



Theatre on the American Frontier

THOMAS A. BOGAR

For two centuries, nearly all historical accounts of American theatre have focused on New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. As a result, the story of theatre on the frontier consists primarily of regional studies with limited scope. Thomas A. Bogar's *Theatre on the American Frontier* provides an overdue, balanced treatment of the accomplishments of the troupes working in the trans-Appalachian West.

From its origins in late eighteenth-century Pittsburgh, New Orleans, and Louisville, frontier theatre grew by the close of the nineteenth century to encompass more than a dozen centers of vibrant theatrical activity. Audiences—mainly pioneers struggling with the hardships of establishing a life in the backcountry—enjoyed thrilling melodramas, the comedies of George Colman the Younger and John O’Keeffe, and even the tragedies of William Shakespeare. Theatre companies that ventured into this challenging and unfamiliar territory did so with a combination of daring and determination. Bogar’s comprehensive study brings this neglected history into the spotlight, cementing these figures and their theatrical productions and practices in their rightful place.

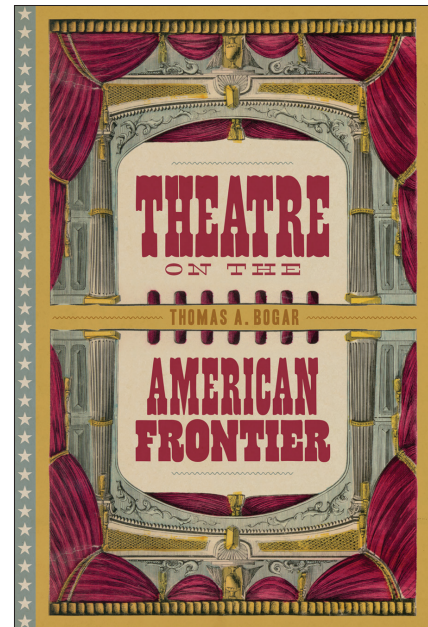
THOMAS A. BOGAR is a former professor of theatre history at Hood College and the author of *Backstage at the Lincoln Assassination: The Untold Story of the Actors and Stagehands at Ford’s Theatre* and *American Presidents Attend the Theatre: The Playgoing Experiences of Each Chief Executive*, among other books.

PRaise FOR *THEATRE ON THE AMERICAN FRONTIER*

“Thomas A. Bogar, a leading theatre historian, has created a skillfully researched and superbly written story of the theatre on the American frontier. From fragmented and oft-conflicting sources, he has summoned a colorful era that brought the stage’s improbable characters and lively culture to the West.”—*Terry Alford, author of In the Houses of Their Dead: The Lincolns, the Booths, and the Spirits*

“Bogar does a yeoman job of tracing the travels and travails of legendary theatre names from the 1800s. The book offers a solid documentary record, as well as human interest stories and vivid evocations of the conditions they faced.”—*Felicia Hardison Londré, co-author of The History of North American Theater: From Pre-Columbian Times to the Present*

“Bogar shines an illuminating light on a little-known and underappreciated aspect of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American life: the many and varied live theatre performances that took place on the frontier from 1790 to 1890 from eastern Kentucky to the Dakota Territory. A fact-filled, sprightly written treat for theatre and history lovers.”—*Marc Leepson, author of Saving Monticello: The Levy Family’s Epic Quest to Rescue the House That Jefferson Built*



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