Scholars, amateur historians and actors have shaped theatre history in different ways at different times and in different places. This Companion offers students and general readers a series of accessible and engaging essays on the key aspects of studying and writing theatre history. The diverse international team of contributors investigates how theatre history has been constructed, showing how historical facts are tied to political and artistic agendas and explaining why history matters to us. Beginning with an introduction to the central narrative that traditionally informs our understanding of what theatre is, the book then turns to alternative points of view – from other parts of the world and from the perspective of performers in fields such as music theatre and circus. It concludes by looking at how history is written in the ‘democratic’ age of the internet and offers a new perspective on theatre history in our globalised world.

David Wiles is Professor of Theatre at Royal Holloway, University of London.

Christine Dymkowski is Professor of Drama and Theatre History at Royal Holloway, University of London.

A complete list of books in the series is at the back of this book
THE CAMBRIDGE
COMPANION TO
THEATRE HISTORY

EDITED BY
DAVID WILES
Royal Holloway, University of London

and

CHRISTINE DYMKOWSKI
Royal Holloway, University of London
# CONTENTS

| List of illustrations | page vii |
| Notes on contributors | x |
| Acknowledgements | xv |

## PART I WHY?

1. Why theatre history?  
   **David Wiles**  
   3

## PART II WHEN?

1. Indicative timeline  
   13

2. Modernist theatre  
   **Stefan Hulfeld**  
   15

3. Baroque to romantic theatre  
   **Christopher Baugh**  
   33

4. Medieval, renaissance and early modern theatre  
   **David Wiles**  
   55

5. Classical theatre  
   **Erika Fischer-Lichte**  
   73

## PART III WHERE?

6. Liverpool  
   **Ros Merkin**  
   91

7. Finland  
   **S. E. Wilmer**  
   104
CONTENTS

8 Egypt
Hazem Azmy

9 Traditional theatre: the case of Japanese Noh
Diego Pellecchia

10 Reflections on a global theatre history
Marvin Carlson

PART IV WHAT?

11 The audience
Willmar Sauter

12 The art of acting
Josette Féral

13 Music theatre and musical theatre
Zachary Dunbar

14 Circus
Marius Kwint

PART V HOW?

15 The nature of historical evidence: a case study
Thomas Postlewait

16 The visual record: the case of Hamlet
Barbara Hodgdon

17 Museums, archives and collecting
Fiona Macintosh

18 Re: Enactment
Gilli Bush-Bailey

19 The internet: history 2.0?
Jacky Bratton and Grant Tyler Peterson

Index

vi
ILLUSTRATIONS

1 Stage design by Bernardo Buontalenti. Cabinet des Dessins inv. 867, Louvre, Paris. Reproduced by permission. page 36
2 Stage of Český Krumlov. Courtesy of the Castle Theatre archive, Český Krumlov, Czech Republic. 38
3 Playhouse drawn by Christopher Wren. All Souls Wren II: 81, reproduced by kind permission of the Warden and Fellows of All Souls College, Oxford. 41
4 Palladian opera house in Berlin. Watercolour by Andras Kaldor, reproduced by kind permission of the artist. 45
6 Drawing of the Swan Theatre after J. de Witt. Bristol Theatre Collection, reproduced by permission of Utrecht University Library, ms. 842, 132r. 64
7 Cartoon from Punch, 1867. Wikimedia Commons: Public Domain. 119
9 Portrait of Youssef Wahbi. Egyptian public domain. 124
10 Still of al-Rihany from the film Ghazal-al-Banat (1949). 125
11 Al-Kassar. Photo courtesy of the Egyptian National Centre for Theatre, Music, and Folklore, Egypt. 126
12 Photo of Nasser and al-Hakim, published in 1964. Egyptian public domain. 128
13 Magda Mounir beside a poster commemorating Beni Suef victims (2011). Photo: Karim Maghawry. 134
14 Scene from Kurozuka. Photo: Harada Kazuhiro. Courtesy of Udaka Michishige. 137
15 Scene from Genshibugumo. Photo: Yoshikoshi Ken. Courtesy of Udaka Michishige. 145

