



A Theater of Our Own: A History and a Memoir of 1,001 Nights in Chicago

Richard Christiansen

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Winner of the Illinois State Historical Society Book Award for Superior Achievement

Who produced the first stage adaptation of "The Wizard of Oz" in 1902-nearly forty years before the movie classic? What entertainment juggernaut began in a converted Chinese laundry on Wells Street in 1959? Where did Louis (Studs) Terkel make his stage debut? When did the original production of "Grease" open at Kingston Mines Theater?

Richard Christiansen, former chief critic for the Chicago Tribune, answers these and many more questions about the rich role of the theater in Chicago, from its earliest days in 1837 to its present state as a diverse community of artists with international stature. In *A Theater of Our Own*, he draws upon his exclusive interviews, insights, and memories gathered over a period of more than forty years of reviewing the arts. This history and memoir traces the evolution of the Chicago theater scene from small theaters to major institutions such as the Steppenwolf Theatre Company, the Goodman Theater, and The Second City. Along the way, Richard Christiansen relates his behind-the-scenes conversations with some of Chicago's most acclaimed writers, directors, and actors--David Mamet, Frank Galati, Mary Zimmerman, John Malkovich, Laurie Metcalf, Harold Ramis, Gary Sinise, and Joe Mantegna--all a part of Chicago's theater renaissance from the 1970s onward. To this day, Chicago remains a city known for its imaginative, innovative, and influential theaters and artists. *A Theater of Our Own*, a valuable contribution to the history of theater, is a book written for anyone who enjoys the theater and its people.

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