

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-41115-8 - Three Tragic Actresses: Siddons, Rachel, Ristori
Michael R. Booth, John Stokes and Susan Bassnett

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This innovative book examines the careers of three performers whose professional lives spanned the period from the late eighteenth to the late nineteenth centuries, from the heyday of neo-classicism to the coming of realism. While the individual essays concentrate on the specific work of Siddons, Rachel, and Ristori, a wide-ranging introduction relates their collective achievement to social and cultural change. All three rejuvenated a national repertoire and experimented with new forms of dramatic literature, achieving fame far beyond the boundaries of their own country. As they redefined the nature of tragic experience so, as strong and independent women, they contributed greatly to changing concepts of gender and sexuality. Vivid reconstructions of their interpretations and unique accounts of theatrical conditions place the art of three very different but pivotal figures in context.

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