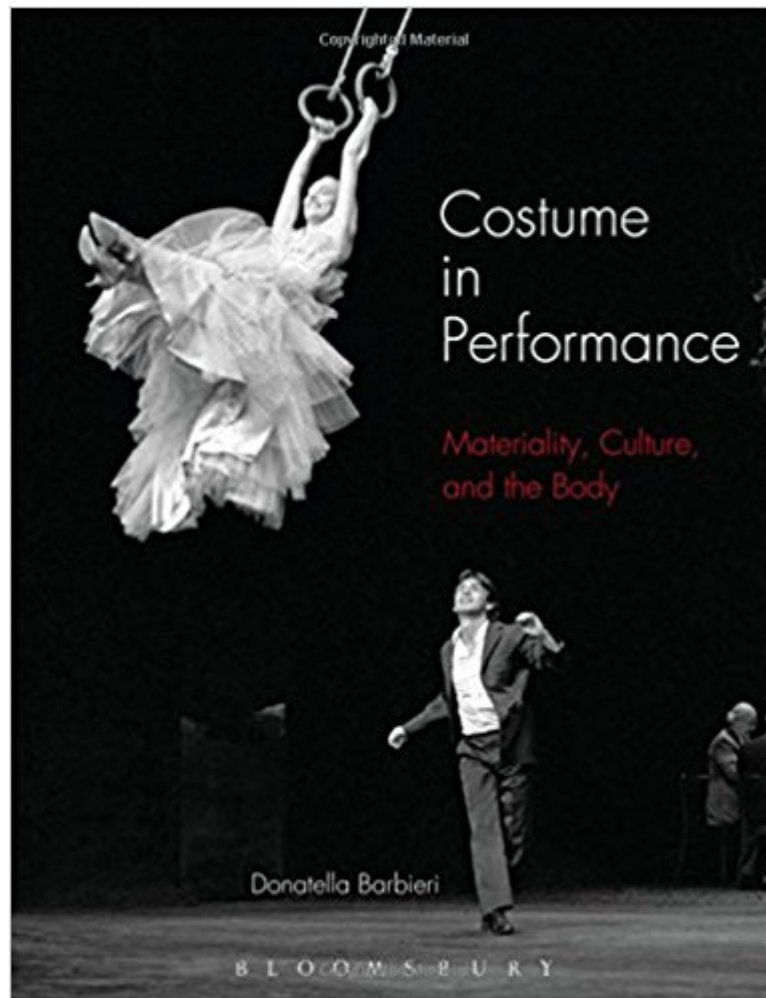




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# Costume In Performance: Materiality, Culture, And The Body



## Synopsis

This beautifully illustrated book conveys the centrality of costume to live performance. Finding associations between contemporary practices and historical manifestations, costume is explored in six thematic chapters, examining the transformative ritual of costuming; choruses as reflective of society; the grotesque, transgressive costume; the female sublime as emancipation; costume as sculptural art in motion; and the here-and-now as history. Viewing the material costume as a crucial aspect in the preparation, presentation and reception of live performance, the book brings together costumed performances through history. These range from ancient Greece to modern experimental productions, from medieval theatre to modernist dance, from the 'fashion plays' to contemporary Shakespeare, marking developments in both culture and performance. Revealing the relationship between dress, the body and human existence, and acknowledging a global as well as an Anglo and Eurocentric perspective, this book shows costume's ability to cross both geographical and disciplinary borders. Through it, we come to question the extent to which the material costume actually co-authors the performance itself, speaking of embodied histories, states of being and never-before imagined futures, which come to life in the temporary space of the performance. With a contribution by Melissa Trimingham, University of Kent, UK

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is essential reading for anyone interested in performance and costumes, providing an exciting and accessible scholarly exploration of the uses and significance of costumes from prehistoric ritual to contemporary theater. It is valuable for its international range of productions and detailed

descriptions of significant costumes, including dance, circus performance, street theater and traditional stage. -- Patricia Lennox, New York University, USA Donatella Barbieri has crafted a unique and intriguing way of looking at the history of costumes for performance. Drawing on case studies and in-depth analysis of performance costume, this book is a marvelous addition for researchers in the costume discipline. -- Colleen Muscha, School of Theatre, College of Fine Arts, Florida State University, USA This poetic work is a tour de force of lively research and imagination. Charting the transformation of performance costume across time, space and material, Barbieri, with Trimingham, takes us from the Ancient Greek chorus to modern trapeze artists, revealing how costume creates new thresholds of human experience. -- Peter McNeil, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia With compelling scholarship and great artistic sensitivity, Barbieri deftly explores the cultural, societal and creative agency of the costumed and performing body. In tracing the complex artistic, historical and cultural journey from every day clothing through the designer to the cutting table to the stage costume, this magnificently illustrated book makes an absolutely essential contribution to our understanding of scenography. -- Christopher Baugh, University of Leeds, UK Donatella Barbieri's own breadth of skills as a passionate lecturer, an inspiring teacher and a practitioner are all evident in this wonderful and uncompromising new book. Through the agility of her themes and connections from paleolithic cave painting to the most recent performances or archival discoveries, she never loses sight of the metamorphic power of costume. This is a daring and inspiring book. -- Judith Clark, Research Centre for Fashion Curation, University of the Arts London, UK.

Donatella Barbieri is Senior Research Fellow in Design for Performance at London College of Fashion, UK, and, previously, at the Victoria and Albert Museum, UK. With contributions from Melissa Trimingham, Senior Lecturer in Drama at the University of Kent, UK.

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