



Re-visioning myth

Frances Babbage

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'Re-visioning myth: contemporary drama by women' examines the diverse ways in which classical myth narratives have been reworked by women playwrights for the European stage. The first in-depth assessment of 're-vision' as a phenomenon in women's drama, this study explores the ideological and aesthetic potential of such practice and simultaneously exposes the tensions inherent in attempts to challenge narratives that have fundamentally shaped western thought. 'Re-visioning myth' examines plays from the 1960s to the 21st century, providing contextualised readings of fourteen theatrical works originating from France, Italy, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, the U.K. and Ireland. Babbage introduces important contemporary playwrights to English speaking readers and audiences, placing these authors and their works into dialogue with others more widely known.

From tracing the persistence of classical myths in contemporary culture and the significance of this in shaping gendered identities and opportunities, through to analysis of individual plays and productions, 'Re-visioning myth' reveals how myths have served in the theatre as 'pretexts' for ideological debate; have enabled exploration of the fragile borders between mythic and the everyday and how revision has been regarded, not unproblematically, as a route towards restructuring the self. Babbage also explores the intersection of re-vision within the contrasting trends of 'in-yer face' and postdramatic theatre, and the unique potential for myth rewriting offered by autobiographical solo performance.

This will make compelling reading for anyone interested in women's writing for the theatre or wider practices of adaptation in literature and performance.

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