

Theatre Criticism

Irving Wardle

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Irving Wardle : Theatre Criticism before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Theatre Criticism:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. As dry as proverbial toast, but indispensableBy Laurence BallardWhen I'm Dictator of the Planet, Mr. Wardle's book will be required reading for every critic--professional or armchair. From the first page alone:"...the critic steals from the theatre. He has, however, some humdrum tasks to

fulfill before he can lay claim to the goods. He has, first of all, to make himself useful."

'You have discovered a perishable treasure, and it is imperative to share it with other people before it fades... You have only one chance to get it right, while the impression is still fresh...' If critics often disagree among themselves over the merits of a given work, this is nothing compared to the wider argument about what the critic's role should be - Objective judge? Consumer guide? Provocateur? - and whether or not those practising criticism are living up to their duty to the 'perishable treasures' on which they pronounce. In *Theatre Criticism*, first published in 1992, Irving Wardle sets out to define the credentials and aims of this vexed profession. Tracing its origins to Dryden and the Grub Street writers of Georgian London, Wardle goes on to examine the prejudices, questions and practices of modern reviewing, drawing on three decades' worth of his own experience.