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***Canadian Theatre Review***

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**Post-Truth**

**Features**

**Post-Truth?**

[*Barry Freeman*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Freeman%2C+Barry)*,*[*Matt Jones*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Jones%2C+Matt)

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***Good Fences’s* Scripted Truths: Cultivating Dialogue in Post-Real Times**

[*Kelsey Jacobson*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Jacobson%2C+Kelsey)

This article considers the presentation and performance of ‘truth’ in Downstage Theatre Company’s *Good Fences. Good Fences* dramatizes the relationship between the oil and gas and agriculture industries in Alberta. The show was created through interviews with ranchers, oil workers, and other Albertans, but, the creators emphasize, the final result is neither verbatim nor site-specific nor documentary, but true. Indeed, spectators of *Good Fences* felt the show’s strength lay in its ability to present sometimes entirely contradictory opinions: something they felt was missing in public government and media representations characterized as less than truthful.

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**“Nature Exposed to Our Line of Questioning”: *Tomorrow’s Child* as Quantum Theatre**

[*Derek Gingrich*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Gingrich%2C+Derek)

This article evaluates Ghost River Theatre’s *Tomorrow’s Child* through theories of subjectivity and reality founded on early quantum mechanics. When scientists first faced uncertainty, discontinuity, granularity of space, and other phenomena that affronted Newtonian and Kantian assumptions, they developed an approach to scientific discovery that respected an unassailable and primary subjectivity yet maintained a realism open to renegotiation. By blinding its spectators, Ghost River Theatre’s *Tomorrow’s Child* emphasizes the subjective orientation of basic cognition. Spectators must choose where to listen, an activity highlighted by their central spatial location. Yet the sounds from other possible orientations linger, reminding spectators of an amorphous, inaccessible, but actual and shared reality outside their orientation.

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**Apocalypse Masque: Post-Electric Theatricality in *Mr. Burns***

[*Ariel Watson*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Watson%2C+Ariel)

How does a society survive through its stories, after the death of the technologies that embodied those narratives? This is the question that drives Anne Washburn’s 2012 play *Mr. Burns*. She posits a landscape in apocalyptic shadow, a post-electric New England where the power plants have failed and wanderers gather around campfires to trade lists of lost loved ones and whatever tales they can remember from the defunct world of television. Over the course of three acts, a single episode from *The Simpsons* becomes a bardic solace for a fractured society, then (a few years later, when troupes are paid to perform fading episodes from the show) an economic structure through which hope and nostalgia are exchanged, and, finally, in the distant future, a fully ritual theatre in which its previous purposes have attained a religious level of abstraction.

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**Is This Still That? Comedy in the Age of Post-Truth**

[*Matt Jones*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Jones%2C+Matt)*,*[*Peter Oldring*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Oldring%2C+Peter)

Matt Jones spoke to an authority on fake news, Peter Oldring, a writer and performer on the weekly Saturday-morning CBC Radio One program *This Is That*, to talk about satirical news in the era of post-truth. The interview revealed how ready audiences are to invest in even the most absurd ideas and stories provided they are dressed in the costume of CBC’s ‘newsy’ legitimacy and carried out with convincing naturalism.

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**Petri Dish Deceptions: A Search for 100% Veracity in Rimini Protokoll’s Statistical Portrait of Montreal**

[*Richard C. Windeyer*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Windeyer%2C+Richard+C)

In the wake of 2016—the year of ‘post-truth’ and ‘fake facts’—Rimini Protokoll’s participatory theatre work, *100% Montréal*, attempted to reveal what the city’s census data had failed to capture about the lives of its citizens. This article examines how their theatrical juxtaposition of a city’s demographic data with the onstage testimonies of 100 residents reveals important underlying factors that have plagued the pursuit of accuracy in census-taking throughout history. In doing so, *100% Montreal* effectively stages the conditions under which contemporary definitions of ‘truth’ become increasingly mutable and elusive, while underscoring the extent to which the public disclosure of accurate and truthful testimony relies on a trustworthy culture of respect and privacy protection between the surveyors and the surveyed.

