

TOM STOPPARD IN CONTEXT

Tom Stoppard's work as a playwright and screenwriter has always been notable for mixing ideas with entertainment. From the early success of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* to masterpieces such as *Arcadia*, from radio plays about modern art to the Oscar-winning screenplay for *Shakespeare in Love*, Stoppard has challenged and delighted audiences with the intellectual and cultural richness of his writing. *Tom Stoppard in Context* provides multiple perspectives on both the life and works of one of the most important modern playwrights. This collection covers biographical and historical topics, as well as the broad array of intellectual, aesthetic, and political concerns with which Stoppard has engaged. More than thirty essays on subjects ranging from science to screenwriting help illuminate Stoppard's rich body of work.

DAVID KORNHABER is Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature at The University of Texas at Austin. He is the author of *Theatre & Knowledge* (2019) and *The Birth of Theater from the Spirit of Philosophy: Nietzsche and the Modern Drama* (2016). He is, with Lawrence Switzky, the editor of the journal *Modern Drama*.

JAMES N. LOEHLIN is Shakespeare at Winedale Regents Professor of English at The University of Texas at Austin. His publications include *Doctor Faustus* (2015), *The Cambridge Introduction to Chekhov* (2012), *Henry IV* (2008), *Chekhov: The Cherry Orchard* (2010), *Romeo and Juliet* (2002), and *Henry V* (1996).

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David Kornhaber, James N. Loehlin
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Tom Stoppard (first row, third from left), age five, pictured shortly after his arrival in India in 1942.

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EDITED BY

DAVID KORNHABER

The University of Texas at Austin

JAMES N. LOEHLIN

The University of Texas at Austin



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Notes on Contributors

WILLIAM BAKER is Distinguished Chair Qiantang River Professor, Hangzhou Normal University, China, and Distinguished Professor Emeritus at Northern Illinois University. A scholar of British literature, he is the author and editor of numerous articles and books, including *Tom Stoppard: A Bibliographical History* (British Library, 2010, with the late Gerald N. Wachs) which he is updating, and *'The Real Thing': Essays on Tom Stoppard in Celebration of His 75th Birthday* (Cambridge Scholars, 2013, with Amanda Smothers). His *Pinter's World: Relationships, Obsessions, and Artistic Endeavours* appeared in 2018, published by Farleigh Dickinson University Press.

ROBERTA BARKER is Associate Professor of Theatre Studies at Dalhousie University, where she also holds appointments in Gender and Women's Studies and Canadian Studies. Her research interests centre on the relationship between theatrical performance and the social construction of identity. She is the author of *Early Modern Tragedy, Gender and Performance, 1984–2000: The Destined Livery* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), editor of *Common Conditions* (Oxford University Press, 2004), and co-editor, with Kim Solga, of *New Canadian Realisms: Eight Plays* and *New Canadian Realisms: Essays* (Playwrights Canada Press, 2012).

NANDI BHATIA is Professor of English and Writing Studies at Western University in Ontario, Canada. A specialist in post-colonial literature and theory, her research explores the connections between literary and theatrical practices, nationalism, and colonialism. Her monographs include *Acts of Authority/Acts of Resistance: Theatre and Politics in Colonial and Postcolonial India* (University of Michigan Press and Oxford University Press, 2004) and *Performing Women/Performing Womanhood: Theatre, Politics and Dissent in North India* (Oxford University Press, 2010).

JOHN BULL is Emeritus Professor of Film and Drama at the University of Reading. He has published extensively on modern and contemporary theatre, and on post-Restoration British drama. His books include *New British Political Dramatists* (Macmillan, 1984), *Stage Right: Crisis and Recovery in British Contemporary Mainstream Theatre* (Macmillan, 1994), and the four-volume *British and Irish Dramatists since World War II* (Thomson Gale, 2000–2005). A co-editor of the three-volume series *From Fringe to Mainstream: British Theatre Companies* (Bloomsbury, 2016–2017), he is solely responsible for the first volume covering the years 1965–1979. In 2016, he organised the International Contemporary Theatre and Drama in English Conference on ‘Nation, Nationhood and Theatre’ at the University of Reading, and was editor of the published proceedings the following year.

