

1472 and 1475. The final chapter considers the production process Spierinc and van Lathem followed in creating the prayer book's "documented core," with discussions of the text's elaborate mise-en-page, or layout; the patterns of rubrication, line fillers, and partial borders; and the thematic interplay between illustration and text. Throughout the chapter, de Schryver addresses the uncertainties involved in definitively assigning responsibility for the execution of calligraphic and illustrative elements in a work that was the product of multiple craftsmen. In the end, however, he succeeds in supporting his original attribution of the illumination and scribal work to van Lathem and Spierinc, respectively, along with associates from their ateliers working in similar and complementary styles.

Rounding out the book are five appendices. The first provides excerpts from the duke's account rolls, including the entries recording the duke's payment to Spierinc and van Lathem, as well as interesting items documenting some of the duke's other manuscript commissions. The second, third, and fourth appendices offer a full codicological description of the prayer book (including a useful diagram of the manuscript's quire structure and the placement of its miniatures); a description of the final thirty-four folios of the book representing a much later addition to the manuscript executed for another owner long after the duke's death; and a detailed account of the manuscript's binding. The final appendix considers the history of the manuscript after the duke's death and attempts to trace its provenance through the complex political and legal battles of the late-fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, its later owners in subsequent centuries, and its eventual purchase by the J. Paul Getty Museum in 1989. Further supplementing the book are forty-six color reproductions of the manuscript's miniatures and an additional 124 black-and-white illustrations that help place the prayer book within the wider context of late-medieval Flemish art.

Thoroughly researched and extremely readable, this book nevertheless suffers from a number of editorial lapses. The majority are simply errors in spelling, although occasionally words are omitted or transposed; and, in one particularly important case at the beginning of the codicological description in Appendix 2, a mistake in numbering the manuscript's folios introduces unnecessary confusion. Most of these errors are likely the result of the author's failing health and unfortunate death during the final preparation of the text and the publisher's rush to get the book into print "as quickly as possible," and, although bothersome, do not detract from the overall quality of de Schryver's scholarship.

Whether addressing specific questions about the prayer book's creators and contents or more general issues related to the wider historical and artistic contexts of the late-fifteenth century Netherlands, de Schryver's study is a model of codicological, art historical, and provenance research. Although primarily intended for art historians and medieval specialists, this volume has much to teach librarians and book historians about manuscript production in the later Middle Ages and how to deal with the complexities and difficulties involved in studying medieval books.—Eric Johnson, *Ohio State University*.

Amnon Kabatchnik. *Sherlock Holmes on the Stage: A Chronological Encyclopedia of Plays Featuring the Great Detective*. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2008. 208p. alk. paper. Cloth, \$55 (ISBN 9780810861251). LC 2008-000118.

Unexpectedly, Amnon Kabatchnik's *Encyclopedia* is a page-turner. The author, a director and a professor of theater, having held positions at SUNY Binghamton, Stanford University, Ohio State University, Florida State University, and Elmira College, has turned the work of synopsis into the work of lively reportage as he recounts the plots and highlights the significant features of the plays featuring Sherlock Hol-

mes since he was created by Arthur Conan Doyle. Kabatchnik traces the wide range of incarnations of Sherlock Holmes in the theater. There is the fairly faithful *Sherlock Holmes* (1899), written jointly by Conan Doyle and William Gillette, the latter playing the title role. Kabatchnik notes the one significant liberty that Gillette takes: the play ends with Holmes pledging his undying love to the distressed damsel of the play. On the other side of the spectrum are the somewhat bizarre plays featuring the Great Detective, like *Sherlock Holmes and the Curious Adventure of the Clockwork Prince* (1980), dubbed by Kabatchnik as “a musical fairy tale” that features “a marshmallow tycoon,” his clockwork son, and a stolen recipe for “licorice marshmallows, worth millions.” In between are an array of sometimes more and sometimes less successful, faithful, and interesting adaptations of the Sherlock Holmes stories or uses of the Sherlock Holmes character. Together, recounted with Kabatchnik’s fine sense of narrative interest and quiz-zical detail, the whole book is a story of Holmes’ second life in the theater that is as unpredictable as any given play.