© in this web service Cambridge University Press
www.cambridge.org
A nineteenth-century audience. Lithograph after a drawing by Fritz von Dardel, published in Teckningar från dagens händelser, 1847. Courtesy of Stockholm City Museum. 170

Attending a performance by travelling actors. Watercolour by Baron Erik Ruuth, courtesy of the Municipality of Ystad (Department of Culture and Education). 175

Performance of a farce at a Flemish kermis. Painting by Pieter Balten (1527–84). Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam / Theater Instituut Nederland. Reproduced by permission. 179

Scene from Gifford’s Circus’s rendition of War and Peace. Photo courtesy of Gifford’s Circus. 211

Astley’s Amphitheatre in 1777. Engraving by J. Smith, c. 1820, after a contemporary drawing by William Capon (author’s collection). 214

Theodore Lane, The Unparelleled [sic] Feat of Monsr Ducrow, in the Character of the Wild Indian Hunter, on Two Rapid Coursers, in the Circle at the Royal Amphitheatre, 1823. TS 930.10F, Harvard Theatre Collection, The Houghton Library, Harvard University. Reproduced by permission. 215


Samuel Collings, The Downfall of Taste and Genius: or, The World as It Goes, engraving, 1785. © The Trustees of the British Museum. 218

Frontispiece to Hamlet. François Boitard, engraved by Elisha Kirkall, in Nicholas Rowe’s Works of Mr. William Shakespeare, 1709. Courtesy of Special Collections Library, University of Michigan. 248

Daniel Maclise, The Play Scene in Hamlet. Watercolour copy, possibly by Alice Bolton, RSC Collection. Courtesy of David Howells and the Royal Shakespeare Company. 251

Hamlet’s Ghost. Wood engraving from The Graphic, November 1874. Courtesy of Marcus Risdell and The Garrick Club. 253


Photograph of John Gielgud as Hamlet, 1937. Angus McBean Photographs, MS Thr 581. © Harvard Theatre Collection, Houghton Library, Harvard University. Reproduced by permission. 257

‘Closet scene’ in Hamlet. Gertrude (Marty Cruickshank); Hamlet (Samuel West); dir. Steven Pimlott (RSC 2001). Photograph by Manuel Harlan. © Royal Shakespeare Company. Courtesy of The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. 260
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS


31 The ‘play scene’ in Hamlet. Hamlet (Mark Rylance); Ophelia (Penny Layden); Claudius (Tim Woodward); Gertrude (Joanna McCallum); dir. Giles Block (Shakespeare’s Globe 2000). Photograph by John Tramper. © John Tramper. Courtesy of Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre. 262


33 ‘Backstage with the Georgians’. Photo: Glenn Dearing. 289

34 Gilli Bush-Bailey in Performing Herself at Birmingham City University, 1 February 2012. Image, courtesy of the Video Production Unit, Birmingham City University. 293

35 Illustration created by Dan Hallett, copyright Dan Hallett and Jonathan Walker, from Pistols! Treason! Murder!: The Rise and Fall of a Master Spy, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009. Reproduced by permission. 295

36 Betty Green, known as Koo Koo, c. 1930: photographer unknown. 300
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

HAZEM AZMY is co-convener (with Marvin Carlson) of the Arabic Theatre Working Group of The International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR/FIRT). Before gaining his Ph.D. at the University of Warwick with a thesis on post-9/11 performance realities, he was based in his home country, Egypt, where he continues to maintain an internationally oriented career as theatre and interdisciplinary humanities researcher, university teacher, theatre and literary critic, translator, and cross-cultural animateur.


JACKY BRATTON is Research Professor of Theatre and Cultural History at Royal Holloway, University of London. She works on the culture of the long nineteenth century; her most recent book is The Making of the West End Stage: Marriage, Management and the Mapping of Gender in London, 1830–1870. She is working on an edition of plays from the works of Dickens, intended to demonstrate that the classic novelist was also a classic dramatic artist by stealth, probably the greatest creator of plays the nineteenth century produced.