LILIANE CAMPOS is Assistant Professor of English and Theatre Studies at the New Sorbonne University, Paris, and a fellow of the Institut Universitaire de France. Her research examines the role of scientific discourse and images in contemporary literature and performance. She has published *The Dialogue of Art and Science in Tom Stoppard’s Arcadia* (Presses Universitaires de France, 2011), *Sciences en scène dans le théâtre britannique contemporain* (Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2012), and a number of collective volumes and articles mapping the biological imagination of twenty-first-century theatre and fiction. She co-directs a Science and Literature seminar with Pierre-Louis Patoine in Paris (<https://litorg.hypotheses.org>).

CLAIRE COCHRANE is Professor of Theatre Studies at the University of Worcester. A theatre historian, primarily of twentieth- and twenty-first-century British theatre, she has particular interests in regional theatre and in recent developments in Black British and British Asian theatre and audiences. Examples of her numerous scholarly publications include the monograph *Twentieth Century British Theatre Industry, Art and Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 2011) and, co-edited with Jo Robinson, *Theatre History and Historiography: Ethics, Evidence and Truth* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), and *The Methuen Drama Handbook to Theatre History and Historiography* (Bloomsbury, 2019). She is co-series editor with Bruce McConachie of the *Bloomsbury Cultural Histories of Theatre and Performance* and is also currently working on the co-edited, two volume, *Routledge Companion to Twentieth Century British Theatre*.

ERIC COLLEARY is the Cline Curator of Theatre and Performing Arts at the Harry Ransom Center, and a lecturer in the Performance as Public Practice program at The University of Texas at Austin. His scholarship and performance reviews can be found in *Performing Arts Resources*, *Lambda Literary*, *Theatre Survey*, and *Theatre Journal*.

WILLIAM W. DEMASTES is the San Diego II Alumni Professor of English at Louisiana State University. He has published extensively on modern and contemporary drama in Britain and America. Books he has published include *The Cambridge Introduction to Tom Stoppard* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), *Comedy Matters: From Shakespeare to Stoppard* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), *Staging Consciousness: Theatre and the Materialization of Mind* (University of Michigan Press, 2002), and *Theatre of Chaos: Beyond Absurdism, Into Orderly Disorder* (Cambridge University Press, 1998).

JOHN ELSOM is a theatre historian and an authority on arts policy and cultural management. His works include many books, an opera libretto, plays, and extensive journalism. He is an honorary president of the International Association of Theatre Critics. In 2003, he was decorated by the Romanian president, Ion Iliescu, for his services to culture during the Cold War. In 2008, he won the Award of International Outstanding Contribution to the Creative Industry of China during the third China Creative Industry Awards ceremony in Beijing. In 2019, he published *State of Paralysis – A Cultural History of Brexit* (The Lutterworth Press).

BRICE EZELL is a PhD candidate in English at The University of Texas at Austin. His research centres on the intersection between drama, theatre, and philosophy. His dissertation, 'The Theatre of Clarity: Analytic Philosophy in American and English Drama', explores the relationship between four playwrights (spanning Oscar Wilde to Annie Baker) and Anglo-American analytic philosophy. His scholarly work has been published in *Modern Drama* and *The Eugene O'Neill Review*. He is also a music and film critic; his cultural criticism can be found at *PopMatters*, *Consequence of Sound*, and several other publications.

ALEX FELDMAN is a lecturer (assistant professor) in the English department at the University of Haifa, Israel, specialising in modern drama. His research addresses the representation of history on stage, and most recently, legal history, within the interdisciplinary context of 'Law and Literature' scholarship. His first book was entitled *Dramas of the Past on the Twentieth-Century Stage: In History's Wings* (Routledge, 2012), and

he is currently working on two projects: *Terence Rattigan: New Critical Perspectives*, an edited collection, under contract with Cambridge University Press; and a monograph entitled *The Rigging of the Law*, concerned with jurisprudential drama in twentieth- and twenty-first-century theatre.

JOHN FLEMING is Professor of Theatre and Dance and Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication at Texas State University. He is the author of two books on Tom Stoppard, *Tom Stoppard's Theatre: Finding Order amid Chaos* (University of Texas Press, 2001) and *Tom Stoppard's Arcadia* (Continuum, 2009). His other books include *Romulus Linney: Maverick of the American Theatre* (Smith & Kraus, 2008), *Davies and Penhall's Sunny Afternoon* (Routledge, 2017), and two editions of *The Essential Theatre*.

R. DARREN GOBERT is William and Sue Gross Professor of Theater Studies and English at Duke University. His publications include *The Theatre of Caryl Churchill* (Bloomsbury, 2014) and *The Mind-Body Stage: Passion and Interaction in the Cartesian Theater* (Stanford University Press, 2013), which won both the Ann Saddlemyer Prize from the Canadian Association for Theatre Research and the Barnard Hewitt Award from the American Society for Theatre Research in 2014. From 2015 to 2020, he was the editor of the journal *Modern Drama*.

