

*An Illustrated History of British Theatre and Performance* chronicles the history and development of theatre from the Roman era to the present day. As the most public of arts, theatre constantly interacts with changing social, political and intellectual movements and ideas, and Robert Leach's masterful work restores to the foreground of this evolution the contributions of women, gay people and ethnic minorities, as well as the theatres of the English regions, and of Wales and Scotland.

Highly illustrated chapters trace the development of theatre through major plays from each period; evaluations of playwrights; contemporary dramatic theory; acting and acting companies; dance and music; the theatre buildings themselves; and the audience, while also highlighting enduring features of British theatre, from comic gags to the use of props.

This first volume spans from the earliest forms of performance to the popular theatres of high society and the Enlightenment, tracing a movement from the outdoor and fringe to the heart of the social world. The *Illustrated History* acts as an accessible, flexible basis for students of the theatre, and for pure fans of British theatre history there could be no better starting point.