

Stefka Mihaylova

School of Drama, University of Washington, 101 Hutchinson Hall, Seattle, WA 98195

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Specialties

20C British and US theatre history and dramatic literature; gender and race in post-World War II British and US theatre; performance theory; avant-garde studies

Positions held

Assistant Professor, School of Drama, University of Washington, Seattle, Autumn 2012-present

Lecturer, School of Drama, University of Washington, Seattle, Autumn 2011-Spring 2012

Lecturer, School of Theatre and Music, University of Illinois at Chicago, Spring 2011, Spring 2008

Lecturer, Northwestern University, School of Continuing Studies, Spring 2008, Spring 2009

Graduate Instructor, Theatre Department, Northwestern University, 2005-2008

Education

Ph.D. Northwestern University, March 2008.

- Thesis: "From Gestus to the Abject: Feminist Strategies in Contemporary American and British Radical Theatre." Advisors: Tracy C. Davis (Chair), Susan Manning, Christopher Lane, and Jennifer De Vere Brody
- Certificate in Gender Studies

M.A. Central European University, Hungary, Department of Gender Studies (2001),
Awarded with distinction.

- Thesis: "Dying, Being, and Becoming: The Formation of Identity in *Wit* by M. Edson and *'night, Mother* by M. Norman." Advisors: Sophia Howlett and Jasmina Lukič.

B.A./M.A. Sofia University, Bulgaria, Department of English and American Studies (2000).

- Thesis: "Mythic Patterns in Three Family Plays by Sam Shepard: *Buried Child*, *Curse of the Starving Class*, and *True West*," Advisor: Kornelia Slavova.

Publications

Monograph

Viewers in Distress: Race, Gender, Religion, and Avant-Garde Performance at the Turn of the 21st Century. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, forthcoming July 2023.

Description:

This book explores a new avant-garde movement at the turn of the twenty-first century, as theatre artists addressed the progressive imperative of making theatre for diverse audiences. The book examines the controversies triggered by productions of plays by Suzan-Lori Parks, Sarah Kane, Forced Entertainment, Gurpreet Kaur Bhatti, and Young Jean Lee. By analyzing those productions and spectators' responses to them, I show how contemporary radical performance builds on the legacy of earlier avant-garde, feminist, and anti-racist art.

Edited Collection

Uncle Tom's Cabins: The Transnational History of America's Most Mutable Book, edited by Tracy C. Davis and Stefka Mihaylova. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2018.

Articles

"Liveness Redux: Radical Performance, Television, and the Truthfulness of Illusion in *Bloody Mess* by Forced Entertainment," *Contemporary Theatre Review* 30.3 (July 2020): 340-56, a peer-reviewed.

"Raising Proper Citizens: Uncle Tom's Cabin and the Sentimental Education of Bulgarian Children during the Soviet Era." In *Uncle Tom's Cabins: The Transnational History of America's Most Mutable Book*, edited by Tracy C. Davis and Stefka Mihaylova. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2018. 314-42.

reprinted in *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 11.2 (Dec. 2020); peer-reviewed
 Tracy C. Davis and Stefka Mihaylova. Introduction to *Uncle Tom's Cabins: The Transnational
 History of America's Most Mutable Book*, edited by Tracy C. Davis and Stefka Mihaylova.
 Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2018. 1-29.

reprinted in *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 11.2 (Dec. 2020); peer-reviewed

"The Radical Formalism of Suzan-Lori Parks and Sarah Kane," *Theatre Survey* 56.2 (May 2015):
 213-31.

"Whose Performance Is It, Anyway? Performed Criticism as a Feminist Strategy."
New Theatre Quarterly 25, no. 3 (2009).

"Reading Corneille with Brecht: *The Comedy of Illusion* and the Illusions of Citizenship." In
The Theatre of Tony Kushner: New Essays on the Art and Politics of the Plays, edited by
 James Fisher, 135-48. Jefferson. N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2006.

Encyclopedia Entries

Five entries on Bulgarian actors for *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Stage Actors and Acting*,
 edited by Simon Williams. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Reviews

Review of *Reading Modern Drama*, edited by Alan Ackerman, Toronto: University of Toronto Press,
 2012. *Theatre Journal* 56, no. 4 (2013).

Review of *Endgame*, by Samuel Beckett, directed by Frank Gallati, Steppenwolf Theatre, Chicago,
Journal of Beckett Studies 20, no. 1 (2011): 102-5.

Review of *Theatre of Estrangement: Theatre, Practice, Ideology*, by Silvija Jestrovic,
 Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006. *Contemporary Theatre Review* 18, no. 1
 (2008): 124-25.

