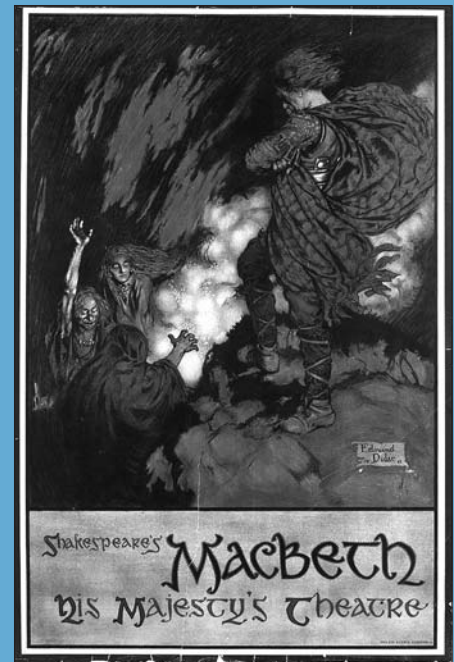


The Beerbohm Tree Collection



“Even when he was hopelessly miscast Tree’s acting was so clever, so inventive, so varied, so intensely interesting, that for unalloyed entertainment one would rather see him in a bad play than anyone else in a good one.”

Anonymous theatre-goer



Adam Matthew Publications

“Never say a humorous thing to a man who doesn't possess humour. He will always use it in evidence against you.”

Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree
Actor & Theatre Manager,
1853-1917



“Especially rich in prompt books... also of enormous interest are the ledgers and account books which give details of production costs, actors' and technicians' salaries, box office takings, advertising and general running costs...”

Christopher Robinson
Former Keeper of the Collection



The Beerbohm Tree Collection

is an essential resource for anybody interested in Victorian and Edwardian theatre. Prompt books, cash books, ledgers and press cuttings reveal how theatres operated. We can see how plays were staged, how they were received critically and commercially, and how the entire enterprise was managed.

Beerbohm Tree

Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree was one of the greatest actor-managers of his day. He mounted spectacularly elaborate productions of Shakespearean drama,



Her Majesty's Theatre, London

specialising in sets - from a nauseatingly realistic ocean for *The Tempest* to a fire that had audiences fleeing *Nero*.

Tree was a pioneer of new drama, introducing the audience to new plays by writers such as Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde, Clyde Fitch and Henrik Ibsen. Committed to the theatre, Tree took on the management of the Comedy Theatre (1887), the Haymarket (1887-1896) and Her (or His) Majesty's Theatre (1897-1915), which was built to Tree's own specifications.

Acting & Directing

Tree's greatest on-stage successes were as Falstaff in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1889), as the lead in *Hamlet* (1892) and as the first-ever Henry Higgins in *Pygmalion* (1914).

He was also one of the first to recognise the potential of cinema: his scene from King John was the first Shakespeare to appear on film.

RADA

In 1904 Tree founded what was to become the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts. He went on to lecture in acting and direction, and wrote three books. Tree was knighted in 1909 for services to the theatre.

Highlights

The Collection's highlights include:

- 253 boxes of prompt books featuring many of Tree's major productions, including *An African Millionaire*, *Antony & Cleopatra*, *David Copperfield*, *Faust*, *Tribly* and *A Woman of No Importance*
- Almost 1000 photographs capturing Tree's work
- 64 volumes of press cuttings from 1885 to 1917, documenting developments in stagecraft and American tours
- Business correspondence, ledgers, account books and meeting minutes
- Personal correspondence and designs for plays

The Beerbohm Tree Collection from the University of Bristol

Part 1: Prompt Copies - 439 fiche

Part 2: Prompt Copies - 443 fiche

Part 3: Agreements & Press Cuttings - 458 fiche

Part 4: Correspondence, Business & Production Records - 111 fiche

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