The Cambridge Companion to Harold Pinter

*The Cambridge Companion to Harold Pinter* provides an introduction to one of the world's leading and most controversial writers, whose output in many genres and roles continues to grow. Harold Pinter has written for the theatre, radio, television and screen, in addition to being a highly successful director and actor. This volume examines the wide range of Pinter's work (including his recent play *Celebration*). The first section of essays places his writing within the critical and theatrical context of his time, and its reception worldwide. The *Companion* moves on to explore issues of performance, with essays by practitioners and writers. The third section addresses wider themes, including Pinter as celebrity, the playwright and his critics, and the political dimensions of his work. The volume offers photographs from key productions, a chronology and bibliography.
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MIREIA ARAGAY is a Senior Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Barcelona. She has published essays on contemporary English and Irish drama, and on Shakespearean film adaptations. In 1996, her Spanish translation of One for the Road, La última copa, was awarded the 10th National Translation Prize by the Asociación Española de Estudios Anglonorteamericanos.

RICHARD ALLEN CAVE is Professor of Drama and Theatre Arts at Royal Holloway in the University of London. He has written extensively on Renaissance, nineteenth-century and modern theatre, and in particular on Anglo-Irish drama. As a director he has staged productions of plays by Lady Gregory, Yeats and Brian Friel, and is joint artistic director of Border Crossings Theatre Company.

FRANCESCA COPPA is Assistant Professor of English at Muhlenberg College, where she specialises in British drama and cultural studies. She has edited and written critical introductions for three volumes of Joe Orton’s work, and is the editor of Joe Orton: A Casebook (forthcoming).

HARRY DERBYSHIRE recently completed his doctorate at King’s College, London, and there are plans to publish his thesis ‘Harold Pinter: Production, Reception, Reputation 1984–99’. He is the co-author of two plays, The Remarkable Ralph Nugent Affair and Life is Pain, and is company writer with the theatre company sob.

CHARLES EVANS is a retired naval officer, now lecturing at the Service colleges, with an honorary doctorate from Moscow University. He has held research fellowships from the British Academy and the Leverhulme Trust, and has travelled widely in Russia. He continues to write and lecture on Russian life and culture, and is also a playwright and poet.

JOHN FOWLES’s novels include The Collector (1963), The Magus (1966) and Daniel Martin (1977). The French Lieutenant’s Woman (1969) was filmed in a screenplay by Pinter in 1981. He is in addition a very keen natural historian, and interested in all aspects of local history.
Steven H. Gale holds the University Endowed Chair of the Humanities at Kentucky State University. He was the founding President of the Harold Pinter Society, the founding co-editor of The Harold Pinter Review: Annual Essays and the author or editor of a number of studies of Pinter, including Butter’s Going Up: An Analysis of Harold Pinter’s Work. He has recently completed a monograph, Harold Pinter: The Screenplays.

Sir Peter Hall, formerly the Artistic Director of the Royal National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company, has directed many of Pinter’s plays, and drew on this first-hand knowledge in his discussion of Pinter in his Clark Lectures in 2000. His most recent major production, Tantalus, opened in Denver, Colorado, in November, 2000.

Ronald Knowles is a Senior Lecturer in English Literature at Reading University. He is associate editor of The Harold Pinter Review, and the author of two books and many articles on Pinter. His most recent publication, as editor, is Henry VI, Part II (The Arden Shakespeare, 1999).

Drew Milne is the Judith E. Wilson Fellow in Drama and Poetry in the English Faculty at the University of Cambridge, and a Fellow of Trinity Hall. He co-edited Marxist Literary Theory: A Reader (1996) with Terry Eagleton, and edits the journal Parataxis: Modernism and Modern Writing. His most recent books of poetry are The Gates of Gaza (2000) and Mars Disarmed (2001).

Michael Pennington has been a leading actor for twenty-five years, with the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Royal National Theatre, on tour with his own English Shakespeare Company and in London’s West End. His publications include The Story of the Wars of the Roses, and User’s Guides to Hamlet (1996) and Twelfth Night, and Chekhov in Mind will appear in 2001.