Awards and Honors

University of Washington College of Arts and Science Kreielsheimer grant to fund research at the
 Harold Washington Theatre Archive in Chicago in September 2022.

University of Washington College of Arts and Science travel grant to fund research at the Harold
 Washington Theatre Archive in Chicago in Summer 2020.

Royal Research Fund Fellowship, University of Washington, competitive internal research fellowship
 providing release from teaching for one quarter, Fall 2017.

Society of Scholars Fellowship, Simpson Center for the Humanities, University of Washington,
 competitive internal research fellowship providing release from teaching for one quarter,
 Fall 2015.

Dissertation Year Fellowship, competitive internal writing fellowship, 2006-07.

Alice Berlin Kaplan Humanities Fellowship, 2005-06, competitive internal fellowship sponsoring
 dissertation research and conference presentations.

Graduate Research Grant, 2005, competitive internal fellowship sponsoring dissertation research

Elizabeth Inchbald Graduate Essay Prize, Interdisc. Ph.D. Program in Theatre and Drama,
 2005, awarded for best paper prepared for publication or conference.

Graduate Essay Prize, Interdisc. Ph.D. Program in Theatre and Drama, awarded for best paper written
 to fulfill a course requirement, 2004.

George Soros Fellowship, awarded to pursue graduate studies at CEU, Hungary, 2000.

Public Lectures and Invited Talks

"The Behzti Controversy," Coffee and Concepts Series, Center for Performance Studies, University of
 Washington, November 9, 2018.

"Forest, Orchards, and Fallow Fields: Chekhov's Moral Philosophy," Chekhov in the 21st Century: A
 Symposium, Theatre Department, Lewis and Clark College, June 28, 2018

"Viewers in Distress: Staging Social Difference at the Turn of the 21st Century," Society of Scholars,
 Simpson Center for the Humanities, UW, February, 2015.

"British Radical Theatre in the 1990s," Theatre Department, University of Puget Sound, December 2,

2014.

“Theatre and Non-Leftist Radicalism,” Center for Performance Studies, UW, October, 2013.

Plenaries and Curated-Panel Presentations

“British Sikh *Flaneurs*: How the Failure of Multiculturalism Produces a Contemporary Avant-Garde,”
ASTR, Portland, 2015.

“Forced Entertainment’s Live Simulacrum: Automata, Liveness, and the Human Actor’s Virtuosity,”
ASTR, Baltimore, 2014.

Conference Presentations

“Activist Anger and Liberal Composure: Fourth Wave Feminism and the Performance of Protest,”
American Society for Theatre Research, 2022, San Diego.

“Performing a New Feminist Essentialism,” International Federation for Theatre Research, 2021.

“Performing Avantgarde ‘Victimhood’: The Posttraumatic Subject of the Feminist Fourth Wave,”
American Society for Theatre Research, 2020.

“Exposing the Spectator’s Privacy: Forced Entertainment’s Antiliberal Theatre,” American Society
for Theatre Research, Arlington, 2019.

“Engaging Affective Publics: The Case of Forced Entertainment,” American Society for Theatre
Research, San Diego, 2018.

“Casting Stare-able Bodies: Mabou Mines’ *Dollhouse*,” American Society for Theatre Research,
Atlanta, 2017.

“The *Behzti* Riot: The Multicultural Spectator and the State of Exception,” American Comparative
Literature Association, Harvard University, 2016.

“Nora’s Stockings and Dr. Rank’s Cane: Embodying the Limits of Neoliberalism in Mabou Mines’
Dollhouse,” IFTR, Warwick, UK, 2014.

“The *Behzti* Riot: Revising the Narrative of Post-World War II Radical Theatre in View of Non-
Leftist Performance,” MATC, Cleveland, 2014.

“Avant-Garde Art in the Academy: Laurie Anderson’s *Dirtday!*,” Performance Studies International,
Stanford, 2013.

“Broken Females, Realism, and the Affects of Feminist Reception,” American Society for
Theatre Research, Nashville, 2012.

“The Politics of Visceral Response: Feminist Art as a Source for Experimental Performance,”
International Federation for Theatre Research, Santiago, Chile, 2012.

“Simulacra of Liveness: The Digital Media’s Challenge to Live Performance,” American Society for
Theatre Research, Montreal, 2011.

“Formalism or Social History? Suzan-Lori Parks’s and Sarah Kane’s Radical Formalisms,” Theatre
History Group Pre-conference,” Association for Theatre in Higher Education, Chicago, 2011.

