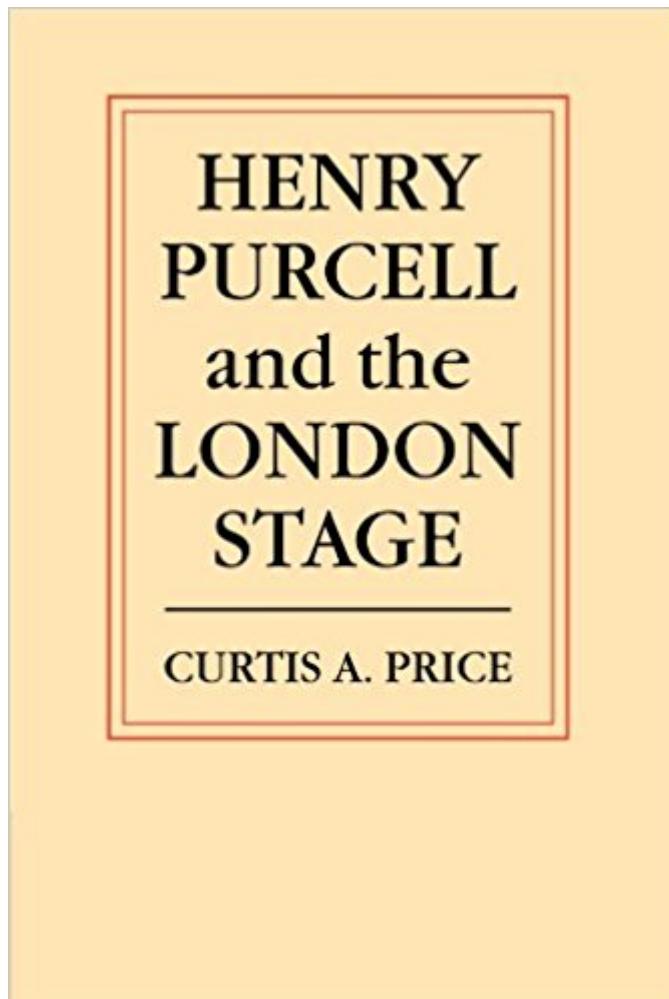


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Henry Purcell And The London Stage



Synopsis

This book was the first comprehensive survey of Purcell's dramatic music. It is concerned as much with the London theatre world - playhouses, poets, actors, singers, producers - as with the music itself. Purcell wrote music for more than fifty plays of various types, most of them produced at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, between 1690 and 1695. The songs, dialogues, choruses, act tunes and larger musical scenes are often active participants in the spoken drama, not simply grafted-on entertainments. The extraordinary semi-operas - *Dioclesian*, *King Arthur*, and *The Fairy-Queen* - are placed in the context of a theatre that thrived mainly on plays that, though less lavish, were no less musical. The traditional picture of a composer trapped within a degraded musical society, his natural predilection for opera ignored, is redrawn to show a consummate dramatist exploiting a remarkably musical theatre.

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