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The Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre, an authoritative and lavishly illustrated new history, celebrates the stage's greatest achievements over 4,500 years, from festival performances in ancient Egypt to international, multicultural drama in the late twentieth century, and from Sophocles and Aristophanes to George Gershwin and Harold Pinter. Here are the playwrights, plays, actors, directors, producers, songwriters, famous playhouses, dramatic movements, and more, accessibly and attractively arranged so that everyone with a passion for the stage can follow the glorious procession of this triumphant art throughout history and across cultures. The Oxford Illustrated History of the Theatre guides readers through the full spectrum of dramatic representation as well as giving due weight to how the scene backstage evolved through the centuries--the role of musicians, light, sound, and equipment, and the art of set design--and to the crucial role of the audience and critics. Finally, there are stimulating essays on the history of Asian theater and a concluding account of theater since 1970 by editor John Russell Brown that highlights the contributions of our best-loved contemporary playwrights, directors, and lyricists. Spectacular illustrations throughout bring the very visual nature of theater to life, serving as dramatic accompaniment to the text. The Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre is an essential source of reference for anyone interested in the stage, from students and teachers to seasoned professionals and starry-eyed fans.