GILLI BUSH-BAILEY, Reader in Women’s Theatre History at Royal Holloway, University of London, has contributed chapters to The Performing Century: Theatre in Nineteenth-Century Britain (ed. T. C. Davis and P. Holland, 2007) and to The Cambridge Companion to the Actress (ed. M. B. Gale and J. Stokes, 2007), where she writes on seventeenth-century actresses and female playwrights.
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

work begun in her first monograph, *Treading the Bawds* (2006). She has extended her published work on actresses and managers in nineteenth-century theatre with *Performing Herself: AutoBiography and Fanny Kelly’s Dramatic Recollections* (2011). Her interest in practice-based research in theatre history informed her collaborative work with Jacky Bratton, which includes the co-authored special edition of *Nineteenth-Century Theatre and Film* (2002). Her research and publication work follows on from her first career as a professional actress.

**Marvin Carlson** is the Sidney E. Cohn Distinguished Professor of Theatre, Comparative Literature and Middle Eastern Studies at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He is the author of over 300 articles and many books on the history and theory of the theatre, most recently *The Theatres of Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria* (2011) with Khalid Amine. He is the founding editor of the journal *Western European Stages*. He is the recipient of many major theatre awards and has been awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Athens.

**Zachary Dunbar** is Senior Lecturer in Music Theatre and Classical Acting at Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London. He has published essays in *Theorising Performance: Greek Drama, Cultural History and Critical Practice* (2010), *Theatre Noise: The Sound of Performance* (2011), *Studies in Musical Theatre* (2011), and *Choruses: Ancient and Modern* (forthcoming 2013). A concert pianist and freelance theatre director/writer, his original works have been staged in the UK and in Europe.

**Christine Dymkowski** was until October 2012 Professor of Drama and Theatre History at Royal Holloway, University of London. Co-founder of the IFTR/FIRT working group on Feminist Theatre/Women in Theatre, she has written extensively on Edwardian and contemporary women playwrights and directors, including a case study of Cicely Hamilton’s *Diana of Dobson’s* for *The Cambridge History of British Theatre* (2004). Her work on Shakespeare includes *Harley Granville Barker: A Preface to Modern Shakespeare* (1986); *The Tempest* in Cambridge University Press’s Shakespeare in Production series (2000); ““Ancient [and Modern] Gower”: Presenting Shakespeare’s *Pericles*, in P. Butterworth (ed.), *The Narrator, the Expositor and the Prompter in European Medieval Theatre* (2007); and ‘Measure for Measure: Shakespeare’s Twentieth-century Play’, in *Shakespeare in Stages*, which she co-edited with Christie Carson (2010). She is also Theatre History editor of the forthcoming New Variorum *Tempest*.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

theory of the theatre, the most recent ones being *Pratiques performatives: Body Remix* (2012) and special issues of *Theatre Research International* on ‘Genetics of Performance’ (2008), of *Yale French Studies* (with Donia Mounsef) on ‘The Transparency of the Text: Contemporary Writing for the Stage’ (2007), and of *SubStance* on ‘Theatricality’ (2002).

ERIKA FISCHER-LICHTE is Director of the Institute for Advanced Studies on ‘Interweaving Cultures in Performance’ (since 2008) and spokesperson of the International Doctoral School ‘InterArt’ (since 2006) at Freie Universität Berlin. She has had guest professorships in the USA, Russia, India, Japan, China and Norway. President of the International Federation for Theatre Research from 1995 to 1999, she is a member of the Academia Europaea, the Academy of Sciences at Goettingen, the National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina, and the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences. Among her many publications are *Theatre, Sacrifice, Ritual: Exploring Forms of Political Theatre* (2005) and *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics* (2008).

BARBARA HODGDON is Professor of English (retired) at the University of Michigan. She is the author of *The Shakespeare Trade: Performances and Appropriations, The End Crowns All: Closure and Contradiction in Shakespeare’s History*, two books exploring Shakespeare’s *Henry IV, Parts One and Two* as texts and performances, and many essays, primarily on performed Shakespeare, stage and film. She is the editor of the Arden 3 edition of *The Taming of the Shrew* and the co-editor of *A Blackwell Companion to Shakespeare and Performance*.

