

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO



TOM STOPPARD

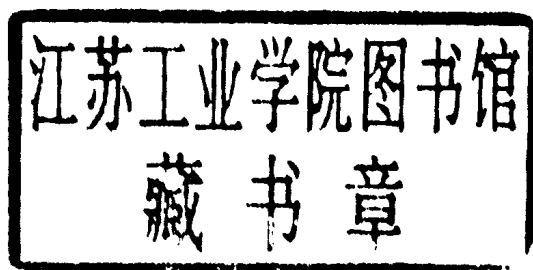
Edited by Katherine E. Kelly



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COMPANION TO
TOM STOPPARD

EDITED BY
KATHERINE E. KELLY

Texas A&M University



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This collection of fifteen essays offers both student and theatergoer a guide to the stage plays, novel, and screenplays of one of the most celebrated British dramatists since Noël Coward. Readers will find that the general and accessible description and analyses in these essays makes the large body of Stoppard's writing clear and approachable while preserving its rich humor. This is the first collection of essays to appear in many years addressing all of Stoppard's major works. It provides insights into the recent plays, *Arcadia* and *Invention of Love*, as well as the first extended examination of his work for screen, including a discussion of his coauthored, Academy Award-winning screenplay *Shakespeare in Love*. Photographs from key productions, a biography and chronology complete the volume and prepare the reader for future work by this extraordinary writer.

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*This book is dedicated to
my family and friends who
showed me the way forward*

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PAUL DELANEY

Chronology

- 1937 Stoppard born Tomáš Straüssler (3 July), the second son of Eugen and Martha Straüssler in Zlín, Czechoslovakia, where his father was a physician for Bata, a shoe manufacturer.
- 1939 The day the Nazis invade Czechoslovakia (14 March), the Straüsslers leave Zlín, with other Jewish doctors who worked for Bata, to go to Singapore.
- 1942 Briefly attends an English convent school in Singapore. When women and children are evacuated prior to the Japanese invasion, four-year-old Tomáš along with his mother and brother leaves for India; his father remains behind and is killed.
- 1943–46 Attends an English-speaking boarding school run by American Methodists in Darjeeling; his mother serves as manager of the local Bata shoe shop.
- 1945 Mother marries Kenneth Stoppard, a British Army major (November).
- 1946 Family moves to England (February) and three weeks later Major Stoppard adopts his two stepsons, giving them his surname; Tommy Straüssler becomes Tom Stoppard.
- 1946–51 Attends the Dolphin School, Nottinghamshire.
- 1951–54 Attends the Pocklington School, Yorkshire.
- 1950 Stoppard family moves to Bristol.
- 1954–58 Stoppard becomes a journalist on the *Western Daily Press*. Kenneth Tynan serves as drama critic on the *Observer*.
- 1954–60 Stoppard attends productions at the Bristol Old Vic.
- 1955 First British production, directed by Peter Hall, of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, which Stoppard cites as the catalyst for modern British drama.
- 1956 The Royal Court production of John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* acclaimed by critic Kenneth Tynan. The Berliner Ensemble, directed by Bertolt Brecht, visits London.

- 1958–60 Stoppard works as a journalist on the *Bristol Evening World*.
- 1958 The 24-year-old Peter O'Toole's performance as Hamlet at the Bristol Old Vic impresses Stoppard.
- 1959 Peter Hall founds the Royal Shakespeare Company.
- 1960 On holiday for his 23rd birthday, Stoppard decides to quit his job as a journalist to try his hand as a playwright; writes *A Walk on the Water*.
- 1960–61 Writes *The Gamblers* (a one-act play) and *The Stand-Ins* (later revised as *The Real Inspector Hound*).
- 1962–63 Theatre critic at *Scene* magazine in London.
- 1963 *A Walk on the Water* televised.
Writes *I Can't Give You Anything But Love, Baby* and *Funny Man* (unproduced television plays).
Becomes romantically involved with Jose Ingle.
- 1964 *The Dissolution of Dominic Boot* and "M" is for Moon Among Other Things on radio.
Three short stories published.
Writes *This Way Out With Samuel Boot* (unproduced television play).
In Berlin on a Ford Foundation grant, writes *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Meet King Lear*, a one-act play.
A Walk on the Water staged in Hamburg, Germany.
- 1965 Marries Jose Ingle (26 March).
The Gamblers, first produced stage play, performed at Bristol University in a two-act version.
A Paragraph for Mr. Blake (an adaptation of Stoppard's short story "The Story") televised.
Writes *How Sir Dudley Lost the Empire* (unproduced television play).
Writes the first of seventy episodes of "A Student's Diary," a radio serial about an Arab medical student in London broadcast by the BBC World Service in Arabic.
- 1966 *If You're Glad I'll Be Frank* on radio.
Stoppard's first son, Oliver, born on 4 May.
Translation (with Nicholas Bethell) of Slawomir Mrozek's *Tango* staged by the RSC.
A Separate Peace televised.
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead staged on the Edinburgh Festival Fringe; Ronald Bryden's review in the *Observer* prompts Kenneth Tynan, literary manager at the National Theatre, to cable Stoppard requesting a script.