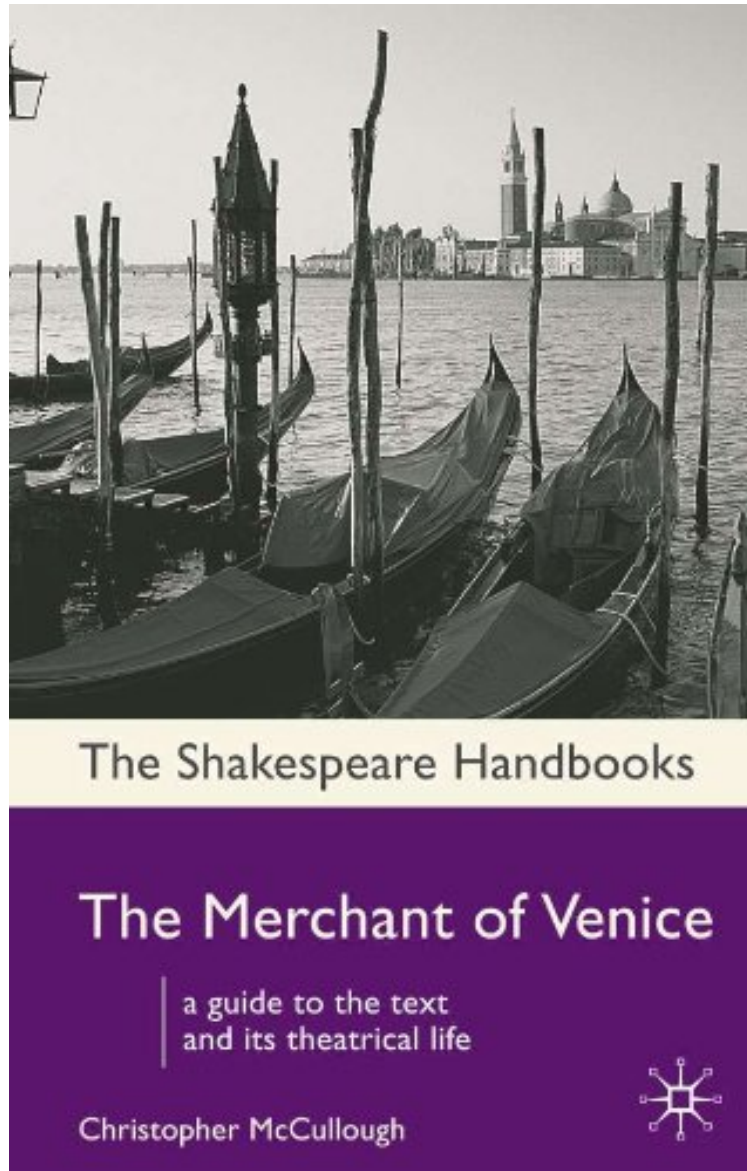



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Christopher McCullough

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Christopher McCullough : The Merchant of Venice (Shakespeare Handbooks) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Merchant of Venice (Shakespeare Handbooks):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Another Tool for the ActorBy K. StanfaAs an actor and theatre practitioner, any resource i can find on performance and clarifying the text or offering ideas on the text is invaluable on my way to working with Shakespeare's text. Any tool that will help you get that inspiration you need or click into place with some idea you have been mulling over but haven't quite figured out, this book might help.What is nice is

often the editors that are writing these books in the Shakespeare Handbooks, are not just scholars, but come mostly from Shakespeare in Performance backgrounds as Directors (and still are). One of my favorite features is the performance history sections. You can read up on what choices and problems other actors had with the show and questions they had about their characters that you as an actor might find very helpful. I think actors shouldn't be afraid of the choices other actors have made in a famous role, because often actors will encounter the same problems as others and why not look to the best for how they might have solved them or asked things differently. Just a thought... Overall, a good tool. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Outstanding Insights into the Play By Sherri the Shakespeare geek This series (Shakespeare Handbooks) is a new one with only a handful of plays covered. My only complaint is that they don't have more of the plays done! This is an outstanding book that gives a sense of historical perspective, but spends the vast (and I mean VAST) majority of its pages discussing "The Merchant of Venice" as a PLAY. It doesn't focus on close reading or nudging some obscure reference to a historical event that has faded from view. Instead, it brings the text to life by offering some insights into how the scene may be presented on stage. It goes scene by scene, with a thorough, but not overwhelming, commentary into how the scene plays out in the theatre. For those who want to approach Shakespeare as a playwright rather than simply as a poet, these are invaluable resources.

This volume, while it raises all the questions appertaining to the cultural, historical and critical contexts of the play, has as its primary focus the play as theatrical performance. This focus is not taken in isolation, but observed in terms of all the social, material and practical aspects of theatrical production. The questions raised are those that face actors, stage managers and directors, scenic and costume designers, in the rehearsal room and on the stage.

About the Author CHRISTOPHER McCULLOUGH is Professor of Theatre and Head of the School of Performance Arts at the University of Exeter, UK. He is a professional director and a member of the editorial boards of Theatre History Studies Journal and Research in Drama in Education. His publications include Theatre and Europe (Oxford, 1996) and Theatre Praxis (ed, Palgrave, 1998).