STEFAN HULFELD is Professor of Theatre and Cultural Studies at the University of Vienna, Austria. Born and educated in Switzerland, he graduated in theatre studies and German literature from the University of Berne. With grants from the Swiss National Science Foundation, he was guest researcher at the Free University of Berlin, at the Biblioteca e Raccolta Teatrale del Burcardo in Rome and at the British Library in London. His second book *Theatergeschichtsschreibung als kulturelle Praxis* (2007) is a study in theatre historiography from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries.

MARIUS KWINT studied cultural history at Aberdeen University and wrote his doctoral thesis at Oxford University on the history of the circus in England. He has worked as a research fellow in history of design at the Victoria and Albert Museum and Royal College of Art, London, and as lecturer in history of art at Oxford. He currently teaches visual culture at the University of Portsmouth and is guest curator for the 2012 exhibition *Brains: The Mind as Matter* at the Wellcome Collection, London.

FIONA MACINTOSH is Director of the Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama (APGRD) and Fellow of St Hilda’s College, University of Oxford.

**Ros Merkin** is a Reader in Drama at Liverpool John Moores University. Her research mainly focuses on local and regional theatre and includes *The Glory of the Garden: English Regional Theatre and the Arts Council 1984–2009*, which she edited with Kate Dorney, and *Liverpool Playhouse: A Theatre and its City for the theatre’s 100th anniversary*.

**Diego Pellecchia** received his Ph.D. from Royal Holloway, University of London, with a thesis on the history of the reception of Noh theatre in the West. He practises Noh chant and dance with Master-Actor Udaka Michishige (Kongō School) and has performed both in Japan and abroad as a member of the International Noh Institute. His research looks at the interactions of aesthetics and ethics of Noh in the international context.

**Grant Tyler Peterson** has published work on British alternative theatre history, gender and sexuality. He holds an MA from UCLA and a Ph.D. from Royal Holloway, University of London. His recent research, funded by HEFCE, presents a historiographical study of street theatre practices, focused on one of Britain’s longest operating street theatre troupes, the Natural Theatre Company. He has been a Visiting Lecturer at University of Winchester, Bath Spa University, and Royal Holloway.


**Willmar Sauter**, Professor of Theatre Studies at Stockholm University, Sweden, has long studied audiences and reception processes. He has also written on Swedish theatre history, from Bronze Age rock carvings to the free group movement in the 1960s. His interest in the theories of the theatrical event is documented in his book *The Theatrical Event* (2000) and summarised in *Eventness* (2006). A founding member and first chairman of the association of Nordic Theatre Scholars, he has also been President of the International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR/
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

FIRT) and Dean of the Faculty of the Humanities at Stockholm University; he is presently the chair of the Research School of Aesthetics.

David Wiles is Professor of Theatre at Royal Holloway, University of London. He has published nine books, seven of them with Cambridge. These include Theatre and Citizenship: The History of a Practice (2011) and A Short History of Western Performance Space (2003). He has published extensively on Greek theatre, taking a special interest in the use of masks and performance space, and on Elizabethan theatre. His books have been shortlisted for the Runciman, Criticos and STR prizes.

S. E. Wilmer is Professor of Drama and Head of the School of Drama, Film and Music at Trinity College Dublin. He is the author of Theatre, Society and the Nation: Staging American Identities (2002) and (with Pirkko Koski) The Dynamic World of Finnish Theatre (2006). Books that he has edited or co-edited include National Theatres in a Changing Europe (2008), Native American Performance and Representation (2009), and (with Audrone Zukauskaite) Interrogating Antigone in Postmodern Philosophy and Criticism (2010). He has also served as a visiting professor at Stanford University and the University of California at Berkeley.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

After this project was commissioned, the editors and contributors met for a two-day symposium on ‘Why Theatre History?’, at the Department of Drama and Theatre, Royal Holloway, University of London, on 18–19 June 2010. We are grateful for the constructive comments from members of the audience, which helped to shape the volume. We are also grateful to the Society for Theatre Research and to the Department for financial support of the symposium. We thank Diego Pellecchia for assembling the index.

Every effort has been made to secure necessary permissions to reproduce copyright material in this work, though in some cases it has proved impossible to trace copyright holders. If any omissions are brought to our notice, we will be happy to include appropriate acknowledgements in any subsequent edition.