

WRITING THE HISTORY OF THE BRITISH STAGE, 1660–1900

This is the first book on British theatre historiography. It traces the practice of theatre history from its origins in the Restoration to its emergence as an academic discipline in the early twentieth century. In this compelling revisionist study, Richard Schoch reclaims the deep history of British theatre history, valorizing the usually overlooked scholarship undertaken by antiquarians, booksellers, bibliographers, journalists, and theatrical insiders, none of whom considered themselves to be professional historians. Drawing together deep archival research, close readings of historical texts from the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, and an awareness of contemporary debates about disciplinary practice, Schoch overturns received interpretations of British theatre historiography and shows that the practice – and the diverse practitioners – of theatre history was far more complicated and far more sophisticated than we had realized. His book is a landmark contribution to how theatre historians today can understand their own history.

RICHARD SCHOCH is Professor of Drama at Queen's University Belfast. He is the author of *Shakespeare's Victorian Stage* (Cambridge University Press), *Not Shakespeare* (Cambridge University Press), and *Queen Victoria and the Theatre of Her Age*. He has also edited *Great Shakespeareans: Macready, Booth, Terry, Irving* and *Victorian Theatrical Burlesques*. For a popular audience, he wrote *The Secrets of Happiness*, which has been translated into six languages. His books have been shortlisted for the Barnard Hewitt Award and the Theatre Book Prize. Schoch has received fellowships from the Leverhulme Trust, the Folger Shakespeare Library, and the Stanford Humanities Center.

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RICHARD SCHOCH



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For Stephen Orgel, optimus maximus

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