JONATHAN GOLDMAN is Professor of English at New York Institute of Technology, author of *Modernism Is the Literature of Celebrity* (University of Texas Press, 2011), editor of the collections *Joyce and the Law* (University of Florida Press, 2018) and *Modernist Star Maps: Celebrity, Modernity, Culture* (Ashgate, 2010), and director of the website 'New York 1920: 100 Years Ago Today (When We Became Modern)'. His writings about twentieth-century literature and culture, ranging in focus from print culture to cinema to Latin music, have appeared in *Modernism/Modernity*, *James Joyce Quarterly*, *The Paris Review*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and numerous other publications. He is the president of the James Joyce Society.

MARK HURST is a lecturer in the History of Human Rights at Lancaster University, England. His research interests focus on the efforts of human rights organisations during the Cold War, and more broadly in the history of human rights, dissent, and political activism, especially in Russia and the Soviet Union. His current research focuses on the history of Amnesty International.

JAMES JESSON is Associate Professor of English at La Salle University, Pennsylvania, where he specialises in twentieth-century drama and modernist literature, with a recent focus on plays about the Vietnam War. His scholarly essays and reviews can be found in *Adaptation*, *College Literature*, *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, and *Libraries & the Cultural Record*.

DANIEL JERNIGAN is Associate Professor in the Division of English at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. His interests include theatre studies and postmodernism. His critical work on Caryl Churchill and Tom Stoppard has been published in *Modern Drama* and *Comparative Drama*, and he is the author of *Tom Stoppard: Bucking the Postmodern* (McFarland, 2012).

RACHEL JOSEPH is an associate professor at Trinity University, Texas, as well as a writer, director, and performer. She teaches classes in playwriting, dramatic literature, performance, and theatre history. Her current book project, *Screened Stages: On Theatre in Film*, analyses cinema and performance in relationship to presentness and reproducibility. Her scholarly work has been published or is forthcoming in academic journals such as *Performance Research*, *College Literature*, *Word & Image*, *The International Journal of Žižek Studies*, *Texas Studies in Language and Literature*, and *Studies in Musical Theatre*, in addition to numerous book chapters.

TOMÁŠ KAČER is Assistant Professor of English and American Studies at Masaryk University, Czech Republic. His scholarship includes the monograph *New Messengers: Short Narratives in Plays by Michael Frayn, Tom Stoppard and August Wilson* (Masaryk University Press, 2013) and *Two Hundred Years of Wasteland: A History of Early American Drama* (Charles University Press, 2019, in Czech), a history of eighteenth and nineteenth century American drama. He has translated into English and co-edited Prague School contributions to theatre semiotics in the anthology *Theatre Theory Reader* (Charles University Press, 2017). He is a translator of novels and plays into Czech.

DAVID KORNHABER is Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature at The University of Texas at Austin, and affiliated faculty member with the Department of French and Italian and the Center for European Studies. He is the author of *Theatre & Knowledge* (Palgrave, 2019) and *The Birth of Theater from the Spirit of Philosophy: Nietzsche and the Modern Drama* (Northwestern University Press, 2016). He has

served, with Martin Middeke, as guest editor of the journal *Anglia*, and he is, with Lawrence Switzky, the editor of the journal *Modern Drama*.

MARK LAWSON is an author and broadcaster. He presented the BBC Radio 4 programme *Front Row* from 1998 to 2014. He is the theatre critic of *The Tablet*, and writes regularly about theatre for *The Guardian*. He presents the series *Mark Lawson Talks To . . .* on BBC Four. His novels include *Idlewild*, *Going Out Live*, *Enough is Enough*, or, *The Emergency Government*, and *The Deaths*. His plays for BBC Radio 4 include *Expand This*, *The Third Soldier Holds His Thighs*, *Enemies of the People* and *Politics*, *Philosophy and Economics*.

JAMES N. LOEHLIN is Shakespeare at Winedale Regents Professor of English at The University of Texas at Austin. He is the author of *Henry V* (Manchester University Press, 1996) and editor of *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare in Production, 2002). For Palgrave Macmillan, he has written handbooks on *Henry IV* (2008) and Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* (2015). For Cambridge, he has written *Chekhov: The Cherry Orchard* (2010) and *The Cambridge Introduction to Chekhov* (2012). He directs the Shakespeare at Winedale programme; his students have staged more than fifty productions of Shakespeare, together with works by Marlowe, Chekhov, Wilde, and Stoppard.

