

A Year in the Life: Publishing *is* and *as* Recording

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On 28 February 2010, I stood on a street in Toronto. It was night, and the sidewalk was uncharacteristically empty. This was not, as one might expect in late February in Toronto, because of the weather. Instead, it was because the Canadian men's hockey team was playing in the gold medal game at the 2010 Olympics. The Olympics were hosted in my home city of Vancouver. I had decided not to travel back for the event. In the middle of a master's degree, I felt I could not afford the trip. And, also, it was one of my first years living away. I was trying to prove to myself I did not *need* to go back. When Canadian player Sidney Crosby scored the game-winning goal, cheers filled the night air and a deep sense of homesickness thudded in my chest.

In her article "A Year in the Life: *Canadian Theatre Review*, 1988" (this issue), Kim Solga also begins with an anecdote about a Canadian-hosted Olympics, the 1988 Games in Calgary. She recalls the vivid sensations of being 13 years old and watching figure skater Liz Manley perform her routine. With this performance as her anchor, Solga introduces her choice to survey the four 1988 issues of *CTR* for her contribution to the fiftieth-anniversary issue. In so doing, Solga begins to signal the complex weave between performance, publishing, and the personal.

In reflecting on Solga's piece, I was reminded of Diana Taylor's *is/as* distinction. Theorizing performance, Diana Taylor conceptualizes the distinction between saying that a phenomenon *is* a performance, an ontological category, and examining a phenomenon *as* a performance, an epistemological approach (2–3). "A Year in the Life" prompted me to extend this distinction beyond performance and think of it in relation to publishing. When used as a verb, "recording" means "to relate, narrate, or put on record" ("Record, *V.* (1)"). When used as a noun, "recording" might refer to "the action

or an act of setting down in writing ..." ("Recording, *N*"). In these senses, the publishing process—the interconnected acts of writing, editing, and circulating works such as *CTR*'s four 1988 issues—*is* an act of recording. Indeed, as Solga demonstrates, the 1988 issues relate various authors' observations about themes including Shakespeare, collective creation, theatre and ethnicity, and critical practice.

At the same time, Solga approaches the issues epistemologically, searching for what we might learn from the themes and threads and spaces between words. In so doing, she foregrounds the ways in which publishing can also be understood *as* recording. As Solga explores these traces, the four 1988 *CTR* issues do not only register the authors' intended messaging. Like trying to tape a conversation in a public space, the issues also capture the inadvertent and the ambient: individual assumptions (about how productions of Shakespeare should or should not interpret text in the Shakespearean issue, for example) or more general trends (such as tensions between academic and non-academic contributors in the criticism issue). These details are, perhaps, particularly important in the context of publishing and performance in Canada.

In publishing, the acts of writing, editing, printing, and circulating are concrete for the individuals performing the tasks, but are mostly hidden from the reader. This erasure is, in fact, built into the process. Editorial feedback or peer reviews are rarely published. Day-to-day communications, and the accompanying glimmers of the interpersonal, are not printed. There is no ledger that lists all the missed deadlines (thank goodness!) or the time it took to secure image permission rights. These omissions are both convention and necessity. Imagine the vulnerability of published peer reviews. Think of the tomes of material if every communication and draft was published. And yet, the process of erasure allows for various degrees of evasion.

As Solga notes, the authors of the Shakespeare issue are mostly male and largely located in English departments. This is part of the record. How this came to be, however, is not. How did the editing process work at *CTR* in 1988? How were the authors of the four 1988 *CTR* issues selected? To help answer some of these questions and better understand editing and publishing in the late 1980s, I reached out to the editors of the four 1988 issues. Natalie Rewa, Robert Wallace, and Alan Filewod replied.