“Ways of Being European: Rosa Popova’s Touring Company,” Mid-America Theatre Conference,
Minneapolis, 2011.

“Guerrilla Tactics for a Feminist Art World,” Women and Theatre Program Conference, New York,
2009.

“Watching Race Critically in *Venus* by Suzan-Lori Parks,” Mid-America Theatre Conference,
Chicago, 2009.

“Viewers in Distress: Laclau’s Theory of Democratic Dialogue as a Theory of
Spectatorship,” Association for Theatre in Higher Education, Denver, 2008.

“Borrowing: A Strategy of Critical Spectatorship in *Soul of a Clone*,” MLA, Chicago, 2007.

“Media Tales and Stage Truths: Sarah Kane’s *Blasted* as a Theatrical Event,” Association for
Theatre in Higher Education, New Orleans, 2007.

“Feminist Alignments: Radical Strategies in Sarah Kane’s *Blasted* and Mona Hatoum’s
Corps Étranger,” Women and Theatre Program Conference, New Orleans, 2007.

“Interface: A Feminist Approach to Theatre Journalism,” International Federation for Theatre
Research, Helsinki, Finland, 2006.

“The Realist Fallacy and the Subject of History in *Topdog/Underdog* by Suzan-Lori Parks,”
Association for Theatre in Higher Education, Chicago, 2006.

Respondent to Patrice Pavis at “Considering Calamity”: An Interdisciplinary Conference on

- Methods for Performance Research, Northwestern University, 2005.
- “Reading Corneille with Brecht: *The Comedy of Illusion* and the Illusions of Citizenship,” International Federation for Theatre Research, College Park, Maryland, 2005.
- “‘A Simple Turn of the Head:’ Parks’s and Godard’s Surrogate Spectators,” American Literature Association, Boston, 2005.

Panel Discussions

- “Issues in Chekhov’s Productions in 21st-Century America,” Chekhov in the 21st Century: A Symposium, Theatre Department, Lewis and Clark College, June 29, 2018

Teaching Experience

Instructor

At the University of Washington in Seattle, School of Drama

- “African American Performance and the Making of Black Publics,” PhD Seminar, Fall 2020, Spring 2018
- Professionalization Seminar, a PhD seminar preparing students for the job market, Spring 2018
- “Advanced Critical Theory,” a PhD seminar, Winter 2020, Winter 2017
- “The New Avant-Gardes: US Avant-Garde Performance after World War II,” a PhD seminar, Spring 2022, Fall 2019, Winter 2016
- “A History of African American Theatre, 1822-2015,” an upper-division undergraduate seminar, Winter 2019, Winter 2016
- “Nineteenth-Century African American Performance,” a PhD seminar, Fall 2015
- “Drama and Performance Analysis,” an undergraduate, intensive-writing course on critical theory for theatre majors, Spring 2022, Fall 2020, Fall 2019, Winter 2019, Fall 2018, Winter 2017, Fall 2016, Fall 2015, Winter 2014, Winter 2013, Fall 2013, Fall 2012, Fall 2011
- “Theatre History, Part III: Modern Theatre,” an undergraduate course for theatre majors, Spring 2021, Spring 2020, Winter 2019, Spring 2017, Spring 2016, Spring 2015, Spring 2014
- “The Historical Avant-Gardes,” a PhD seminar, Fall, 2021, Spring 2015, and Spring 2012
- “The Body in Performance: Feminist Performance, Queer Performance, and the Performance of Disability,” PhD seminar, Spring 2014
- “Modern Theatre and Modern Technology,” a PhD seminar, Winter 2021, Winter 2017, Fall 2013
- “Performing Race on the Twentieth-Century US Stage,” a PhD Seminar, Spring 2013
- “Solo Performance,” an upper-division undergraduate seminar, Fall 2012
- “Contemporary Western Theatre: Dramatic Theatre, Devised Performance, Reader’s Theatre, and Clown Performance,” an upper-division undergraduate seminar, Winter 2012
- “Twentieth-century US Drama: The Canon and Its Others,” an upper-division undergraduate seminar, Winter 2012
- “Modern Theatre and the Social History of Modern Technology,” an upper-division undergraduate seminar for theatre majors, Fall 2011

At Northwestern University

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| School of Continuing Studies | “A History of Chicago Theatre,” an upper-division undergraduate seminar for adult non-theatre majors, Spring 2009 and Spring 2008. |
| English and Gender Studies | “Gender and Sexuality in 20th-Century American Drama,” an upper-division undergraduate seminar for English, theatre, and gender-studies majors, Spring 2008. |
| Theatre Department | “Theatre and Race,” an upper-division undergraduate seminar for theatre majors, Winter 2008. |
| Theatre Department | “Radical Theatre and Screen Practice,” an upper-division undergraduate seminar for theatre majors, Fall 2007. |