The book is divided into three major parts: “Plays Written or Co-written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle,” “Plays Featuring Sherlock Holmes Written by Other Hands,” and “One-Act Plays” (this latter category suggesting that one of the book’s target audiences is the world of working actors and directors). There is also a series of Appendices that provide information about various things beyond the book’s focus, including information about “Radio, Film, and Television” productions (Appendix B), a puppet play rendition of “The Speckled Band” (Appendix C), and a full bibliography of “Acting Editions” (Appendix G). Each entry in the main sections is devoted to one play. In each entry, Kabatchnik provides a synopsis of the play and information about its production (when the information is available). The synopsis is often followed by one or more sections providing biographical information about the writer, director, or

actors involved with the play. There are occasional exceptions to this organization of one entry per play in which two or more plays may be treated together, as in the entry “Early Holmes: *Under the Clock* (1893) and *Sherlock Holmes* (1894).” The first play of this entry gets some extensive treatment, while the second is treated in what is best described as an afterthought. Herein is an example of the book’s irregularities. In its comprehensive inclusion of what appears to be every published (but not necessarily performed) play featuring the Great Detective, Kabatchnik’s book deserves its claim to be an encyclopedia, but it is a quirky and uneven one. There does not seem to be a consistent methodology dictating the volume of information provided in the entries. Some plays are treated more expansively, represented by full synopses replete with anecdotes about the composition or the staging and linked to other notable events or people, like when we are told that it was Mark Twain who got William Gillette his first acting job. For others, we are barely given a sketch of the full plot. Nor does this unevenness appear to be dictated by the importance of the play—Wall Spence’s rendition of *The Sign of Four* (1940) does not appear to have been performed publicly and receives more lines than Paul Giovanni’s *The Crucifer of Blood* (1978), which ran for 228 performances.

This unevenness extends to the information provided about the writers, the actors, and the performance details of the plays. For instance, writer, director, and actor Tim Heath gets no biographical treatment in the entry on his Holmes play, *Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure at Sir Arthur Sullivan’s* (1996). Meanwhile, touted as “phenomenal” without clear, objective reasons, Tim Kelly gets a significant amount of attention in each entry that treats one of his Holmes plays. Nevertheless, in keeping with the great traditions of Sherlockiana, this is a book by a person to whom the subject matters. Indeed, the book doesn’t promise to be an encyclopedia of the actors and playwrights involved

either centrally or tangentially with plays featuring the Great Detective.

Two composition and formatting decisions are inexplicable, however. Dubbed an encyclopedia, the book resembles a collection of essays: the play's title is centered on the page, the entry is followed by endnotes, and the next entry begins on the next full page. The result is a significant amount of white space. Moreover, it is difficult to imagine how one would use it as an encyclopedia, arranged as it is chronologically by play title. As a supplement, the index is helpful but not exhaustive. If, for instance, I wanted to know all the plays that featured Jonathan Small, the villain of Conan Doyle's *The Sign of Four*, I would have to look for this information using the index entry for *The Sign of Four*; there is no entry for Jonathan Small. By comparison, I have in mind Jack Tracy's *The Ultimate Sherlock Holmes Encyclopedia* (aka *The Encyclopedia Sherlockiana*), which is a comprehensive and user-friendly book, going so far as to have an entry on "skiff," since it is one of the watercraft used in *The Sign of Four*. And

though Kabatchnik frequently uses and cites Tracy's book, among others, there is no research bibliography included in the book, though the entries are carefully documented.

Kabatchnik's *Sherlock Holmes on the Stage* does the job it promises to do—it provides a complete list of plays featuring Sherlock Holmes. Sometimes it gives readers a lot more. In his best entries, Kabatchnik gives us the kind of behind-the-scenes glimpses that help contextualize the play in the life of the theater and the theater world. For instance, we learn that, after wrangling with Lyn Harding over his interpretation of the villain of Conan Doyle's hastily penned play version of "The Speckled Band" (1910), Conan Doyle consults his friend J.M. Barrie, who, after watching a rehearsal, sides with Harding. This is the kind of detail that brings the history of Sherlock Holmes in the theater to life and makes it thick with interest to Sherlock Holmes scholars, theater scholars, and late 19th-century popular culture scholars alike.—Amy Murray Twynning, *University of Pittsburgh*.