MARTIN MIDDEKE is Professor and Chair of English Literature at the University of Augsburg, and Visiting Professor of English at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa. He has published widely on modern drama, co-editing the Methuen Drama Guides to *Contemporary South African Theatre* (2015), *Contemporary American Playwrights* (2014), *Contemporary British Playwrights* (2011), and *Contemporary Irish Playwrights* (2010), in addition to several other edited collections and journal articles. He currently serves as editor-in-chief of *Contemporary Drama in English*. Along with David Kornhaber, he organised and edited the 2018 special issue on Drama, Theatre, and Philosophy for *Anglia: Journal of English Philology*.

IRENE MORRA is Professor of English Literature at Cardiff University. Her books include *Verse Drama in England, 1900–2015: Art, Modernity, and the National Stage* (Bloomsbury Methuen, 2016), *Britishness, Popular Music and National Identity: The Making of Modern Britain* (Routledge, 2014), and *Twentieth-Century British Authors and the Rise of Opera in Britain* (Ashgate, 2007). Her peer-reviewed articles feature in *Modern Drama* and *Literary Imagination*, among dozens of others. She is

currently working on two book projects: *Wagnerism and British Culture: Myth, Modernism, and the Art-Work of the Future* and *On the Frontier: The Stage Lives of W. H. Auden in Britain and America*.

RAMONA MOSSE is a lecturer in Theatre and Performance Studies at Freie Universität Berlin. Her work has been published in *Anglia*, *Theater Journal*, *THEWIS*, *Performance Philosophy Journal*, and *The Baffler*, among others. She is a core convener of the Performance Philosophy Network. Her research interests include modernity and tragedy, cultural politics of the Cold War, the post-human and non-human in performance, aurality in theatre/sound studies and the environmental humanities. She is currently writing a monograph on theatrical performance in the Anthropocene and is editing, with Anna Street, a volume on genre in performance and philosophy. Mosse also works as a dramaturg and translator.

IRA NADEL is Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and Professor of English Language and Literatures at the University of British Columbia. In addition to writing the first biography of Tom Stoppard (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) and, earlier, Leonard Cohen (2nd ed, 2006), he is the author of several monographs, a recent selection of which includes *Virginia Woolf* (Reaktion, 2016), *Cathay, Ezra Pound's Orient* (Penguin, 2015), *Modernism's Second Act* (Palgrave, 2013), and the edited collection *Ezra Pound in Context* (2010). His articles have been published in the *Journal of Modern Literature*, *Modernist Cultures*, and the *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*, to name just a few.

KERSTI TARIEN POWELL is Associate Professor of English and Director of Irish Studies at Saint Joseph's University, Pennsylvania. She is the author of *Irish Fiction: An Introduction* (Continuum, 2004) and articles in *Éire-Ireland*, *Irish University Review*, *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, *Clues*, and *New Hibernia Review*, among other venues.

DAN REBELLATO is an academic and a playwright. He is Professor of Contemporary Theatre at Royal Holloway, University of London. His scholarship includes the monographs *1956 and All That* (1999), *Theatre & Globalization* (2009), and the edited collections *Modern British Playwriting: 2000–2009* (2013), *The Suspect Culture Book* (2013), *Contemporary European Theatre Directors* (2nd ed, 2020), and *Contemporary European Playwrights* (2020). His plays for stage and radio include *Chekhov in Hell*, *Static*, *Here's What I Did with My Body One Day*, *Mile End*, *Beachy Head*, *Theatremorphosis*, *Cavalry*, *My Life Is a Series of People Saying Goodbye*, and *You and Me*.

Notes on Contributors

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NEIL SAMMELLS is Deputy Vice-Chancellor Provost and Professor of English and Irish Literature at Bath Spa University, England. He has research interests in modern drama and Irish writing, with a particular interest in Oscar Wilde. He is the author of *Tom Stoppard: The Artist as Critic* (Macmillan, 1988) and *Wilde Style: The Plays and Prose of Oscar Wilde* (Longman, 2000). He is also the co-editor, with Paul Hyland, of books on Irish writing and writing and censorship and is founding editor of *Irish Studies Review*.

