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978-1-107-07916-8 - The First Frame: Theatre Space in Enlightenment France

Pannill Camp

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THE FIRST FRAME

In the late eighteenth century, a movement to transform France's theatre architecture united the nation. Playwrights, philosophers, and powerful agents including King Louis XV rejected the modified structures that had housed the plays of Racine and Molière, and debated which playhouse form should support the future of French stagecraft. In *The First Frame*, Pannill Camp argues that these reforms helped to lay down the theoretical and practical foundations of modern theatre space. Examining dramatic theory, architecture, and philosophy, Camp explores how architects, dramatists, and spectators began to see theatre and scientific experimentation as parallel enterprises. During this period of modernization, physicists began to cite dramatic theory and adopt theatrical staging techniques, while playwrights sought to reveal observable truths of human nature. Camp goes on to show that these reforms had consequences for the way we understand both modern theatrical aesthetics and the production of scientific knowledge in the present day.

PANNILL CAMP is Assistant Professor of Drama at Washington University in St. Louis. His research examines points of intersection between theatre history and the history of philosophy, especially in eighteenth-century France. Before joining the faculty of Washington University, he was a postdoctoral fellow at the Humanities Center at Harvard University and taught in Harvard's Department of History of Art and Architecture. At Brown University, he won the Joukowsky Family Foundation's Award for Outstanding Dissertation in the Humanities, and the Weston Award for theatre directing. His work has been published in journals including *Theatre Journal*, *Performance Research*, *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, and *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*.

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