

Comparative Stages: Essays in the History of Euro-American Drama

Bert Cardullo

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This is a collection of essays whose title more or less explains its contents. In 'Comparative Stages', the author attempts to chart some of the high points in the history of Western drama, from the Greeks to our contemporaries: ancient Athenian tragedy, Shakespearean historical comedy, French neoclassicism, and modern as well as avant-garde Euro-American drama. In addition, one can find here an examination of postwar Italian plays and a survey of German-language comedy from its origins to the twentieth century. 'Comparative Stages: Essays in the History of Euro-American Drama' is obviously not meant to be a comprehensive history of the drama, Western or otherwise. But the book is intended to display a critical approach - historically contextual at the same time as it is intrinsically or organically analytical - that could lead to such a history, for there has not been anything even resembling one in quite some time. Let it be emphasized that this is a reference to a history of dramatic form - of the formal permutations the drama has undergone during its history and the philosophico-aesthetic as well as socio-political reasons for these stylistic-cum-structural permutations - not to a history of the theater or theatrical production (of which volumes there have been plenty). It is to be hoped that, with this collection of essays, the prefatory dialogue necessary to the undertaking of just such a history of Western, if not world, drama has at least begun.

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