



# **The Theatre of D.H. Lawrence: Dramatic Modernist and Theatrical Innovator (Critical Companions)**

*James Moran*

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This is the first major book-length study for four decades to examine the plays written by D. H. Lawrence, and the first ever book to give an in-depth analysis of Lawrence's interaction with the theatre industry during the early twentieth century. It connects and examines his performance texts, and explores his reaction to a wide-range of theatre (from the sensation dramas of working-class Eastwood to the ritual performances of the Pueblo people) in order to explain Lawrence's contribution to modern drama.

F. R. Leavis influentially labelled the writer 'D. H. Lawrence: Novelist'. But this book foregrounds Lawrence's career as a playwright, exploring unfamiliar contexts and manuscripts, and drawing particular attention to his three most successful works: *The Widowing of Mrs Holroyd*, *The Daughter-in-Law*, and *A Collier's Friday Night*. It examines how Lawrence's novels are suffused with theatrical thinking, revealing how Lawrence's fictions – from his first published work to the last story that he wrote before his death – continually take inspiration from the playhouse.

The book also argues that, although Lawrence has sometimes been dismissed as a restrictively naturalistic stage writer, his overall oeuvre shows a consistent concern with theatrical experiment, and manifests affinities with the dramatic thinking of modernist figures including Brecht, Artaud, and Joyce. In a final section, the book includes contributions from influential theatre-makers who have taken their own cue from Lawrence's work, and who have created original work that consciously follows Lawrence in making working-class life central to the public forum of the theatre stage.

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