The 1988 issues were published following a reorganization of the editorial process in 1987, wherein the editorial structure of *CTR* moved from a sole editor model (Wallace) to a group of four scholars: Alan Filewod, Natalie Rewa, Ann Wilson, and Robert Wallace. In this model, the editorial collective discussed a year's themes and issues, and then each editor toiled independently on their issue: working with contributors (and possibly guest editors), selecting the featured playscript, and securing visual materials. According to Wallace, few unsolicited manuscripts were received, and editors usually reached out to potential authors to solicit contributions. While limited use of email was available at universities, editors largely communicated with contributors via phone, fax, or mail.

In terms of editing timelines, Rewa noted that "editors had to work timing based on an annual routing from University of Toronto Press of when the issue was to appear." Alongside individual approaches and editing styles, this meant that a piece might go through a revision cycle (with feedback often communicated via phone calls). According to Wallace and Filewod, it was also possible that an editor would revise an article without consultation with the author, particularly in the case of late submissions that were close to the publisher's deadlines. In the design and proofing stage of the process, editors worked closely with University of Toronto Press publishing personnel. Rewa recalls that a "significant deadline was that to get all the edited, marked up typescripts and peripheral materials to the copyeditor," who at the time was Olive Koyama. Meanwhile, Filewod fondly remembers driving to Toronto to work with the University of Toronto Press's designer Beth Earl Rose, with whom he would "spend the day" and "physically lay out the magazine." Wallace also highlights working with Earl Rose, noting that his "favorite memory of editing *CTR*—any issue—was sitting with Beth Earl in her office at U of T, working through the design of the issue, page by page."

The editors' recollections function as a kind of flashlight, illuminating easy to overlook details while also highlighting the many textures that are not reflected in the printed product. A keen reader can find a note about the editorial reorganization on page 3 of the Shakespeare issue. They can also find the names of Beth Earl Rose and Olive Koyama listed in the front matter of each of the 1988 issues. At the same time, the editorial meetings, the typed manuscripts, the phone calls, the days spent at the University of

Toronto Press office, and the personal and interpersonal joys and stresses have fallen away. This highlights the tension, between what gets registered and what does not—a topic which is particularly important in the context of this issue of *Performance Matters*, an issue that attempts to acknowledge the often-obscured dynamics of publishing in the field of theatre and performance and beyond.

As both the editors' remembrances and Solga's approach highlight, the personal frequently gets lost in the process of editing. Each of the 1988 editors highlighted personal and interpersonal details: the people they worked with, the pressures and pleasures of the role. Similarly, Solga connects her relationship to *CTR* by remembering watching Liz Manley at 13 years old and noting that, in 1988, she "could not have imagined the scholar" (132) she would become. Relatedly, on that Toronto street in 2010, I could not know that the homesickness and loneliness I felt would become an anchor in my intellectual career. Indeed, the game would become the case study for one of my first conference presentations in theatre and performance studies and later one of my first publications in the field, in a special issue of *Canadian Theatre Review*.¹ Sometimes, performance does that: it impresses itself upon a body in unexpected ways. And, sometimes, an impulse to record that impression follows. One of the challenges, of course, is the ephemerality of performance itself. As Peggy Phelan famously argues, "[P]erformance becomes itself through disappearance" (146). The articles that fill the pages of journals in any field variously seek to index, make legible, perform, capture, or otherwise chronicle something that is vanishing, vanished. This desire to share performance through the record is, indeed, what often connects editors, authors, and readers, both in and across time.

As an epistemological approach to publication reminds us, however, the process of recording and sharing is neither simple nor neutral. Writing about performance can be, as it was for Solga and me, deeply intertwined with the personal. Publishing can be, as it was for the editors and authors of the four 1988 *CTR* issues, individually, collectively, and contextually revealing. Approaching publication epistemologically reminds us of how important it is

¹ Editor's note: Blair's article, "Hockey Sticks and Heartstrings: The Men's Gold Medal Hockey Game and the Affective Legacy of the 2010 Olympic Games" was published in *CTR* 164 (Fall 2015), "Vancouver After 2010," edited by Peter Dickinson, Keren Zaiontz and Kirsty Johnston.

to understand publication both *is* and *as* recording—to read for the intended alongside the fragments of the ambient and the hidden.

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