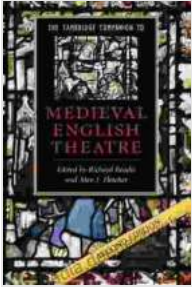


The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre: A Comprehensive Guide to the History, Plays, and Performances of Medieval English Drama



The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre (Cambridge Companions to Literature)

by Henrik Ibsen

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre is a comprehensive guide to the history, plays, and performances of medieval English drama. With contributions from leading scholars in the field, it provides a thorough understanding of this vibrant and influential era in English theatre.

The book is divided into four parts. The first part provides an overview of the history of medieval English theatre, from its origins in the early Middle Ages to its decline in the late Middle Ages. The second part examines the different types of medieval English plays, including mystery plays, morality plays, miracle plays, interludes, and mummers' plays. The third part

focuses on the performance of medieval English plays, discussing the different venues in which they were performed, the actors who performed them, and the audiences who attended them. The fourth part explores the legacy of medieval English theatre, discussing its influence on later English drama and its continuing relevance today.

History

The origins of medieval English theatre can be traced back to the early Middle Ages, when religious plays were performed in churches and monasteries. These plays, which were often based on biblical stories, were intended to teach the Christian faith to the illiterate masses. Over time, these religious plays began to incorporate more secular elements, and by the 14th century, they had evolved into a fully developed form of theatre.

The 14th and 15th centuries were a golden age for medieval English theatre. During this time, a number of new types of plays were developed, including morality plays, miracle plays, and interludes. These plays were performed by professional actors in a variety of venues, including town squares, churches, and guildhalls. The audiences for these plays were diverse, ranging from the nobility to the common people.

The late Middle Ages saw a decline in the popularity of medieval English theatre. This decline was due to a number of factors, including the rise of Protestantism, the closure of the theatres by the Puritans, and the development of new forms of entertainment, such as the Renaissance theatre.

Plays

Medieval English theatre produced a wide variety of plays, including mystery plays, morality plays, miracle plays, interludes, and mummers' plays. Mystery plays were based on biblical stories, while morality plays were allegories that taught moral lessons. Miracle plays were based on the lives of saints, while interludes were short, comic plays that were often performed between the acts of longer plays. Mummers' plays were traditional folk plays that were performed during the Christmas season.

Some of the most famous medieval English plays include the York Mystery Plays, the Chester Mystery Plays, the Towneley Mystery Plays, and Everyman.

Performance

Medieval English plays were performed in a variety of venues, including town squares, churches, guildhalls, and even the homes of wealthy patrons. The actors who performed in these plays were often members of trade guilds, and they were paid for their performances. The audiences for these plays were diverse, ranging from the nobility to the common people.

The performance of medieval English plays was often quite elaborate. The actors wore elaborate costumes and makeup, and they used a variety of props and scenery. The plays were often accompanied by music and dancing.

Legacy

Medieval English theatre had a profound impact on the development of later English drama. The plays of William Shakespeare, for example, are heavily influenced by the medieval mystery plays. Medieval English theatre

also continues to be performed today, both in its original form and in modern adaptations.

The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre is a valuable resource for anyone interested in this fascinating and influential era in English theatre. The book provides a comprehensive overview of the history, plays, and performances of medieval English drama, and it is written by leading scholars in the field.

The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre is a comprehensive and authoritative guide to this fascinating and influential era in English theatre. The book provides a wealth of information on the history, plays, and performances of medieval English drama, and it is written by leading scholars in the field. It is a valuable resource for anyone interested in medieval English theatre, and it is highly recommended.



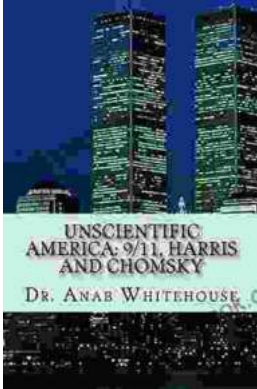
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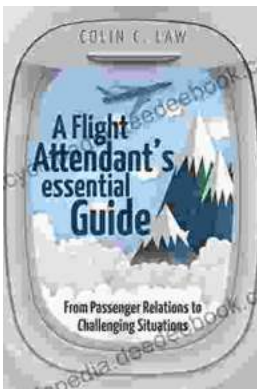
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