

1. Record Nr.	UNIORUON00150406
Autore	NISHIO Koichi
Titolo	Chusei shosetsu bungaku ron / Nishio Koichi
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Tokyo, : Koshobo, 1972
Descrizione fisica	301 p. ; 18 cm
Classificazione	GIA VI A
Soggetti	LETTERATURA GIAPPONESE - PERIODO KAMAKURA (1185-1333)
Lingua di pubblicazione	Giapponese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
2. Record Nr.	UNINA9910723700903321
Autore	Mihaylova Stefka G
Titolo	Viewers in Distress : Race, Gender, Religion, and Avant-Garde Performance at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Ann Arbor, : University of Michigan Press, , 2023 ©2023
ISBN	0-472-90370-5
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (223 pages)
Disciplina	792.0905
Soggetti	Theater - Political aspects - History - 21st century Experimental theater - History Gender identity in the theater
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di contenuto	Intro -- Contents -- Illustrations -- Introduction: "Can We All Along?" Get -- Chapter 1: The Radical Formalism of Suzan-Lori Parks and Sarah Kane -- Chapter 2: A Spectator Prepares: Forced Entertainment's Theater of Critical Feeling -- Chapter 3: The Behzti Riot as a

**Sommario/riassunto**

Conventional notions of avant-garde art suggest innovative artists rebelling against artistic convention and social propriety, shocking unwilling audiences into new ways of seeing and living. *Viewers in Distress* tells a different story. Beginning in the tumultuous 1990s, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and in the wake of the Los Angeles riots, rebellious spectators in American and British theaters broke with theater decorum and voiced their radical interpretations of shows that were not meant to be radical. In doing so, audiences tried to understand the complex racial, gender, and religious politics of their times, while insisting that liberal societies fulfill their promise of dignity for all. Stefka Mihaylova argues that such non-conforming viewing amounts to an avant-garde of its own: a bold reimagining of how we live together and tell stories of our lives together, aimed to achieve liberalism's promise. In telling this story, she analyzes the production and reception politics of works by Susan-Lori Parks, Sarah Kane, *Forced Entertainment*, Gurpreet Kaur Bhatti, and Young Jean Lee, as well as non-theatrical controversies such as the conflict over Halloween costumes at Yale in 2015. At the core of spectators' discontent, this book suggests, is an effort to figure out how to get along with people different from ourselves in the diverse U.S. and British societies in which we live.

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