London's extraordinary Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson Theatre Collection was founded in 1939 by two actors and formed into a charitable trust in 1977. For many years the collection was housed at 5 Venner Road in Sydenham, but the move to larger and more comfortable quarters is now almost complete. The new building, a renovated Georgian mansion in Beckenham Place Park, will provide space better suited to the maintenance and use of the impressive collection in addition to ample gallery space for the exhibition of the treasures which will soon be on view, not only to scholars, but to the general public as well.

The vast holdings, which are added to continually, include books, periodicals, photographs, designs, programs, press clippings, oil paintings, water colors, ceramic figurines, and other materials related primarily to British theatre. It has always been a working collection and has provided materials for exhibitions, theatre programs, and media consultation as well as reference service for students and authors. Mr. Mitchenson and the late Mr. Mander have themselves organized numerous exhibitions and written more than 20 books related to the theatre.
Archivist Jillian Edwardes Jones working on the files with assistance from two members of the volunteer group.

A corner of the Green Room, currently part of Joe Mitchenson's private accommodation.

Curator Colin Mabberley.
BOOK REVIEWS


Stanley Green, that indefatigable chronicler of the musical theatre, has now come up with a “combination history, guide, fact book and photograph album of some 300 memorable” on and off-Broadway productions. His criteria for inclusion are all runs of more than 50 performances, seminal importance, the people involved, the quality of the score, the uniqueness of the approach or subject matter, and the general acceptance as a significant work in the field.

The 300 entries are arranged chronologically, from The Black Crook in 1866 up through Big River in 1985. I wish that they had been alphabetically arranged so that it would not be necessary to use the index to locate a particular show. I also think that Anyone Can Whistle and Happy End (omitted) are of more interest and importance than The Magic Show and Lil’ Abner (included).

Each entry includes credits for music, lyrics, book, producer, director and choreographer. Major cast members and song titles are listed, as well as the opening date, the theatre and the number of performances for the New York run. The comments that follow not only summarize the plot, but include tidbits about the history of the show, the major cast replacements during a long run, the recordings and published librettos, and the licensing agents. There are over 100 black and white photographs.

The last 88 pages include seven indexes: show title, composer/lyricist, director, choreographer, librettist, major cast members, and theatre. Not only is this a book of considerable reference value, particularly for the early years, but it is also extremely readable and consistently entertaining.

—Richard C. Lynch


Sheridan Morley (the son of you-know-who) is truly a man of the theatre. Not only is he a theatre critic, a writer of theatrical biographies and a reviewer of theatrical recordings for London’s theatrical programmes, he sometimes even appears on stage in such revues as Side by Side by Sondheim and Noel and Gertie. This volume contains more than 200 short biographies of “great stage stars” spanning more than four centuries. Mr. Morley believes that his choices have all won lasting popular or critical acclaim on the British, American or Australian stage. It doesn’t bother him at all that they range from Herbert Beerbohm Tree to Carol Channing. Fifty black and white photos are scattered throughout the book.

Perhaps you are familiar with the David Shipman Great Movie Stars volumes. This was designed as a companion volume dealing with the stage. Thus the Marlene Dietrich entry may mention a few of her films, but primarily deals with her stage appearances during the latter part of her career. Since Mr. Morley has been the drama critic for Punch, The International Herald Tribune, and other publications, he has interviewed many of the stars included in this book, adding a personal touch to the entry. Some of the names in this book, I must admit, were unknown to me—Frederick Valk? Irene Vanbrugh? But I can think of no nicer way to make their acquaintances than through the pages of Mr. Morley’s book.

The author states that this book is meant as “an attempt at pure information. Who opened when, where, in what and to whom contemporary reaction?” Occasional errors creep in—Lotte Lenya did not win a Tony for Cabaret—but nevertheless, this volume is well worth investigating.

—Richard C. Lynch


How many people read a coffee-table book? Not many, one suspects. Its size, weight and visual impact all discourage more than a casual glance at the text. In this case such negligence would be a pity, for Mary Henderson’s commentary is as lively and as entertaining as the accompanying illustrations.

The book is unusual in its organization. It is divided into chapters, each of which deals with some participant in the making of a play—the producer, playwright, director, and so on. Within the chapters the account is chronological, which entails some repetition, but which enables the author to give coherent account of various facets of the theatre. In dealing with playwrights and actors the author makes use of familiar names, but in her chapters discussing less well-publicized figures such as directors, designers and architects she is particularly interesting.

