

Annotated Bibliography of Books on Ira Aldridge

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Charkrabarti, Lolita. *Red Velvet*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012.

Inspired by Marshall and Stock's work on Ira Aldridge, Charkrabarti composes a play, using seven scenes to illustrate her interpretation of Aldridge's acting career. Specifically, she focuses on his 1833 appearance at Covent Garden as Othello and the politics that supposedly led to the closing of the theater immediately after his performance. While Charkrabarti does take some artistic liberties, the majority of her play is grounded in historical evidence of Aldridge's life.

Kujawińska-Courtney, Krystyna and Maria Łukowska, eds. *Ira Aldridge, 1807-1867: The Great Shakespearean Tragedian on the Bicentennial Anniversary of His Birth*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009.

This work is a product of the Ira Aldridge Symposium, held in 2007 by the British and Commonwealth Studies Department at University of Łódź in Poland to celebrate the bicentennial anniversary of the Aldridge's birth. Divided into three parts, the book aims to illustrate the growth of Aldridge as a man, actor, and playwright, as well as his career in Europe and the traces of his life in modern times. While this work does not tell Aldridge's entire story, it is a fine collection of scholarly chapters that do more than narrate Aldridge's life, making historical arguments and interpretations based on existing evidence.

Lindfors, Bernth, ed. *Ira Aldridge: The African Roscius*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2007.

In his work, Lindfors compiles a collection of essays written in both Ira Aldridge's time and in present day. The mixture of early and modern perspectives on Aldridge gives the reader a unique glimpse into the actor's life and the analytical arguments that surround it. While the detail of this book is little compared to Lindfors' multivolume work on Aldridge published a few years later, *Ira Aldridge: The African Roscius* should be appreciated for its ability to merge past and present accounts to create a holistic picture of Aldridge's life.

Lindfors, Bernth. *Ira Aldridge: The Early Years, 1807-1833* (Vol. 1). Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2011.

Lindfors, Bernth. *Ira Aldridge: The Vagabond Years, 1833-1852* (Vol. 2). Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2011.

Lindfors, Bernth. *Ira Aldridge: Performing Shakespeare in Europe, 1852-1855* (Vol. 3). Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2013.

Lindfors, professor emeritus of English and African Literatures at University of Texas at Austin, authors a multivolume work illustrating the life of Ira Aldridge. His extensive archival research reveals previously unknown details about Aldridge's career and family life, and his well-curated collection of images printed throughout the volumes put his findings into more context. Written in an entertaining and readable style, Lindfors' books give the most complete and descriptive account of Aldridge's life to date.

Marshall, Herbert and Mildred Stock. *Ira Aldridge: The Negro Tragedian*. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1993.

The first comprehensive biography on Ira Aldridge, Marshall and Stock's book was initially published in 1968 and laid the foundation for future research on the 19th century actor. The authors attempt to reconstruct Aldridge's family life and career, utilizing several newspaper reviews and visuals concerning Aldridge to supplement their arguments. Marshall and Stock's broad, yet descriptive survey of Aldridge is a useful starting point for researchers and students hoping to learn more about the actor's life.