The rich legacy of women’s contributions to Irish theatre is traditionally viewed through a male-dominated literary canon and mythmaking, thus arguably silencing their work. In this timely book, Shonagh Hill proposes a feminist genealogy which brings new perspectives to women’s mythmaking across the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The performances considered include the tableaux vivants performed by the Inghinidhe na hÉireann (Daughters of Ireland), plays written by Alice Milligan, Maud Gonne, Lady Augusta Gregory, Eva Gore-Booth, Mary Devenport O’Neill, Mary Elizabeth Burke-Kennedy, Paula Meehan, Edna O’Brien and Marina Carr, as well as plays translated, adapted and performed by Olwen Fouéré. The theatrical work discussed resists the occlusion of women’s cultural engagement that results from confinement to idealized myths of femininity. This is realized through embodied mythmaking: a process which exposes how bodies bear the consequences of these myths, while refusing to accept the female body as passive bearer of inscription through the assertion of a creative female corporeality.

SHONAGH HILL teaches at University College Dublin. She was awarded an Irish Research Council Postdoctoral Fellowship 2016–17 (University College Dublin) to develop this book. Hill has published articles on women and Irish theatre in a range of leading journals and internationally reviewed books. Most recently, ‘Feeling Out of Place: The “Affective Dissonance” of the Feminist Spectator in The Boys of Foley Street’ was published in Performance, Feminism and Affect in Neoliberal Times (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).
WOMEN AND EMBODIED MYTHMAKING IN IRISH THEATRE

SHONAGH HILL

University College Dublin
For Mary and David Hill,

with love.
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