

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910971215403321
Autore	Brooks Daphne
Titolo	Bodies in dissent : spectacular performances of race and freedom, 1850-1910 // Daphne A. Brooks
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Durham : , : Duke University Press, , 2006
ISBN	9780822337225
Disciplina	791.08996073
Soggetti	African Americans in the performing arts African American theater - History - 19th century African American theater - History - 20th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (pages [417]-453) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Our bodies, our/selves: racial phantasmagoria and cultural struggle -- The escape artist: Henry Box Brown, black abolitionist performance, and moving panoramas of slavery -- The deeds done in my body: performance, black(ened) women, and Adah Isaacs Menken in the racial imaginary -- Alien/nation: re-imagining the black body (politic) in Williams and Walker's In Dahomey -- Divas and diasporic consciousness: song, dance, and new negro womanhood in the veil -- Epilogue: theater, black women, and change.
Sommario/riassunto	In Bodies in Dissent Daphne A. Brooks argues that from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth, black transatlantic activists, actors, singers, and other entertainers frequently transformed the alienating conditions of social and political marginalization into modes of self-actualization through performance. Brooks considers the work of African American, Anglo, and racially ambiguous performers in a range of popular entertainment, including racial melodrama, spectacular theatre, moving panorama exhibitions, Pan-Africanist musicals, Victorian magic shows, religious and secular song, spiritualism, and dance. She describes how these entertainers experimented with different ways of presenting their bodies in public—through dress, movement, and theatrical technologies—to defamiliarize the spectacle of “blackness” in the transatlantic imaginary. Brooks

pieces together reviews, letters, playbills, fiction, and biography in order to reconstruct not only the contexts of African American performance but also the reception of the stagings of “bodily insurgency” which she examines. Throughout the book, she juxtaposes unlikely texts and entertainers in order to illuminate the complicated transatlantic cultural landscape in which black performers intervened. She places Adah Isaacs Menken, a star of spectacular theatre, next to Sojourner Truth, showing how both used similar strategies of physical gesture to complicate one-dimensional notions of race and gender. She also considers Henry Box Brown’s public re-enactments of his escape from slavery, the Pan-Africanist discourse of Bert Williams’s and George Walker’s musical *In Dahomey* (1902–04), and the relationship between gender politics, performance, and New Negro activism in the fiction of the novelist and playwright Pauline Hopkins and the postbellum stage work of the cakewalk dancer and choreographer Aida Overton Walker. Highlighting the integral connections between performance and the construction of racial identities, Brooks provides a nuanced understanding of the vitality, complexity, and influence of black performance in the United States and throughout the black Atlantic.
