



The Early Stuart Masque: Dance, Costume, and Music

Barbara Ravelhofer

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The Early Stuart Masque: Dance, Costume, and Music studies the complex impact of movements, costumes, words, scenes, music, and special effects in English illusionistic theatre of the Renaissance. Drawing on a massive amount of documentary evidence relating to English productions as well as spectacle in France, Italy, Germany, and the Ottoman Empire, the book elucidates professional ballet, theatre management, and dramatic performance at the early Stuart court. Individual studies take a fresh look at works by Ben Jonson, Samuel Daniel, Thomas Carew, John Milton, William Davenant, and others, showing how court poets collaborated with tailors, designers, technicians, choreographers, and aristocratic as well as professional performers to create a dazzling event. Based on extensive archival research on the households of Queen Anne and Queen Henrietta Maria, special chapters highlight the artistic and financial control of Stuart queens over their masques and pastorals. Many plates and figures from German, Austrian, French, and English archives illustrate accessibly-written introductions to costume conventions, early dance styles, male and female performers, the dramatic symbolism of colors, and stage design in performance. With splendid costumes and choreographies, masques once appealed to the five senses. A tribute to their colorful brilliance, this book seeks to recover a lost dimension of performance culture in early modern England.

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