MIKE VANDEN HEUVEL is Professor of Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies and Howe Bascom Professor of Integrated Liberal Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He is author of *Performing Drama! Dramatizing Performance: Alternative Theater and the Dramatic Text* (University Michigan Press, 1991) and editor-contributor to *Decades of American Playwriting: The 1970s* (Methuen, 2017). He is editing a two-volume series on American-devised theatre companies to be published by Bloomsbury in 2020. He has published widely on contemporary theatre with particular focus on science and theatre.

SAMUEL WEST is an actor and director. He originated the role of Valentine in Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia* when it premiered at the National Theatre in 1993. He is an experienced Shakespearean performer, having performed the title roles of *Richard II* and *Hamlet* for the Royal Shakespeare Company. From 2005 to 2007, he was the artistic director of Sheffield Theatres. In the West End, he directed and appeared in plays such as Patrick Marber's *Dealer's Choice*, Harold Pinter's *Betrayal*, and T. S. Eliot's *The Family Reunion*. His film credits include *Hyde Park on Hudson*, *Van Helsing*, *Iris*, *Notting Hill*, and *Howards End*.

MICHAEL ŽANTOVSKÝ is a Czech diplomat, politician, author, journalist, lyricist, and psychologist. He is the director of the Václav Havel Library and honorary president of the Aspen Institute Central Europe. He was a spokesman, press secretary, and advisor to President Václav Havel. He was a chairman of the Czech Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Security. He has combined a career in politics and foreign service with work as an author and translator into Czech of many contemporary British and American writers. He is the author of *Woody Allen: Life and Work* (Czechoslovak Film Institute, 1990) and *Havel: A Life* (Grove Atlantic, 2014).

Chronology

Year	Tom Stoppard's Life and Work (dates of plays indicate premiere performance unless otherwise specified)	Historical and Cultural Events
1937	Tomáš Stráussler born on 3 July in Zlín, Czechoslovakia, to Eugen and Marta Stráussler	
1939	Stráusslers flee to Singapore with other Jewish families	Nazis invade Czechoslovakia, and subsequently Poland; WWII begins
1941		The United States enters WWII after Pearl Harbor attack
1942	Tomáš evacuated to India with mother and brother; father killed in air raid	Japanese invade Singapore
1943–1946	Attends English-language boarding school in Darjeeling	
1945	Mother marries Major Kenneth Stoppard	US drops atomic bombs on Japan; WWII ends
1946	Stoppard family moves to England; Tomáš becomes Tom Stoppard, begins attending Dolphin School, Nottinghamshire	
1947		Indian independence and partition
1949		T. S. Elliot, <i>The Cocktail Party</i>
1950	Stoppard family moves to Bristol	
1951–1954	Attends Pocklington School, Yorkshire	
1953		Beckett, <i>Waiting for Godot</i>
1954–1958	Journalist, <i>Western Daily Press</i>	
1956		Osborne, <i>Look Back in Anger</i>
1958–1960	Journalist, <i>Bristol Evening World</i>	
1960	Writes <i>A Walk on the Water</i>	

Chronology

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(cont.)

Year	Tom Stoppard's Life and Work (dates of plays indicate premiere performance unless otherwise specified)	Historical and Cultural Events
1961	Writes <i>The Gamblers</i>	
1962		Cuban missile crisis
1962–1963	Theatre critic at <i>The Scene</i>	
1963		Assassination of John F. Kennedy
1964	In Berlin on Ford Foundation grant, writes <i>Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Meet King Lear</i>	
1965	Marriage to Jose Ingle	Pinter, <i>The Homecoming</i>
1966	<i>Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead</i> (Edinburgh Festival Fringe); <i>If You're Glad I'll Be Frank</i> (radio); <i>Lord Malquist and Mr Moon</i> published	
1967	<i>Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead</i> (London and New York); <i>Another Moon Called Earth</i> (TV); <i>Albert's Bridge</i> (radio)	
1968	<i>Enter A Free Man</i> ; <i>The Real Inspector Hound</i>	'Prague spring'; student riots in Paris
1970	<i>After Magritte</i>	
1972	<i>Jumpers</i> ; <i>Artist Descending a Staircase</i> (radio); Divorce from Jose Ingle and marriage to Miriam Moore-Robertson	
1974	<i>Travesties</i>	Nixon resigns after Watergate scandal
1976	<i>Dirty Linen</i> and <i>New-Found Land</i> ; Stoppard meets Victor Fainberg, taking a more active human rights role	
1977	<i>Every Good Boy Deserves Favour</i> ; Stoppard visits Czechoslovakia; <i>Professional Foul</i> (TV)	Václav Havel and other Czech dissidents publish Charter 77
1978	<i>Night and Day</i>	'Winter of discontent' in Britain
1979	<i>Dogg's Hamlet</i> , <i>Cahoot's Macbeth</i> ; <i>Undiscovered Country</i>	Margaret Thatcher elected prime minister
1981	<i>On the Razzle</i>	Solidarity leaders arrested in Poland
1982	<i>The Real Thing</i>	Falklands War between Britain and Argentina; Churchill, <i>Top Girls</i>
1984	<i>Squaring the Circle</i> (TV); <i>Rough Crossing</i>	

