



Ludics in Surrealist Theatre and Beyond (Studies in Surrealism)

Vassiliki Rapti

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Taking as its point of departure the complex question about whether Surrealist theatre exists, this book re-examines the much misunderstood artistic medium of theatre within Surrealism, especially when compared to poetry and painting. This study reconsiders Surrealist theatre specifically from the perspective of ludics—a poetics of play and games—an ideal approach to the Surrealists, whose games blur the boundaries between the 'playful' and the 'serious.' Vassiliki Rapti's aims are threefold: first, to demystify André Breton's controversial attitude toward theatre; second, to do justice to Surrealist theatre, by highlighting the unique character that derives from its inherent element of play; and finally, to trace the impact of Surrealist theatre in areas far beyond its generally acknowledged influence on the Theatre of the Absurd—an impact being felt even on the contemporary world stage. Beginning with the Surrealists' 'one-into-another' game and its illustration of Breton's ludic dramatic theory, Rapti then examines the traces of this kind of game in the works of a wide variety of Surrealist and Post-Surrealist playwrights and stage directors, from several different countries, and from the 1920s to the present: Roger Vitrac, Antonin Artaud, Günter Berghaus, Nanos Valaoritis, Robert Wilson, and Megan Terry.

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