



# **Thomas Killigrew and the Seventeenth-Century English Stage: New Perspectives (Studies in Performance and Early Modern Drama)**

*Philip Major*

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Despite his significant influence as a courtier, diplomat, playwright and theatre manager, Thomas Killigrew (1612-1683) remains a comparatively elusive and neglected figure. The original essays in this interdisciplinary volume shine new light on a singular, contradictory Englishman 400 years after his birth. They increase our knowledge and deepen our understanding not only of Killigrew himself, but of seventeenth-century dramaturgy, and its complex relationship to court culture and to evolving aesthetic tastes. The first book on Killigrew since 1930, this study re-examines the significant phases of his life and career: the little-known playwriting years of the 1630s; his long exile during the 1640s and 1650s, and its personal, political and literary repercussions; and the period following the Restoration, when, with Sir William Davenant, he enjoyed a monopoly of the London stage. These fresh accounts of Killigrew build on the recent resurgence of interest in royalists and the royalist exile, and underscore literary scholars' continued fascination with the Restoration stage. In the process, they question dominant assumptions about neatly demarcated seventeenth-century chronological, geographic and cultural boundaries. What emerges is a figure who confounds as often as he justifies traditional labels of dilettante, cavalier wit and swindler.

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