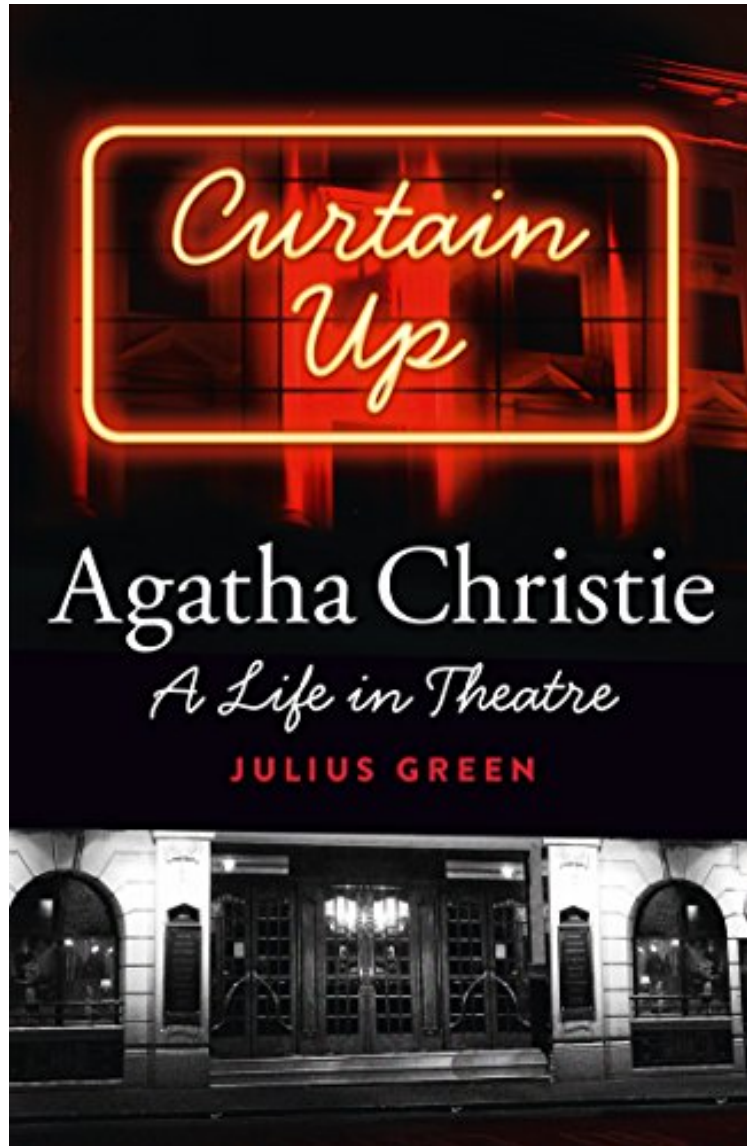


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Curtain Up: Agatha Christie: A Life in Theatre

Julius Green

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Julius Green : Curtain Up: Agatha Christie: A Life in Theatre before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Curtain Up: Agatha Christie: A Life in Theatre*:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By Christopher Brochon
This should be on the shelf of every Christie fan.
4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A comprehensive history of Agatha Christie's life as a playwright
By Bookreporter
Julius Green has written a comprehensive history of Agatha Christie's life as a playwright. To people like myself, Christie was best known for her crime novels. But to others, she was well known as a playwright, as is evidenced by the contents of *CURTAIN UP*. Green has not written a

biography of Christie's life, as he says there are already a number of good ones out there. Rather, his intent is to set the record straight on her contributions to live theatre. He contends (and rightly so based on what he has written) that Christie was never given the recognition she deserved as a playwright. She was the first woman ever to have three plays running simultaneously in London's popular West End theatre district. One of them, 'The Mousetrap,' opened in 1952 and is still going strong, starting its 64th year of production. It is the longest-running play --- and show --- of all time. In the process of detailing Christie's theatrical accomplishments, Green puts them into historical perspective, listing other plays that were being done at the same time as hers. This is not only a history of Christie's work, but also somewhat of a history of the theatrical goings-on of the West End. Green, a theatrical producer who has been responsible for some of Christie's plays, tackles a heavy subject. Although he writes with some humor, most of the book is rather matter-of-fact. Still, he adds lots of interesting and fascinating material, including many never-before-published personal letters between Christie and others in the theatre business, giving the reader a different insight into her thoughts and ideas at the time. I have been a fan of Agatha Christie for many decades, having read a great deal of her short stories and novels. Until I read CURTAIN UP, I wasn't fully aware of the role she played in the history of theatre. Many thanks to Julius Green for giving me a whole new perspective on the life of one of my favorite writers. Reviewed by Christine M. Irvin 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Wonderfully Informative piece of Christie History By Mahish10 Surprisingly well researched and more important well written. Julius Green appears to be a meticulous writer and this one book does not insult the memory of the great Agatha Christie. Her grandson, Matthew Pritchard has been trying to make more money by adding to the Christie canon by getting people to write junk such as the awful Poirot novel; The Monogram Murders and less awful but meaningless (second volume) of secret note books. There is a small item in the book about how Christie who loved going to the theatre, took her grandson to see Shakespeare. I was quite reluctant to pick up this volume thinking it would be another redundant addition to the long line of post Christie, Christie. But it is a very nicely presented volume with history of the West End in the days of Agatha Christie which is a treat by itself. Actually there is a How Charles Laughton, an aspiring young actor those days played Poirot. I did not even realize that Poirot and Christie were so popular in the theatre those days. Mr. Green quotes briefly and poignantly from Ms. Christie's life and those are very interesting footnotes, such as divorce from Archibald Christie and the missing days in her life. Now I wish a book of her plays -not in Mousetrap and other plays-such as Alibi, Chimneys and others could be put together and published to mark another Christie for Christmas. It was surprising to read that Mrs. Christie in the 30s was highly regarded as a writer and a dramatist. In America, despite her enormous popularity, she has always been regarded as writing about cardboard characters with unusual twists in the end. Of course such writers do not merit generations of followers. It is great to note that reviewers talked of her depth of characters (in the plays) that reflected her 'undoubted genius'. Unknown anecdotes about Akhnaton, not published until 1973, was a play written in the 30s. There is the association with Eden Phillpott's (who was a Victorian/Edwardian writer of great repute and who encouraged Agatha to write) daughter who wrote blank verse drama of the same character. These observations, meticulously documented are the rewards of this book. The early history is so much fun to read and this gives a better understanding of Agatha than many of her biographies, although the author states clearly it is not that. As a staunch Agatha Christie fan for far many years that I care to count, I found this book worthy of her memory. Please Mr. Pritchard, no more Monogram murders.

A revealing and witty new examination of how Agatha Christie became the world's most successful and popular female playwright, including details of never-before-published scripts and stories. Published in celebration of Agatha Christie's 125th birthday, *Curtain Up!* is an essential purchase for Agatha Christie fans worldwide. Everyone knows that *The Mousetrap* is the world's longest-running play, but this first ever book dedicated to Agatha Christie as a playwright tells how Christie prevailed against the male-dominated establishment to be the only woman to have three plays in the West End at the same time and became the most popular and successful female playwright in the world. Author and theatre producer Julius Green has been given unprecedented access to archives in the UK and USA and has uncovered more than ten unpublished and unperformed plays, as well as previously unknown facts and correspondence. Agatha Christie was a skilful and accomplished stage writer, and this long-awaited book is a fascinating, funny and revealing tale that theatregoers and Agatha Christie fans won't want to miss. As a special feature, this book includes extensive endnotes available at www.harpercollins.co.uk/notes/curtainup