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Culture War

Conflict, Commemoration and the Contemporary Abbey Theatre

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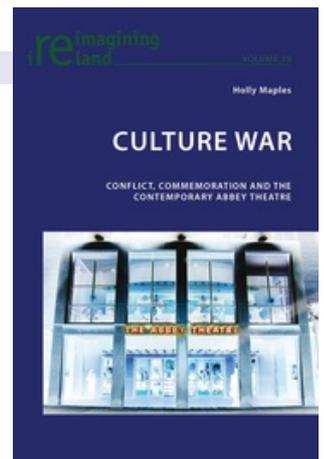
Reimagining Ireland. Vol. 29

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Book synopsis

The Irish National Theatre Society began its centenary in 2004 with ambitious theatrical events at home and abroad. By the end of the year, however, the company was close to financial ruin, culminating in its dissolution and subsequent reestablishment. The financial crisis was only one element of controversy during the centenary year. During this period, the remit of the Abbey Theatre as a house for the performance of Irish identity and new Irish writing was brought into question. While debates unfolded over the artistic and financial crises, many commentators queried the very nature of, or need for, a national theatre in twenty-first-century Ireland.

Examining organizational issues such as finance and public policy, as well as wider questions about the representation of Irishness on the national stage and the shaping of collective memory through commemoration, this book questions the way that the private concerns of the Irish National Theatre reflect greater issues within Irish society. Drawing together personal interviews, government documents, media sources and comparative studies from the history of the Republic, the author interweaves current and past crises of the Abbey Theatre with the social, cultural and financial anxieties of an evolving Ireland.

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About the author(s)/editor(s)

Holly Maples holds a PhD in Theatre Studies from Trinity College Dublin and is currently Lecturer in Drama at the University of East Anglia. Both a practitioner and a scholar, her interests combine performance studies, practice-based research and theatre history. Her current research examines the embodiment of collective memory in Irish and American civic performance.

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