Austin Quigley is Garbedian Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University, where he has been Dean since 1995. Among his books are The Pinter Problem (1975) and The Modern Stage and Other Worlds (1985), and he is on the editorial board of New Literary History, Modern Drama and The Harold Pinter Review. He is currently working on a book on Postmodernism and the Drama.

Peter Raby lectures in Drama and English at Homerton College, Cambridge. He has written extensively on the theatre, and edited the Cambridge Companion to Oscar Wilde (1997). Among his other recent books are Bright Paradise (1996), a study of Victorian scientific travellers, and a biography, Alfred Russel Wallace (2001).

Anthony Roche is Senior Lecturer in Anglo-Irish Literature and Drama at University College, Dublin, where he is also chair of the Board of Drama Studies. His publications include Contemporary Irish Drama.
From Beckett to McGuinness (1994) and special issues of the Irish University Review (which he edits) on Brian Friel (1999) and contemporary Irish fiction (2000).

John Stokes is Professor in the Department of English at King’s College, London. He has written widely on the culture of the fin de siècle and is the author of In the Nineties (1989) and Oscar Wilde: Myths, Miracles and Imitations (1996). He reviews theatre regularly for The Times Literary Supplement.

Yael Zarhy-Levo teaches literature and theatre history in the Department of Poetics and Comparative Literature at Tel-Aviv University. Her forthcoming book, The Theatrical Critic as Cultural Agent: Constructing Pinter, Orton and Stoppard as Absurdist Playwrights, is being published by Peter Lang, 2001.
1930 (10 October) Harold Pinter born at 19 Thistlewaite Road in Hackney, north London, the son of Jack and Frances Pinter.
1939 Evacuated to Caerhays, near Mevagissey, Cornwall, the first of a number of wartime stays outside London.
1944 Gains a place at Hackney Downs Grammar School, where he is particularly influenced by an excellent English teacher, Joe Brearley.
1947 Plays Macbeth in a school production, reviewed in the News Chronicle.
1948 (Autumn) Enters Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.
(October) Called up for National Service, registers as a conscientious objector.
(19 September) First professional performance, Focus on Football Pools.
1951 (January to July) Spends two terms at Central School of Speech and Drama.
(August) Is engaged by Anew McMaster for a six-month tour playing Shakespeare and other classic drama in Ireland.
1952 In McMaster’s company, with Pauline Flanagan and Barry Foster. Continues to write poetry. Discovers Beckett.
1953 Joins Donald Wolfit’s company. Works on his novel The Dwarfs.
1954 Changes stage name to David Baron. Joins Huddersfield Repertory company for the winter.
1956 Acting in Bournemouth, with Vivien Merchant.
(14 September) Marries Vivien Merchant. After a honeymoon in Cornwall, they join the repertory company in Torquay.
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| 1957 | Acting in Torquay, Birmingham, Palmer's Green, Worthing.  
(15 May) *The Room*, produced at Bristol University Drama Department.  
(December) New production of *The Room* entered for *Sunday Times* student drama competition, praised by Harold Hobson. |
Writes *The Hothouse*. |
| 1959 | (January) Directs *The Birthday Party* at Birmingham.  
(18 July) *The Dumb Waiter* produced in German, at Frankfurt Municipal Theatre.  
(29 July) *A Slight Ache*, radio (BBC Third Programme).  
(23 September) ‘Last to Go’, ‘Request Stop’ and ‘Special Offer’ in the Revue *Pieces of Eight*, Apollo Theatre. |
| 1960 | (21 January) *The Room* and *The Dumb Waiter*, Hampstead Theatre Club, both transferred to the Royal Court.  
(1 March) *A Night Out*, radio (BBC Third Programme) (with Pinter as Seeley).  
(22 March) *The Birthday Party*, television (Associated Rediffusion).  
(24 April) *A Night Out*, television (ABC).  
(30 May) *The Caretaker*, Duchess Theatre (with Pinter, later in the run, playing Mick) (1960 *Evening Standard* Drama Award).  
(21 July) *Night School*, television (Associated Rediffusion).  
(27 July) *The Birthday Party* opens at the Actors’ Workshop, San Francisco – the first Pinter professional production in the United States. |
(17 September) *A Night Out*, Gate Theatre, Dublin.  
(4 October) *The Caretaker* opens at the Lyceum Theatre, New York – first Broadway production for Pinter. |
| 1963 | (28 March) *The Lover*, television (Associated Rediffusion) (awarded the Prix Italia for Television Drama).  
(18 September) Directs *The Lover* and *The Dwarfs*, Arts Theatre Club, London. |
The Caretaker, film, directed by Clive Donner (Berlin Film Festival Silver Bear) (released, 1964, in the United States as The Guest).

