

Queer Temporalities: Contemporary Performance and the Hole of History



Time Slips: Queer Temporalities, Contemporary Performance, and the Hole of History (Performance Works) by David Leavitt

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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In her seminal work, *Time and the Other*, Luce Irigaray argues that time is a patriarchal construct that has been used to marginalize and oppress women. She posits that women's experiences of time are often nonlinear and fragmented, and that they have been denied access to the dominant, masculine temporality that values progress and linearity.

Queer temporalities challenge traditional understandings of time and history, offering alternative ways of experiencing and understanding the past, present, and future. Queer performance artists use their bodies, gestures, and narratives to create alternative temporal experiences that disrupt dominant narratives and open up new possibilities for queer subjectivity and identity.

Performing the Past

One way that queer performance artists engage with queer temporalities is by performing the past. This can involve reenacting historical events, retelling personal stories, or creating new narratives that challenge traditional accounts of the past. By performing the past, queer artists can bring to light forgotten or marginalized histories, and they can challenge the dominant narratives that have shaped our understanding of the past.

For example, the performance artist Tim Miller has created a series of works that explore the history of queer sexuality. In his piece *The Pansy Project*, Miller reenacts the trial of Oscar Wilde for gross indecency. By performing Wilde's trial, Miller brings to light the homophobic laws and attitudes that were prevalent in Victorian England. He also challenges the dominant narrative of Wilde as a tragic figure, and he offers a more nuanced and complex understanding of Wilde's life and work.

Disrupting Linear Time

Another way that queer performance artists engage with queer temporalities is by disrupting linear time. Linear time is the dominant way of understanding time in Western culture. It is a concept that is based on the idea that time moves forward in a straight line, from the past to the present to the future. Linear time is often associated with progress and development.

Queer performance artists often disrupt linear time in their work. They may use nonlinear narratives, fragmented timelines, or repetitive gestures to create a sense of time that is fluid and non-linear. By disrupting linear time, queer artists challenge the dominant understanding of time and history, and they open up new possibilities for queer subjectivity and identity.

For example, the performance artist John Kelly has created a series of works that explore the relationship between time and memory. In his piece *Ghost Light*, Kelly uses a series of repetitive gestures to create a sense of time that is both fluid and fragmented. The piece is inspired by Kelly's own experiences with memory and loss, and it explores the ways in which our memories can shape our understanding of the past and the present.

Creating Alternative Temporalities

In addition to performing the past and disrupting linear time, queer performance artists also create alternative temporalities in their work. These alternative temporalities can offer new ways of experiencing and understanding the past, present, and future. They can also provide a space for queer people to imagine new possibilities for themselves and their communities.

For example, the performance artist Travis Alabanza has created a series of works that explore the temporality of queerness. In his piece *Burgerz*, Alabanza uses a series of repetitive gestures and spoken word to create a sense of time that is both personal and political. The piece explores the ways in which queer people have been marginalized and oppressed throughout history, but it also offers a vision of a more just and equitable future.

The Hole of History

The work of queer performance artists is often characterized by a sense of urgency. This urgency is due in part to the fact that queer people have been historically marginalized and oppressed. Queer performance artists feel a need to speak out against injustice and to create new possibilities for queer subjectivity and identity.

The urgency of queer performance art is also due to the fact that queer people are often faced with a sense of historical loss. Queer histories have been erased or marginalized, and queer people have often been denied access to the dominant narratives of history. This sense of historical loss can be traumatic, and it can lead to a feeling of disconnection from the past.

Queer performance artists use their work to fill the hole of history. They create new narratives that give voice to queer experiences and histories. They also challenge the dominant narratives of history that have marginalized and oppressed queer people.

Queer Temporalities and Social Change

The work of queer performance artists has the potential to bring about social change. By challenging traditional understandings of time and history, queer performance artists can open up new possibilities for queer subjectivity and identity. They can also create a more just and equitable future for all.

Queer performance art is a powerful tool for social change. It can challenge dominant narratives, create alternative temporalities, and give voice to marginalized experiences. Queer performance artists are using their work to create a more just and equitable world for all.



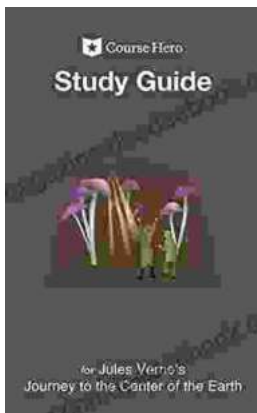
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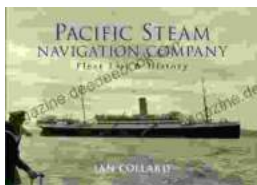
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