Theatre Department	“British Feminist Theatre,” freshman seminar for theatre majors, Spring 2006.
Theatre and Gender Studies	“Performing Gender and Race in the U.S.” an upper-division undergraduate class for theatre and gender-studies majors, Winter 2006.
Theatre Department	“Adaptations of Plays,” freshman seminar for theatre majors, Fall 2004 and Spring 2005.
<i>At the University of Illinois in Chicago</i>	
Performing Arts Department	“Modern Drama,” an undergraduate seminar for non-humanities majors, Winter 2008 and Winter 2011.
<u>Teaching Assistant</u>	
Department of Comparative Literature	Modern Drama 362-3, “Theatre in Totalitarian Regimes,” an upper-division undergraduate lecture course; Spring 2004.
English Department	“Introduction to Drama,” undergraduate lecture course, Winter 2004.
Department of Comparative Literature	Modern Drama 362-1, “European Drama from the Early-Twentieth Century to the Second World War,” an upper-division undergraduate lecture course, Fall 2003.

Research Advised at University of Washington

As dissertation director and advisor

- Shadow Zimmermann, “Mediating Black Modernisms: Charles S. Johnson and His Circle,” dissertation in progress.
- Weiyu Li, “Performing Blackness during the Cultural Revolution,” dissertation in progress.
- Christie Zhao, *The Good Person*, a CAPSTONR project, involving the adaptation and directing of *The Good Person of Setzuan*, by Bertolt Brecht, Fall 2020-Spring 2021.
- Kristin Seifert, “Brecht between Mediums: Reevaluating Epic Theory in Theatre and Film,” dissertation in progress, defended June 2019.
- Bahar Karlidag, “The Pre-Settlement Years: Joan Littlewood and Ewan MacColl’s Collaboration,” dissertation; defended June 2017.
- Holly Griffith, “Through the Lens of Apartheid: The Shifting of Perspectives for Sizwe Bansi Is Dead,” essay developed in Drama 302, winner of the 2014 National Amy and Eric Burger Essays on Theatre Competition.

As dissertation reader

- Jonathan Rizzardi, *Coming of Age in America’s Coming of Age: Childhood and Change on the U.S. Stage, 1914-1945*, dissertation in progress.
- Em Allen, “Scenic Design Process for *Cabaret*,” MFA thesis, defended 2020.
- Margaret Adair MacCormack, “Scenic Design Process for *The Best of Everything*,” MFA thesis, defended 2020.
- Matthew Strauss, “To Those Born After: A Genealogy of Bertolt Brecht’s Epic Theater,” dissertation in progress.
- Alice Hofgren, “Performing Democracy: Comedy and Forensic Oratory as Enactments of Athenian Democratic Process,” dissertation in progress.
- Guillaume Tourniare, “Only Make Believe”: Musical Theatre and Evolving American Identity,” dissertation in progress.
- Shelby Lunderman, “Cruel and Unusual Performance: (Re)producing Capital Punishment on the U.S. Stage,” defended 2020.
- Robert Wighs, “Alaska Native Theatre,” dissertation in progress.
- Monica Cortez-Viharo, “Trauma Drama,” defended 2021.
- Jason Eckard, “Tenth- and Eleventh-Century Liturgical Drama,” dissertation in progress.
- Scott Venters, “The Im(Mediate) Animal,” defended 2021.
- Jacob Hutchison, “Satirical Activism”; defended 2018.
- Christopher Goodson, “Performing Precarity”; defended 2017.

Jyana Brown, "Creating a Public: Love Suicide on the Osaka Stage, 1703-1722"; defended 2017.
 Sarah Marsh, "Never Mere Observation: Performance, Technology, and the Act of Looking;"
 defended 2017.
 Susan Fink, "Re-story(y)ing Theatre History in the Americas: Professional Players and the Callao
 Contract of 1599"; defended 2017.
 Elizabeth Coen, "Staging Theater to Realize a Nation: The Development of German National Theater
 in the 18th Century"; defended 2015.
 Sarah Guthu, "European Modernism and the Resident Theatre Movement"; defended 2013.

GSR

Michael Bennet, "The Broadway Musical," dissertation in progress.
 Jennifer Van Houdt, English, "Delenda Est: World and Belief in Apocalyptic Thought"; defended
 2018.
 Krista Daniel, English, "Novel Aspirations: Sophistication and Speech in British Middlebrow Fiction,
 1929-1952," defended 2020.