Mrs. Henderson’s years of experience as a researcher, teacher and curator have familiarized her with visual sources of theatrical history, and she has enriched the text with many unfamiliar illustrations as well as familiar ones. They are handsomely reproduced, with a lavish number in color. In view of the book’s expense it is inexcusable, however, to devote a mere page to the photographic credits. To identify, for example, the source of the painting of “Jump Jim Crow” reproduced on page 124, one has to plow through a page of microscopic type, confusingly arranged.

Otherwise there is little to fault. Mrs. Henderson is a skillful and entertaining guide and her choice of material—textual and illustrative—is judicious. The book also contains a brief introduction by Joseph Papp (p. 8), who, it might be noted, bears a striking resemblance to Edwin Booth (p. 151).

—William W. Appleton

Year of the King. By Antony Sher. London: Methuen, 1985. 249 pp. £4.50 (pbk.).

Having been numbered among those in the entry “Americans invade—Stratford gets so full it might be sick” during the run of Antony Sher’s performance in Richard III, this diary of the lives of the two of us, from the first suggestion to opening night promised a great deal of interest. How good that it fulfills that promise and offers more—eloquent writing, astonishing drawings, and cause for laughing out loud.

Year of the King deals with the experience of creating a performance, from “an unkept mess” to “a bottled spider.” In this case, the creation began even before a line of “Joe Allen’s chat” came from the mouth of Trevor Nunn; it was a popped Achilles’ tendon which drove Sher into both physical therapy and psychotherapy—both essential elements in his concept of Richard. It was foreshadowed by a small accident at a Barbican opening, where the old man into whose shoulder Sher crashes is Laurence Olivier. (“God,” Sher had written earlier, “it seems terribly unfair of Shakespeare to begin his play with such a famous speech. You don’t like to put your mouth to it...it’s as hard as saying ‘I love you’ as if you’d just coined the phrase for the first time.”) Once the part is offered to him and he accepts, Sher visits both libraries and health farms, tapes TV programs on the disabled and murderers—all in “compulsive” pursuit. While he searches for Richard, he also tapes two plays for television—and takes a holiday trip back home to South Africa, which he had not visited for eight years. The journey involves another search, for feelings long unvoiced. Finally, Stratford-rehearsals begin. The idea of Richard on crutches—Shakespeare’s great warrior who is severely disabled—is adopted, ditched, and adopted again. Previews, opening, acclaim from Trevor Nunn, and “a flash of a night in Joe Allen’s some millennia ago,” and letters from the Richard III Society (only one or two “less enthusiastic”). Accounts of all are here. It is our pleasure that Mr. Sher’s “pile of notes and sketches from this past year” have been shared with us. They provide a rare insight into the making of a historic theatrical event, yet one in which the play rests “in pride of place, on the top.”

—Adelle Bellinger

The Jungman Twins (1928) by Cecil Beaton. Photograph courtesy of Sotheby’s.
On Tuesday, October 21, 1986, TLA presented a panel featuring private collectors of performing arts materials discussing their collections. Martha Mahard, TLA board member, introduced Dorothy Swerdlove and Brigitte Kueppers who coordinated the program and presented the panel members.

Bill Appleton, the first speaker, taught English at Columbia University from 1945-75 and wrote biographies of Mme. Vestris and Macklin. He explained that he inherited a very good library from his grandfather which financed his own collecting. Quoting Samuel Butler's advice—"Pick your ancestors carefully"—he began collecting in 1934 and continued through the war years buying press books and first editions. After the war his interests changed, and he sold off most of his collection. When he began teaching Elizabethan drama he bought some early quartos, but soon found collecting in this field to be too expensive. In the '50s he began buying manuscript materials and he says, in retrospect, that he wished he had begun to do so 20 years earlier when such materials were more available and at lower prices. Once again Appleton auctioned many of his books to concentrate on other fields. One of the collections he acquired was that of James Winston-C.B. Cochran, a group of about 400 theatrical letters and documents dating from the 17th to the late 19th century. He says that he quite often gets requests for information from this collection.

Appleton's advice to collectors was that the best deals could sometimes be made with collectors who had tired of their collections. He has also collected Diaghilev material, show music from 1920 to 1950, and juvenile drama. These materials have been loaned to a number of exhibitions. Appleton feels that his collection developed from a conventional one to a more scholarly one. He wonders what his grandfather would have thought of it and suspects that he would have dismissed it as a lot of debris.

