A history of the theatre

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Responsibility: [by] George Freedley and John A. Reeves.

Abstract: For other editions, see Author Catalog.
A Brief History Of Theatre. Posted on Sep 22, 2016 | By Jade Ali. Theatre has been around for what seems like forever or at least as far back as we can track society that is. The word theatre itself means a place for seeing, usually a building where a dramatic performance is given but theatre is so much more than that. When you think of the historical roots of theatre it is often thought upon to go straight to Ancient Greece and its amphitheatres which you would be right so in doing as it’s the first recorded theatre in Europe dating back to 600 B.C. but that would be putting theatre into a box and it’s far too big for that. Arguably, theatre can be dated back all the way to 8500 B.C. considering tribal dance and religious rituals. Theatre is here to stay, so let us take a short look at the historical timeline of its development.

Primitive Tribal Dance (8500 BCE). Dancing was an integral part of most shamanistic rituals. As stated by Greek historians, those plays were so realistic that some of the actors consequently died from the severity of their wounds. Dance as Entertainment (1400 BCE). It is not an easy task to determine the exact date of the origin of dance as we know it today. Unfortunately, there are not many artefacts or cave paintings that clearly depict or represent dancing. However, some Egyptian paintings have been found to represent scantily clad girls who danced to music played by seated musicians.