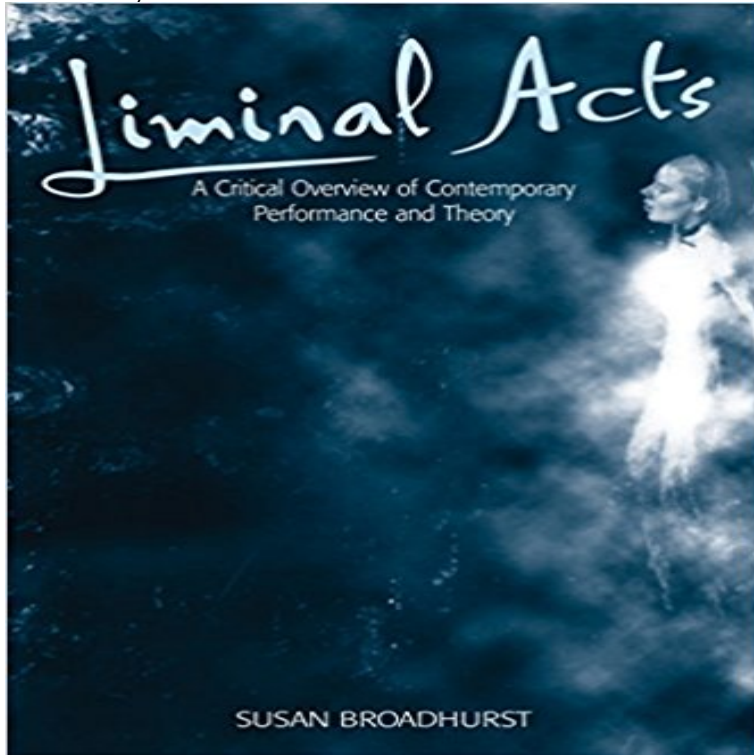


Liminal Acts: A Critical Overview of Contemporary Performance and Theory



The liminal describes a marginalized space of chaos and creative potential where nothing is fixed or certain. Liminal performance describes a range of interdisciplinary, highly experimental, performative types in theatre and performance, film and music-performances which can be seen to prioritize the body, the technological and the primordial. This text argues that traditional and contemporary critical and aesthetic theories are deficient in interpreting such works. Examples of liminal works discussed include Pina Bauschs Tanztheater, the Theatre of Images of Robert Wilson and Philip Glass, the controversial Social Sculptures of the Viennese Actionists, Peter Greenaways Painterly Aesthetics, Derek Jarman's Queer Politics, digitized sampled music and neo-gothic sound. Given the importance of the body in such performance, the linguistic turn present in traditional theories seems inappropriate and needs to be adjusted for an intersemiotic analysis - a signifying practice not only includes but goes beyond language. The early part of the book therefore surveys traditional aesthetics in the writings of Kant, Nietzsche and Heidegger together with contemporary aesthetics in the writings of Foucault, Derrida, Baudrillard and Lyotard. This is followed by a series of case studies and, in the final chapter, a summary description of liminal performances as an emerging genre.

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