



The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas (a John Hope Franklin Center Book)

Diana Taylor

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In *The Archive and the Repertoire* preeminent performance studies scholar Diana Taylor provides a new understanding of the vital role of performance in the Americas. From plays to official events to grassroots protests, performance, she argues, must be taken seriously as a means of storing and transmitting knowledge. Taylor reveals how the repertoire of embodied memory—conveyed in gestures, the spoken word, movement, dance, song, and other performances—offers alternative perspectives to those derived from the written archive and is particularly useful to a reconsideration of historical processes of transnational contact. *The Archive and the Repertoire* invites a remapping of the Americas based on traditions of embodied practice.

Examining various genres of performance including demonstrations by the children of the disappeared in Argentina, the Peruvian theatre group Yuyachkani, and televised astrological readings by Univision personality Walter Mercado, Taylor explores how the archive and the repertoire work together to make political claims, transmit traumatic memory, and forge a new sense of cultural identity. Through her consideration of performances such as Coco Fusco and Guillermo Gómez-Peña's show *Two Undiscovered Amerindians Visit . . .*, Taylor illuminates how scenarios of discovery and conquest haunt the Americas, trapping even those who attempt to dismantle them. Meditating on events like those of September 11, 2001 and media representations of them, she examines both the crucial role of performance in contemporary culture and her own role as witness to and participant in hemispheric dramas. *The Archive and the Repertoire* is a compelling demonstration of the many ways that the study of performance enables a deeper understanding of the past and present, of ourselves and others.

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