Patricia Barnes, a writer for Dance & Dancers and ex-wife of critic Clive Barnes, discussed the dance collection that she and her sister have amassed. She decribed their collection as leaning towards romantic and traditional dance (citing as an example, prints of Taglioni's Bayadère) with emphasis on Diaghilev materials. The pair began collecting in book stores in an example, prints of Taglioni's Bayadère) with emphasis on Diaghilev materials. The pair began collecting in book stores in an example, prints of Taglioni's Bayadère) with emphasis on Diaghilev materials. The pair began collecting in book stores in an example, prints of Taglioni's Bayadère) with emphasis on Diaghilev materials. The pair began collecting in book stores in an example, prints of Taglioni's Bayadère) with emphasis on Diaghilev materials. The pair began collecting in book stores in an example, prints of Taglioni's Bayadère) with emphasis on Diaghilev materials. 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TLA AT ALA: 1986

On Monday, June 30, 1986, as part of the American Library Association's Annual Conference, TLA presented a two-part program at the handsome, if little used, Cort Theatre on 48th Street. The program opened with greetings from Gerald Schoenfeld, Chairman of the Board of the Shubert Organization, who pointed out that the Shubert theatres across the country are fewer now than in the heyday of the Shubert Brothers but that there are still 17 operating buildings in New York City, one of which is the Cort. He also mentioned that the Cort, in spite of its beauty and its popularity among actors, has the disadvantage of being small, double-balconied, and east of Broadway. Nevertheless, the Shuberts maintain it from profits made in other venues. It has been booked for the coming season.

Mr. Schoenfeld's remarks were followed by a slide presentation during which Mr. Richard Buck discussed the research and design connected with his and Alan Pally's exhibition about the commercial theatre in New York City. The exhibition, entitled "Places Please: Broadway's Historic Theatres," took place at The New York Public Library at Lincoln Center in 1984. Mr. Buck's lively presentation emphasized the wealth of material available in various New York City libraries and the difficulty in selecting the most riveting, evocative and historically important material into the limited space of the gallery.

The slide presentation was followed by a panel discussion which considered resources of New York City libraries in regard to the theatres in New York. Brooks McNamara introduced the section on the Shubert Archive by recounting his amazement when first confronted by the enormous amount of material in 1976. The Shubert's Archivist, Brigette Kueppers, then described exactly how huge the collection turned out to be. Louis Rachow of the Players' Club described the eight major collections in the Hampden/Booth Library there, and Maxwell Silverman and Mary Ann Smith of the Theatre Collection of the Museum of the City of New York discussed, with slide accompaniment, their resources with special emphasis on original designs and photographs. Dorothy Swardlova then described the holdings of the Theatre Collection of The New York Public Library. Following the panel, the Shubert Organization hosted a reception in the lounge of the Cort Theatre.

- Donald J. Fowle

POSTER SHOW AT MCNY

Before the age of neon, theatre producers used huge, striking posters to advertise their shows. Twenty-five of these are on view at the Museum of the City of New York, in an exhibition entitled "Selling the Show: Turn-of-the-Century Theatre Posters." The exhibition was organized by Bob Taylor, Curator of the Museum's Theatre Collection, and runs through May 10, 1987.

THE BIG NEW YORK SUCCESS

KIDNAPPED

- CAPTURE OF THE ASSASSIN

Poster advertising the popular melodrama Kidnapped, by an anonymous designer

1983 ANNUAL THEATRE BIBLIOGRAPHY

The second volume, for 1983, of the International Bibliography of Theatre has been published. It is a full-sized work, much expanded over the 1982 bibliography. There are 11,000 subject entries referring to 1,591 theatre articles and 519 books published in 1983. The IBT is now much more useful since it contains a more thorough survey of foreign publications in the field.

The cost of the volume is $65 (institutions $85). Orders may be placed with the Publishing Center, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012. Scholars whose work may be appropriate for listing in the IBT should contact The Theatre Research Data Center, Brooklyn College, Bedford Avenue and Avenue H, Brooklyn, NY 11210.

We are eager to publish relevant news and items of interest from around the world. In addition, we require book reviewers in various sub-specialties of theatre. Please write to:

Alan J. Pally, Editor
Broadsheet Theatre Library Association
111 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10023

BOOKS RECEIVED


WORK IN PROGRESS

A major exhibition devoted to the work of Cecil Beaton was mounted by London's Barbican Art Gallery and open to view from May 16 through August 10, 1986. Representing the full range of his activities over seven decades—from theatre and film design to fashion photography and wartime reportage—the exhibition aimed to show Beaton's importance in shaping contemporary taste and consciousness. Shown here is Cecil Beaton, left, with his gardener John Smallpeice (1970s). Photograph courtesy of Sotheby's.
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