Year	Tom Stoppard's Life and Work (dates of plays indicate premiere performance unless otherwise specified)	Historical and Cultural Events
1985	Oscar nomination for <i>Brazil</i> screenplay	
1986	<i>Dalliance</i> ; <i>Largo Desolato</i> (Havel) translation	
1987	<i>Empire of the Sun</i> (film)	
1988	<i>Hapgood</i>	Havel elected interim president of Czechoslovakia (subsequently president); Wertebaker, <i>Our Country's Good</i>
1989		Fall of Berlin wall and collapse of Soviet Bloc
1990	Film of <i>Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead</i> ; Separation from Miriam Stoppard; relationship with Felicity Kendal	
1991	<i>In the Native State</i>	Dissolution of the USSR; Kushner, <i>Angels in America, Part I</i>
1993	<i>Arcadia</i>	Czech Republic and Slovakia separate
1994	Learns history of family lost in Holocaust	
1995	<i>Indian Ink</i>	End of Bosnian war; Kane, <i>Blasted</i>
1996	Death of Stoppard's mother	
1997	<i>The Seagull</i> ; death of Stoppard's stepfather; <i>The Invention of Love</i> ; Stoppard knighted	Tony Blair becomes prime minister, representing 'New Labour'
1998	<i>Poodle Springs</i> (TV); Stoppard and his brother Peter return to Zlín; end of relationship with Felicity Kendal	
1999	<i>Shakespeare in Love</i> wins seven Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Screenplay	
2001		Attacks on the United States on 11 September
2002	<i>The Coast of Utopia</i>	
2003		Britain joins US invasion of Iraq
2004	<i>Henry IV</i> (Pirandello adaptation)	Hare, <i>Stuff Happens</i>
2005		Hurricane Katrina in the United States

Chronology

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(*cont.*)

Year	Tom Stoppard's Life and Work (dates of plays indicate premiere performance unless otherwise specified)	Historical and Cultural Events
2006	<i>Rock 'n' Roll</i>	
2008	<i>Ivanov</i> (Chekhov translation)	
2009		Butterworth, <i>Jerusalem</i> ; Prebble, <i>Enron</i>
2012	<i>Parade's End</i> (TV)	
2014	<i>Anna Karenina</i> (film); marriage to Sabrina Guinness	
2013	<i>Darkside</i> (radio); Stoppard awarded PEN Pinter Prize	Same-sex marriage legalised in Britain
2015	<i>The Hard Problem</i>	Syrian civil war leads to migrant crisis
2016		UK votes to leave the European Union
2017	<i>Tulip Fever</i> (film)	
2019		UN Climate Action Summit
2020	<i>Leopoldstadt</i>	COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic

Abbreviations

In-text citations of Stoppard's plays in this book refer to those plays which appear in Faber & Faber's five-volume *Plays* collections of Stoppard's drama. Plays that do not appear in the *Plays* texts are cited in endnotes.

- TSP 1 *Plays 1* (*The Real Inspector Hound, After Magritte, Dirty Linen, New-Found-Land, Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth*)
- TSP 2 *Plays 2* (*In the Native State, The Dissolution of Dominic Boot, 'M' is for Moon Among Other Things, If You're Glad I'll Be Frank, Albert's Bridge, Where Are They Now?, Artist Descending a Staircase, The Dog It Was That Died, On 'Dover Beach'*)
- TSP 3 *Plays 3* (*A Separate Peace, Teeth, Another Moon Called Earth, Neutral Ground, Professional Foul, Squaring the Circle*)
- TSP 4 *Plays 4* (*Dalliance, Undiscovered Country, Rough Crossing, On the Razzle, The Seagull*)
- TSP 5 *Plays 5* (*Arcadia, The Real Thing, Night and Day, Indian Ink, Hapgood*)