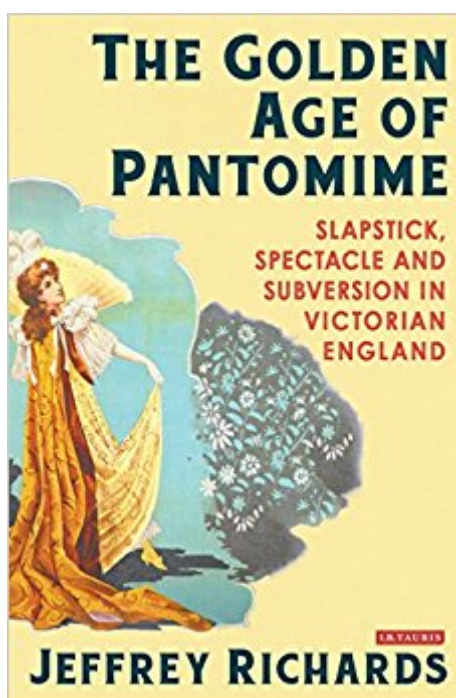


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The Golden Age Of Pantomime: Slapstick, Spectacle And Subversion In Victorian England



Synopsis

Queen Victoria and her family loved the pantomime, so did her subjects of all classes. The English Pantomime is one of the most popular, least analysed of all theatrical forms. It's been the festive mainstay of the English stage since the eighteenth century, and it has survived by its ability to evolve. This continual evolution is traced by Jeffrey Richards in the first history of panto through its 'Golden Age' in Victorian England. He explores the spectacle, the slapstick, and the talent for subversion that nineteenth-century pantomime had and still has in different ways. His story, told with panache and enjoyment, is peopled with remarkable actors, managers, producers and punters, across the country from Drury Lane to Blackpool. This is a treat as rich as turkey and Christmas pudding.

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Customer Reviews

'I rejoice at Jeffrey Richards' achievement: the first thorough and gratifyingly detailed study of London's pantomimes from the 1830s through to c.1900 which quietly blends immaculate scholarship, close analysis and archival work with entertaining readability. So doing, he has produced a work entirely free from whimsy, mawkish nostalgia and enforced rapture that so disfigure earlier attempts to describe this major English theatrical genre.' David Mayer, Emeritus Professor of Drama, Manchester University. 'An insightful and passionate study of the pantomime written by one of Britain's leading cultural historians. Jeffrey Richards is able to bring the Victorian panto back to life, show its vibrancy and popularity, and the extraordinary detail with which it was discussed in the print media. Richards almost made me want to go back in time to witness these

spectacles firsthand.' Anselm Heinrich, Head of Theatre Studies, University of Glasgow

Jeffrey Richards is Professor of Cultural History, Lancaster University, UK. His many publications on theatre history include *Sir Henry Irving: A Victorian Actor and His World* and *John Ruskin and the Victorian Theatre*. He is General Editor of Tauris' Cinema and Society Series.

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