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978-0-521-03467-8 - *Eroticism on the Renaissance Stage: Transcendence, Desire, and the Limits of the Visible*

Celia R. Daileader

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Celia Daileader explores the paradoxes of eroticism on stage in early modern England, where women and their bodies (represented by boy actors) were materially absent and yet symbolically central. Her starting point is the theoretical and theatrical problem of sexual acts that take place offstage, which is a paradigm for the limits of the visible in Renaissance theater. The space that lies offstage becomes an imaginary realm, encompassing both spiritual and erotic transcendence. In accounting for its power, Daileader looks to the suppression of religious drama in England and the resulting secularization of the stage. Focusing on the link between absence and desire, and discussing a wide range of drama from Corpus Christi plays to Shakespeare, her argument draws together questions about sexuality and the sacred, in the bodies – of Christ and of woman – that are banished from the early modern English stage.

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# Eroticism on the Renaissance stage

*Transcendence, desire, and the limits of the  
visible*

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Celia R. Daileader

*University of Alabama*



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*Dedicated to the memory of  
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