Contents

Preface: Watching WOW—Jill Dolan vii
Introduction: Secret WOW—Holly Hughes 1
Introduction: Liberté, Egalité, Lesbianité
—Carmelita Tropicana 9
WOW Women in Their Own Words: Brave New World
—Group Interview by Alisa Solomon with WOW Collective Members (1984) 14
Song: “It’s Hard to Be a Dyke in NYC”
—Lynn Hayes and Debra Miller’s band, the Useless Fems 28

SECTION ONE

Lesbian Camp: Redressing the Canon of 1950s Television

Introduction—Holly Hughes 29
Split Britches (1981)—Lois Weaver, Peggy Shaw, and Deb Margolin 31
Fear of Laughing on the Lower East Side (1984)—Alice Forrester 38
WOW Women in Their Own Words—Alice Forrester 42
Waaay Beyond the Valley of the Dolls (1986)
—Alison Rooney 47
Paradykes Lost (1988)—Lisa Kron for the Five Lesbian Brothers 55
WOW Women in Their Own Words: A Fine Bromance
—Group Interview by Holly Hughes and Carmelita Tropicana with the Five Lesbian Brothers, Maureen (Moe) Angelos, Babs Davy, Dominique Dibbell, Peg Healey, and Lisa Kron (2000) 66
Hamlet (1989): Scripted after Shakespeare’s Hamlet
—Deb Margolin 75
Codependent Lesbian Space Alien Seeks Same (1992)
—Madeleine Olnek 83
WOW Women in Their Own Words—An Interview with Madeleine Olnek by Holly Hughes (June 2000) 94
SECTION TWO

Dyke Noir

Introduction—Holly Hughes 99

The Lady Dick (1985)—Holly Hughes 101

Pickaxe (1986)—Ana Maria Simo 107

O Darn! The World Is Not a Safe Place for Little Buttercups (1991)
—Moe Angelos and Dominique Dibbell 133

WOW Women in Their Own Words—Susan Young 143

SECTION THREE

How to Write Autobiography with Someone’s Hand over Your Mouth

Introduction—Holly Hughes 145

Memories of the Revolution/Memorias de la Revolucíon (1987)
—Carmelita Tropicana and Uzi Parnes 148

How to Say Kaddish with Your Mouth Shut (1988)
—Claire Moed 154

Threads from the Tailor’s Grand Daughters (1989)
—Sharon Jane Smith 160

WOW Women in Their Own Words
—An Interview with Sharon Jane Smith by Carmelita Tropicana (December 2001) 168

Feeling Blue (1988)—Eileen Myles 172

WOW Women in Their Own Words—Eileen Myles 180

Women and Children First: Outstanding Perk or Tool of Oppression? (1992)—Babs Davy 182

WOW Women in Their Own Words: As the World Turns
—Group Interview (2004) 188

Contributors 197

Further Reading 207

Acknowledgments 209

Photographs following page 98