



Thomas Betterton: The Greatest Actor of the Restoration Stage

David Roberts

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Restoration London's leading actor and theater manager Thomas Betterton has not been the subject of a biography since 1891. He worked with all the best-known playwrights of his age and with the first generation of English actresses; he was intimately involved in the theater's responses to politics, and became a friend of leading literary men such as Pope and Steele. His innovations in scenery and company management, and his association with the dramatic inheritance of Shakespeare, helped to change the culture of English theater. David Roberts's entertaining study unearths new documents and draws fresh conclusions about this major but shadowy figure. It contextualizes key performances and examines Betterton's relationship to patrons, colleagues and family, as well as to significant historical moments and artifacts. The most substantial study available of any seventeenth-century actor, Thomas Betterton gives one of England's greatest performing artists his due on the tercentenary of his death.

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