

Henry V (Shakespeare in Performance MUP)

James N. Loelin



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This study examines the profound changes that twentieth-century performance has wrought on Shakespeare's complex drama of war and politics. What was accepted at the turn of the century as a patriotic celebration of a national hero has emerged in the modern theatre as a dark and troubling analysis of the causes and costs of war. The book details the theatrical innovations and political insights that have turned one of Shakespeare's most traditional-bound plays into one of his most popular and provocative.

Like the other volumes in the Shakespeare in performance series, Henry V gives details analyses of several important modern productions. Beginning with a consideration of the play's political significance in Elizabethan London, the book goes on the reveal its subsequent reinvention, both as patriotic pageant and anti-war manifesto. Individual chapters consider important productions by the Royal Shakespeare Company, and other British and North American companies, as well as the landmark film versions of Laurence Olivier and Kenneth Branagh. A compelling account of the theatrical revolution that has transformed one of Shakespeare's most challenging plays.

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