

Grand-Guignol



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The Theatre du Grand-Guignol in Paris (1897-1962) achieved a legendary reputation as the "Theatre of Horror", a venue displaying such explicit violence and blood-curdling terror that a resident doctor was employed to treat the numerous spectators who fainted each night. Indeed, the phrase "grand guignol" has entered the language to describe any display of sensational horror. Since the Theatre du Grand-Guignol closed its doors 40 years ago, the genre has been overlooked by critics and theatre historians. This book reconsiders the importance and influence of the Grand-Guignol within its social, cultural and historical contexts, and attempts a major evaluation of the genre as performance. It gives full consideration to practical applications and to the challenges presented to the actor and director and also includes new translations of 10 Grand-Guignol plays previously unavailable in English. The presentation of these plays in English for the first time is an implicit demand for a total reappraisal of the grand-guignol genre, not least for the unexpected inclusion of two very funny comedies.

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