowered to establish their own cultural parameters of legitimate taste and aesthetic disposition.

In her short provocation, 'Labours of Social Inclusion: Amateur, Professional, Community Theatres', Helen Nicholson takes up the issue of cultural gatekeeping and notes the various ways in which hierarchies of taste and professionalism cut across efforts towards wider participation in theatre making. Amateur theatre makers are an important but unacknowledged part of the theatre ecology and make 'a major contribution to place-making' but there is a 'disconnect' between the amateur and professional sectors which contributes to the narrow social profile of the latter. Nicholson considers what exchange between amateurs and professionals might have to offer in trying to create a more socially inclusive profession and argues that 'there is a social and political case for including amateurs in cultural policy'.

In the second of our producer interviews, Yamin Choudury, Artistic Director of Hackney Empire, talks about the organisation's Creative Futures programme which involves projects created by and for young people and designed specifically to remove barriers to participation and 'to create a sense of entitlement for those that feel unentitled'. A key principle of projects such as *Alter Ego*, an annual talent show produced and performed by young people, is that it is 'uncurated and unedited'. For Choudury it is the start of a conversation between local youth and Hackney Empire that begins with giving young producers control over the acts and the content of the show that leads to a deeper sense of agency as artists and as citizens.

Affording emerging artists greater agency in their relationships with institutional partnerships also underpins the conceptual framework under construction in 'Becoming Civic-Centred: A Case Study of the University of Greenwich's Bathway Theatre based in

Woolwich'. In this article, Tatiana Ellis, David Hockham, Erica Rolle and Pamela Zigomo propose an 'open-third space' conceptual framework for university–community partnerships in guard against a model of exchange in which the university is too often considered the holder of legitimate knowledge that, accordingly, drives the aims and parameters of the collaboration. The authors argue for a greater consideration of the legitimacy of the perspectives and aims of all partners and individuals concerned, and draw on the university's pilot programme, *What About Us: Empowering Community Voices*, to construct a model for more equitable partnership practice.

In our third producer interview, Paul Warwick, theatre producer, director and the co-director of China Plate, also emphasises the importance of partnership working when seeking to diversify the artists that China Plate is able to support. China Plate runs regular 'Darkroom' residencies which offer selected artists the opportunity to invest in their artistic development rather than focus on an end product, and Warwick notes how framing this as an 'ecology of opportunity' leads quickly to a need to start thinking about which artists are represented within that ecology and who is missing. Consequently, Warwick discusses recent initiatives with partners that focused on development schemes that are solely for artists of colour or deaf and disabled artists.

In 'Acta Community Theatre's "Cycle of Engagement" and Foundation Worker Programme: Creating Pathways into Cultural Participation and Work' Kerrie Schaefer et al. look at how the long-established Bristol-based community theatre have embedded development and progression opportunities from participation to professional practice via their Foundation Worker Programme. Reflecting on the changing understandings of the politics of community theatre over the company's thirty-five-year history the authors describe how their 'commitment to access and participation has come to be enshrined in a system called the "cycle of engagement" which offers multiple pathways into and through participation in theatre making' which have recently 'been extended into (paid) training and employment'.

The final case study, 'Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries: Case Studies from a Decade of Supporting the Next Generation of Artists from Lower Socio-economic Backgrounds', features the first-hand experiences of four recipients of the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries scheme which supports emerging artists from lower socio-economic backgrounds through paid work placements in arts organisations to become leaders in the arts. Fittingly then, this special issue is brought to a close by the insights of artists who have successfully met the challenges addressed throughout the journal. The words of one contributor, Gemma Connell, provide the summation to this introduction:

in order to be truly reflective of society, art should represent the experiences of people from all walks of life, and that can only be done authentically by tapping into the lived experiences of marginalised groups. This doesn't just mean *letting us participate*, it means actively giving us the floor, the mic, and the power to pursue our own ideas throughout the lifespan of our careers.

Notes

1. The Principal Investigator for the project was Professor Liz Tomlin, University of Glasgow and the project was devised and run in collaboration with Alison Gagen (ACE), Joslin McKinney, Jessica Bowles and Paul Geary. See Tomlin 2020 for the project report. Further details of activities of the project can be found on the *Incubate Propagate* website here: <https://incubate-propagate.com/>

2. See <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/diversity-and-equality/new-strategic-investment-diversity-and-creative-case>
3. Participants at each of the network events are listed on the Project Report at <https://incubate-propagate.com/>
4. House of Commons research shows that following the introduction of the EBacc in England in 2011 the number of entries for drama GCSE fell 15.9% from 2010–2016 (Labour Party 2017, 7).
5. The Warwick Commission cites research undertaken by Ipsos MORI that evidences that ‘70% of children whose parents do not have graduate qualifications spend fewer than three hours a week on cultural activity compared to 80% of the children of graduate parents who spend more than three hours a week.’ (Warwick Commission 2015, 47). Also see the article by Geoffrey Colman and Aly Colman in this special issue.
6. <https://www.creativepeopleplaces.org.uk/map>

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Liz Tomlin is Professor of Theatre and Performance at the University of Glasgow where she specialises in the analysis of British and European contemporary theatre through the lens of political and cultural theory. Her key works include *Acts and Apparitions: Discourses on the Real in Performance Practice and Theory 1990 – 2010* (Manchester University Press, 2013); *British Theatre Companies 1995 – 2014* ed. (Bloomsbury Methuen, 2015) and *Political Dramaturgies and Theatre Spectatorship: Provocations for Change* (Bloomsbury Methuen, 2019). Liz was the principal investigator of the AHRC Research Network *Incubate Propagate* which brought together arts policy makers and funders, theatre producers and academics to investigate pathways to emerging artist

development programmes and platforms for those without university backgrounds and training. She was previously a playwright and director with Point Blank Theatre (1999 – 2009) and has published that body of work in *Point Blank* (2007).

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