Theatre, Performance and Cognition
Languages, Bodies and Ecologies
Edited by Rhonda Blair & Amy Cook

"The three concepts addressed in this volume are central, contested, and used in significantly different ways in the humanities, neuroscience and psychology. Through presenting essays that use the term and then inviting someone more familiar with the sciences, this book challenges preconceptions about how terms are used and serve as a means of improving the quality of communication between disciplines." John Lutterbie, Stony Brook University, USA

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Theatre, Performance and Cognition introduces readers to the key debates, areas of research, and applications of the cognitive sciences to the humanities, and to theatre and performance in particular. It features the most exciting work being done at the intersection of theatre and cognitive science, containing both selected scientific studies that have been influential in the field, each introduced and contextualised by the editors, together with related scholarship from the field of theatre and performance that demonstrates some of the applications of the cognitive sciences to actor training, the rehearsal room and the realm of performance more generally.

The three sections consider the principal areas of research and application in this interdisciplinary field, starting with a focus on language and meaning-making in which Shakespeare’s work and Tom Stoppard’s Arcadia are considered. In the second part which focuses on the body, chapters consider applications for actor and dance training, while the third part focuses on dynamic ecologies, of which the body is a part.

Rhonda Blair, Professor at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX, USA, is the author of The Actor, Image, and Action: Acting and Cognitive Neuroscience (2008), and essays in Theatre Topics, TDR, the Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism, among others, and several edited volumes. She was president of the American Society for Theatre Research, 2009-2012.

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