

Entrepreneurs, empires and pantomimes: JC Williamson's pantomime productions as a site to review the cultural construction of an Australian theatre industry, 1882 to

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Abstract:

'Entrepreneurs, Empires and Pantomimes' examines how Williamson influenced the form and content of one theatrical genre within his theatrical empire between 1882

and 1914. As the frontispiece signals in spectacular fashion, the pantomime was a vitally popular dramatic form. I believe ...

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Pantomimes are performed not only in the best theatres in the land but also in village halls throughout Britain. Whether a lavish professional performance or a hammy local amateur dramatic production, all pantomimes are well attended. Dan Leno as the pantomime Dame in 'Jack and the Beanstalk', (1899). Audience participation is a very important part of a pantomime. The audience are encouraged to boo the villain whenever he enters the stage, argue with the Dame (who is always a man) and warn the Principal Boy (who is always a girl) when the villain is behind them by shouting out "He's behind you Pantomime was one of the most popular, enduring and influential theatrical forms in Victorian England. It is a given of our national cultural life and has been part of the experience of virtually every generation of English people since the Industrial Revolution. However, it remains almost entirely unanalysed and unstudied in a scholarly context. This neglect is almost certainly due to the widely held misapprehension that the pantomime is essentially lightweight and frivolous. Our project, however, seeks to investigate a series of substantial and significant research questions. To what extent