

Topic Page: [Abbey Theatre](#)

Definition: **Abbey Theatre** from *Philip's Encyclopedia*

Theatre erected on Abbey Street, Dublin (1904), by Annie E.F. Horniman to house the Irish National Theatre Society. In 1925 the Abbey became the National Theatre of Ireland. Works by W.B. Yeats, Lady Gregory, J.M. Synge and Sean O'Casey have been introduced here, and the Theatre is renowned for its support of new writers.



Summary Article: **Abbey Theatre**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

Image from: [Ireland's flag was adopted in 1922 after the... in Philip's World Factbook 2008-2009](#)

Playhouse in Dublin, Republic of Ireland, associated with the literary revival of the early 1900s, that was part of a general cultural Irish revival. The theatre opened in 1904 and staged the works of a number of Irish dramatists, including Lady Gregory, W B Yeats, J M Synge, and Seán O'Casey. Burned down in 1951, the Abbey Theatre was rebuilt in 1966.

Financed by Annie Horniman, the theatre was built to house the Irish National Theatre Society, formed in 1901 by W G Fay, Yeats, and Lady Gregory to perform the plays of new Irish dramatists. The theatre's licence was held by Lady Gregory and for most of the early years she and Yeats were its only directors. The theatre made a name for itself as a specialized repertory theatre with well-acted plays of fine quality. Other early playwrights include Padraic Colum, George Fitzmaurice, and George Bernard Shaw.

The company toured in England and the USA, where its excellence in production and acting had a profound influence in the years before 1914. The theatre survived the troubles of World War I, and in later years produced the early plays of Seán O'Casey. After Lady Gregory and Yeats donated the theatre to the Irish Free State in 1924, it became the first state-maintained theatre in the English-speaking world. A number of actors graduated from its ranks, including Sara Allgood and Arthur Sinclair. An influx of young dramatists in the 1920s and 1930s deflected the Abbey from poetic to realistic drama, and standards remained high in spite of the loss of the theatre building in 1951 from fire. The company played at the Queen's Theatre until the new Abbey Theatre opened in 1966.

From the 1960s onwards, the Abbey Theatre made a series of highly innovative departures as it embraced the new Irish drama created by Tom Murphy, Thomas Kilroy, Frank McGuinness, Sebastian Barry, Marina Carr, and others, without abandoning its hold on the established repertoire associated with playwrights such as O'Casey and T C Murray. Actors such as Donal McCann and Fiona Shaw succeeded Cyril Cusack, Siobhan McKenna, and F J McCormick from previous generations. The Abbey continues to tour successfully with plays by Brian Friel, Conor MacPherson, and others.

weblinks

[Abbey Theatre](#)

APA

Chicago

Harvard

MLA

Abbey Theatre. (2018). In Helicon (Ed.), *The Hutchinson unabridged encyclopedia with atlas and weather guide*. Abington, UK: Helicon. Retrieved from https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/abbey_theatre



© RM, 2018. All rights reserved.



© RM, 2018. All rights reserved.

APA

Abbey Theatre. (2018). In Helicon (Ed.), *The Hutchinson unabridged encyclopedia with atlas and weather guide*. Abington, UK: Helicon. Retrieved from https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/abbey_theatre

Chicago

"Abbey Theatre." In *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*, edited by Helicon. Helicon, 2018. https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/abbey_theatre

Harvard

Abbey Theatre. (2018). In Helicon (Ed.), *The Hutchinson unabridged encyclopedia with atlas and weather guide*. [Online]. Abington: Helicon. Available from: https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/abbey_theatre [Accessed 18 September 2019].

MLA

"Abbey Theatre." *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*, edited by Helicon, 2018. *Credo Reference*, https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/abbey_theatre. Accessed 18 Sep. 2019.