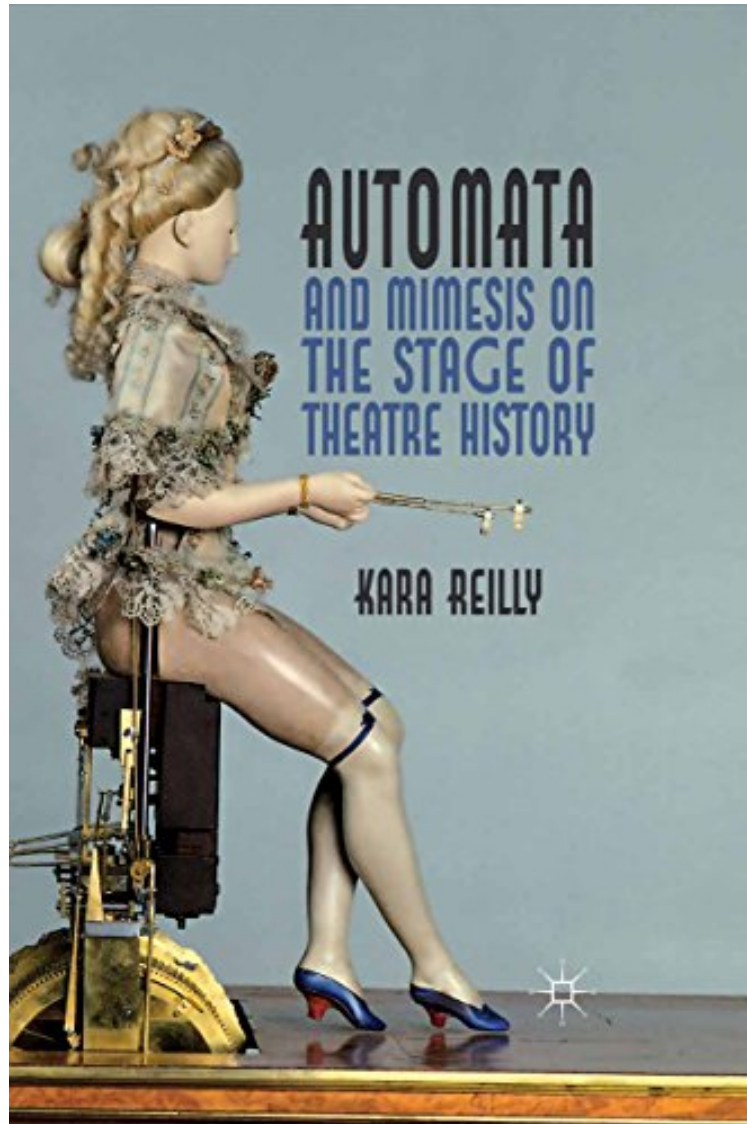


Automata and Mimesis on the Stage of Theatre History

K. Reilly

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K. Reilly : Automata and Mimesis on the Stage of Theatre History before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Automata and Mimesis on the Stage of Theatre History:

0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Automata, in relations to Aesthetics, and SocietyBy Matthew SimonI enjoyed this book very much. My primary interest was the relationship between early opera, music, and dance, and stage design such as found in the Drottningholm Palace theatre in which perspective (Brunelleschi) became significant, as well as use of automated lighting, etc. Kara Reilly fails to define exactly what she means by "automata", and this defines her book. Two definitions exist: one in which machines seem to move and approximate living things (used by Reilly), the other is modern and is more specific. The first half of the book about automata and the theatre

was very good. This covered up to and including Descartes. After Descartes, Reilly fails to mention that automata are equivalent to Chomsky languages, thus Reilly doesn't deal with the relationship of automata and languages and the theatre. For example, she doesn't deal with the famous Turing test (effectively, can a person differentiate between a person and a computer). However, the material after Descartes is precisely about that subject. This immediately affects Reilly's views about the significance of Robots and androids in theatre. Reilly's research about the silk weavers in Lyon, the Canutes and automata (looms, and weavers being replaced by automata) was VERY good, but she fails to mention (to be aware of) the Canutes {The Lyon Uprising of 1834: Social and Political Conflict in the Early July Monarchy (Study in Urban History)} being at the bottom of proletarian protest in the 1834 French Revolution, of significance to the observing Tsarist government chinovniki (officials). However, she is very concerned with this question concerning proletarians. Thus the relationship about political aspects of the subject is extremely limited. Matthew Simon

The automaton, known today as the robot, can be seen as a metaphor for the historical period in which it is explored. Chapters include examinations of Iconoclasm's fear that art might surpass nature, the Cartesian mind/body divide, automata as objects of courtly desire, the uncanny Olympia, and the revolutionary Robots in post-WWI drama.

About the Author KARA REILLY is a Lecturer at the University of Birmingham, UK. She is a theatre historian, theorist and dramaturg. Her work has appeared in New Theatre Quarterly, American Drama, Theatre Journal and Contemporary Theatre . This is her first book.