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Theatrum Mundi of Hospitality / Lupton, Julia Reinhard -- Portraits of Hydra: Theatre and the Many-Headed Multitude / Höfele, Andreas -- "They Have Their Exits and Their Entrances" On Two Basic Operations in the Theatrum Mundi / Wild, Christopher -- "Look on the Tragic Loading of this Bed": Performing Community and its Other in Shakespeare's Othello / Quiring, Björn -- A Narrow Thing Within One Word The Foreclosure of Nature in Post-Shakespearian Worlds and Times / Haverkamp, Anselm -- Doubtful Visibilities The Theatrum Mundi of the German Baroque Trauerspiel / Newman, Jane O. -- Metaphysical Skepticism, Incertitude and the Dissolution of the Theatrum Mundi / Sierhuis, Freya -- Theatrum Mundi and the Politics of Rebellion in Seventeenth-Century Drama / Smith, Nigel -- The End of a Trope for the World / Harries, Martin

Sommario/riassunto	To metaphorize the world as a theatre has been a common procedure since antiquity, but the use of this trope became particularly prominent and pregnant in early modern times, especially in England. Old and new applications of the "theatrum mundi" topos pervaded discourses, often allegorizing the deceitfulness and impermanence of this world as well as the futility of earthly strife. It was frequently woven into arguments against worldly amusements such as the stage: Commercial theatre was declared an undesirable competitor of God's well-ordered world drama. Early modern dramatists often reacted to this development by appropriating the metaphor, and in an ingenious twist, some playwrights even appropriated its anti-theatrical impetus: Early modern theatre seemed to discover a denial of its own theatricality at its very core. Drama was found to succeed best when it staged itself as a great unmasking. To investigate the reasons and effects of these developments, the anthology examines the metaphorical uses of theatre in plays, pamphlets, epics, treatises, legal proclamations and other sources.