The Servant, film, directed by Joseph Losey.

1964
(April/May) That’s Your Trouble, That’s All, Applicant, Interview and Dialogue for Three, radio (BBC Third Programme).

The Pumpkin Eater, film, directed by Jack Clayton.

Plays Garcin in In Camera, by Jean-Paul Sartre.

1965
(25 March) Tea Party, television (BBC).
(3 June) The Homecoming, Royal Shakespeare Company, Aldwych Theatre.

Created Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

1966
(25 September) Night School, radio (BBC Third Programme).

The Quiller Memorandum, film, directed by Michael Anderson.

1967
(3 January) The Homecoming, Music Box, New York.
(20 February) The Basement, television (BBC), with Pinter as Stott.

Accident, film, directed by Joseph Losey.

The Homecoming receives New York Drama Critics Award.

1968
(25 April) Landscape, radio, BBC, after Pinter refuses to amend the text at the Lord Chamberlain’s request.

The Birthday Party, film, directed by William Friedkin.

1969
(2 July) Silence and Landscape, Royal Shakespeare Company, Aldwych Theatre.
(9 April) Night in Revue Mixed Doubles, Comedy Theatre.

Plays Lenny in The Homecoming, Watford. 

1970
(18 January) The Birthday Party (BBC radio).
(17 September) Tea Party and The Basement, Duchess Theatre, with Pinter as Stott.

Directs Exiles, by James Joyce, Mermaid Theatre.

Awarded the German Shakespeare Prize.

Filming The Go-Between, film, directed by Joseph Losey.

1971
(May) The Go-Between awarded the Palme d’Or at Cannes Film Festival.
(1 June) Old Times, Royal Shakespeare Company, Aldwych Theatre.


1972
Works on The Proust Screenplay.

1973
(13 April) Monologue, television (BBC).

Directs Butley, by Simon Gray, television (BBC).

The Homecoming, American Film Theatre, directed by Peter Hall.
1974  The Last Tycoon, film, directed by Elia Kazan. 
   Directs Next of Kin, by John Hopkins, Royal National Theatre.
1975  (23 April) No Man’s Land, Royal National Theatre at the Old Vic Theatre, transfers (15 July) to Wyndham’s Theatre.
   (22 October) Old Times, television (BBC).
   Directs Otherwise Engaged, by Simon Gray, Queen’s Theatre, and later in New York.
   Directs Blithe Spirit, by Noel Coward, Royal National Theatre.
   (3 December) acts in Monologue, radio (BBC).
1976  The Homecoming (film), released in UK.
       (20 September) Langrishe, Go Down, television version of screenplay (BBC), directed by David Jones.
       (3 October) No Man’s Land, television (Granada).
       (15 November) Betrayal, Royal National Theatre.
   Directs The Rear Column, by Simon Gray, Globe Theatre.
   Publishes The Proust Screenplay.
   Directs The Rear Column, by Simon Gray, television (BBC).
   Marries Antonia Fraser.
1981  (13 February) Family Voices, Royal National Theatre, and (22 January) radio (BBC Radio 3).
       The French Lieutenant’s Woman, film, directed by Karel Reisz.
       Directs Quartermaine’s Terms, by Simon Gray, Queen’s Theatre, London.
   Directs Incident at Tulse Hill, by Robert East, Hampstead Theatre.
1982  (27 March) Directs The Hothouse, television (BBC).
       (14 October) Other Places (Family Voices, A Kind of Alaska, Victoria Station), Royal National Theatre.
       Betrayal, film, directed by David Jones.
1983  Directs The Trojan War Will Not Take Place, by Jean Giraudoux, Royal National Theatre.
       (18 December) Directs Precisely, in The Big One (anti-nuclear performance), Apollo Victoria Theatre.
(March) Directs One for the Road, Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith.
(16 December) A Kind of Alaska, television (Central).