Service

For the UW School of Drama

Chair, Strategic Hiring Committee, Fall 2020-Fall 2021
 Member, Strategic Hiring Committee, Fall 2018-Fall 2022
 Member, Committee on the Reappointment of Senior Lecturer Bridget Connors, Fall 2018
 Member, Committee on the Reappointment of Senior Lecturer Skip Mercer, Fall 2017
 Member, Committee on the Reappointment of Senior Artist in Residence Karen Hartman, Fall 2016
 Member, Committee on BA Drama Program, Winter 2016
 Member, Committee on the Reappointment of Senior Lecturer Catherine Madden, Fall 2015
 Member, Executive Director Search Committee, Autumn 2013
 Member, Associate Professor Search Committee, Autumn 2012-Winter 2013
 Member, Innovation Fund Committee, Autumn 2012-Spring 2013
 Won a Walker-Ames Grant to bring theatre historian David Wiles to the School of Drama, 2013
 (Wiles eventually cancelled for personal reasons)
 Introduced Laurie Anderson at her Danz Public Lecture, October 2012

For the UW Center for Performance Studies (CPS)

Organizer, Research talk by Ana E. Puga, "The Caravan of Central American Mothers in Mexico,"
 May 20, 2022.
 Organizer, Friday Coffee and Concepts Talks, a colloquium, presenting new work and work in
 progress by CPS faculty; Fall 2018 - present

- Created series, invited participants, scheduled and hosted more than twenty individual talks

Organizer, CPS website remodeling – Spring 2019
 Organizer (with Scott Magelssen), "Revisiting the Newness of New Drama," Performing Arts Lecture
 Series, February, 2016

- Wrote call for lectures

Organizer (with Scott Magelssen), Performance Studies Research Group, 2014-2016

- Co-wrote (with Scott Magelssen) application to the Simpson Center for the Humanities for funding the research group's activities, Winter 2015 and Winter 2014
- Introduced Harvey Young at his talk "A Racist Love Note: Stereotypes and Caricatures in Early 20th Century Valentine's Day Cards," January 2016.
- Introduced Soyini Madison at her talk "Beauty, Praxis, and Performance Ethnography," March 2015
- Introduced Shannon Jackson at her talk "The Way We Perform Now," November 2014

Organizer (with Odai Johnson), "Celebrity and Its Discontents," Performing Arts Lecture Series,
 October 2014

- Wrote call for lectures

Organizer, Sue-Ellen Case's CPS talk "Performing the Post: Gender, Racialization, and Sexuality after the Collapse," February, 2013

Introduced Tracy C. Davis at her CPS talk "Performance Study, à la 1865," April 2013

For the Department of Otolaryngology, UW School of Medicine

Facilitator of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Discussion

- Created an annotated list of plays, novels, films, and documentaries to facilitate conversations about equity, diversity, and inclusion, Winter 2022
- Gave a lecture on the history of Abolitionism and led discussion on past and contemporary anti-racist efforts, May 25, 2022.

For the American Association for Theatre Research (ASTR)

Mentor, Northwest Publication Forum, ASTR, Summer 2020-present

- Advised more junior scholars on the process of publishing for articles, monographs, and edited collections

Chair, ASTR Collaborative Research Grants Committee, 2018

Member, ASTR Collaborative Research Grants Committee, 2016-2018

Organizer (with Ann White) of the ASTR Career Sessions, 2014-2015

- Invite session conveners, prepare and coordinate career sessions program

Member, ASTR Collaborative Research Grants Committee, 2013

Dramaturgical Experience

New-Play Development

Literary Dramaturg, "Red Earth," by Mark Jenkins, 2012-2015

Reader of play manuscripts, Goodman Theatre, Chicago, 2010-2011

Production Dramaturg

"The Hostage," by Brendan Behan, dir. Jonathan Berry, Theatre Building, Chicago, September 2009

"A Perfect Wedding," by Charles Mee, dir. Joanie Schultz, Circle Theatre, Chicago, March 2009

"Mad Forest," by Caryl Churchill, dir. Brant Russel, Northwestern University, January 2009

"Many Loves" by William Carlos Williams, dir. Joanie Schultz, Caffeine Theater, Chicago, October 2008

"Three Sisters," dir. M. Poole, Northwestern-University, 2005

"King Lear," dir. A. Woodworth and D. Mora, Northwestern-University, 2003

Memberships: American Society for Theatre Research, International Federation for Theatre Research