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**Violence, Speech, and Reality: The Case of *Cinq Visages pour Camille Brunelle***

[*François Jardon-Gomez*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Jardon-Gomez%2C+Fran%C3%A7ois)

This article focuses on the connection between violence, obscenity, language, and character in contemporary Quebec theatre and how it might help us redefine the tension between theatre and reality, questioning anew oppositions such as artifice/authenticity or theatricality/performativity. Using Guillaume Corbeil’s *Cinq visages pour Camille Brunelle*, this article proposes that even if contemporary playwrights use a resemblance with reality (resemblance of language, discourse, ideas, or characters), the ‘stage’ should not try to refer to the ‘real world.’ I argue that the question of reality and post-reality is in need of a new definition. Theatre could be redefined as a new space, acting as a mediator between the real and the fictional, making use of both at the same time.

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**Mobilizing a Slow Theatre Movement through an *Atypique*. Artist Perspective**

[*Ash McAskill*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/McAskill%2C+Ash)

With our performance industry working from turbo-capitalistic frameworks, artists from neurodiverse and other disability communities are all-too-often passed over. This article calls attention to how an emerging slow theatre movement in Canada is changing these conditions. Slowness, as McAskill argues, is an important mode of perception that values human diversity, resensitizing us to the world we move through. McAskill extends this approach with the Quebec-based *atypique* artistic movement. Dedicated to recognizing the aesthetic value and professional rights of physically unconventional and neurodivergent artists, McAskill describes in what ways *atypique* artists are leading new legacies of a slow theatre movement, particularly Les Productions des pieds des mains, a Montreal-based dance-theatre company.

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**“I Wonder Where They Went”: Post-Reality Multiplicities and Counter-Resurgent Narratives in Thirza Cuthand’s *Lessons in Baby Dyke Theory***

[*Lindsay Nixon*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Nixon%2C+Lindsay)

For Thirza Cuthand, video, media, and film became a platform for early articulations of queer and prairie disidentifications with the objectives of Indigenous resurgence. Post-reality, or the overshare age of the Internet, early seeds of which can be seen throughout Cuthand’s work, made way for multiple perceptions and perspectives in fields traditionally monopolized by hegemonic structures, including Indigenous art.

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**Forced Entertainment? Gamified Surveillance in Theatre Conspiracy’s *Foreign Radical***

[*Matt Jones*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Jones%2C+Matt)

The nature of surveillance is changing. It is becoming gamified. This article charts a shift in thinking about surveillance culture, from the panopticon models advanced by Jeremy Bentham and Michel Foucault to current analyses of the increasingly participatory and gamified models of surveillance in the age of big data. That shift is played out literally in Theatre Conspiracy’s immersive play *Foreign Radical*, in which participants are led through a game environment in which they reveal aspects of their online behaviour and judge each other in a way that replicates the kinds of social sorting that take place in both social media and surveillance. The game leads them to deliberate on the case of an Iranian-Canadian man named Hesam, who stands accused of terrorism.

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**Script**

**Foreign Radical**

[*Tim Carlson*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Carlson%2C+Tim)*,*[*Jeremy Waller*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Waller%2C+Jeremy)*,*[*David Mesiha*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Mesiha%2C+David)*,*[*Kathleen Flaherty*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Flaherty%2C+Kathleen)*,*[*Milton Lim*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Lim%2C+Milton)*, [Aryo Khakpour](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Khakpour%2C+Aryo),*[*Florence Barrett*](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Barrett%2C+Florence)*, [Cande Andrade](https://ctr.utpjournals.press/author/Andrade%2C+Cande)*

Theatre Conspiracy’s *Foreign Radical* is an interactive, multimedia theatre show with multilingual elements in Farsi and Arabic. Thirty participants enter an intriguing theatrical game that explores security, profiling, freedom of expression, and privacy in the age of cybersurveillance. Mobile throughout the performance, the participants collaborate, compete, investigate, debate, and spy on each other. The *Foreign Radical* set is divided into four quadrants where participants, depending on personal and group responses to various questions posed by the game’s ‘host,’ witness different perspectives on the action.

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