1985

(7 March) One for the Road with A Kind of Alaska and Victoria Station, Duchess Theatre.
(25 July) One for the Road, television (BBC).
Turtle Diary, film, directed by John Irvin.
(July) Directs Sweet Bird of Youth, Tennessee Williams, Theatre Royal, Haymarket.
Plays Deeley in Old Times, St Louis and Los Angeles.
(23 July) The Dumb Waiter, television (BBC).

1986

(6 March) Victoria Station (BBC radio).
Directs Circe And Bravo, by Donald Freed, Hampstead Theatre Club, Wyndham's Theatre.

1987


1988

(20 October) Directs Mountain Language, Royal National Theatre.
(11 December) Directs Mountain Language, television (BBC).

1989

Reunion, film, directed by Jerry Schatzberg.
The Heat of the Day, film, directed by Christopher Morahan.

1990

Directs Vanilla, by Jane Stanton Hitchcock, Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith.
Publishes The Dwarfs, novel.
The Comfort of Strangers, film, directed by Paul Schrader.
The Handmaid's Tale, film, directed by Volker Schlondorff.

1991

(20 June) Directs The Caretaker, Comedy Theatre.
(19 July) Directs The New World Order, Royal Court Theatre Upstairs.
(31 October) Directs Party Time, Almeida Theatre, in a double bill with Mountain Language.
(26 October) Old Times, television (BBC).
Publishes Poems and Prose, collected anthology.

1992

Plays Hirst in No Man's Land, Almeida Theatre, Comedy Theatre.
(17 November)Directs Party Time, television (BBC).

1993

(7 September) Moonlight, Almeida Theatre, Comedy Theatre.
The Trial, film, directed by David Jones.
Directs Oleanna, by David Mamet, Royal Court Theatre (later at Duke of York's).

1994

The Birthday Party, Royal National Theatre.
First Pinter Festival, Gate Theatre, Dublin (Betrayal, The Dumb Waiter, Old Times, One for the Road, Moonlight and Landscape).
Directs Landscape, transferred to Royal National Theatre.
Plays Roote in The Hothouse, Chichester Festival and Comedy Theatre.  
(21 October) Directs Landscape, television (BBC).  
Awarded David Cohen British Literature Prize, for lifetime's achievement in literature.  
(31 December) The Proust Screenplay (BBC Radio 3).

1996  Directs Twelve Angry Men, by Reginald Rose, Bristol Old Vic and Comedy Theatre.  
(12 September) Directs Ashes to Ashes, Royal Court Theatre at the Ambassadors Theatre, later seen in Palermo and Paris.  
Receives Laurence Olivier award for lifetime’s achievement in theatre.

Second Pinter Festival, Gate Theatre, Dublin (The Collection, Ashes to Ashes, A Kind of Alaska, No Man's Land – plays Harry in The Collection, directs Ashes to Ashes).  
Plays John Smith in Breaking the Code, by Hugh Whitemore, television (BBC).  
Directs Life Support, by Simon Gray, Aldwych Theatre.

1998  (13 May) 3 by Harold Pinter, Donmar Warehouse (A Kind of Alaska, The Collection and The Lover).  
The Collection, with Pinter as Harry, and The Lover subsequently tour to Theatre Royal, Bath and Richmond Theatre.  
Plays Sam Ross in Mojo, by Jez Butterworth (BBC films).  

1999  Directs The Late Middle Classes, by Simon Gray, Palace Theatre, Watford.

2000  (16 March) directs The Room and Celebration, Almeida Theatre.  
Plays Sir Thomas Bertram in Mansfield Park, film.  
(8 October) Moonlight (BBC Radio 3) with Pinter as Andy.  
(13 October) A Slight Ache (BBC Radio 3) with Pinter as Edward.  
(15 November) The Caretaker, Comedy Theatre.  
(23 November) Remembrance of Things Past (adapted by Di Trevis from Pinter’s screenplay), Royal National Theatre.
NOTE ON THE TEXT

The references to Harold Pinter’s plays within the text vary, with respect to edition, from chapter to chapter. Full details of editions used are given in the notes to each chapter.

Within the quotations from Pinter’s plays, three dots (…) is a Pinter convention, and four dots (…) indicates an omission.