



# Howard Barker's Theatre: Wrestling with Catastrophe (Methuen Drama Engage)

*James Reynolds (Editor), Andy W. Smith (Editor)*

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Howard Barker and The Wrestling School have been seen as marginal to the major concerns of British theatre, problematic in their staging and challenging in the ideas they explore. Yet Barker's writing career spans six decades, he is the only living writer to have been accorded an entire season with the Royal Shakespeare Company, and The Wrestling School produces theatre of such a striking quality that it earned continuous Arts Council funding for nearly 20 years.

*Wrestling with Catastrophe* challenges existing ways of reading Barker's theatre practice and plays and provides new ways into his work. It brings together conversations with theatre makers from in and outside The Wrestling School, with first-hand accounts of the company's practice, and a selection of critical readings. The book's combining of testimony from key Wrestling School practitioners with alternative practical perspectives, and with analysis by both established and emerging scholars, ensures that a spectrum of understanding emerges that is rich in both breadth and depth.

In its consideration of the full range of Barker's aesthetic concerns - including text, direction, design, acting, narrative form, poetry, appropriation, painting, photography, electronic media, technology, puppetry, and theatre space - the volume makes a radical re-evaluation of Barker's theatre possible.

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