

Three Plays Absurd Person Singular Absent Friends Bedroom Farce

A student edition of five one-act plays by Britain's most popular playwright.

'Laughter', says Eric Weitz, 'may be considered one of the most extravagant physical effects one person can have on another without touching them'. But how do we identify something which is meant to be comic, what defines something as 'comedy', and what does this mean for the way we enter the world of a comic text? Addressing these issues, and many more, this is a 'how to' guide to reading comedy from the pages of a dramatic text, with relevance to anything from novels and newspaper columns to billboards and emails. The book enables you to enhance your grasp of the comic through familiarity with characteristic structures and patterns, referring to comedy in literature, film and television throughout. Perfect for drama and literature students, this Introduction explores a genre which affects the everyday lives of us all, and will therefore also capture the interest of anyone who loves to laugh.

Ends and Odds brings together nine short dramatic works by the Nobel Prize-winning author of Waiting for Godot.

"In this play, Annie has arranged to spend an illicit weekend with her sister Ruth's husband Norman, and for this reason, suitably disguised, has asked her elder brother Reg and his wife Sarah to look after their widowed mother and the house. As it happens the seduction, thought or planned, by each of the six characters never takes place either"--Publisher's website.

Taking Steps

Absurd Person Singular, Absent Friends [and] Bedroom Farce

A Biography of Alan Ayckbourn

Reunion ; Dark Pony

The Best Plays of 1993-1994

Ends and Odds

Fred is waiting for the show to start. The Players arrive: Nell, Bethany, Talitha, Jenkin, Albert and a strange mechanized creature, Kevin on Keyboards. They tell Fred that they are slaves of the Storytellers who control their every move. Once they had a champion, Flavius, who nearly managed to wrest storytelling control back into their hands where it belongs. The Storytellers arrive: Great Aunt Repetitus, Uncle Erraticus and Uncle Oblivious. The Players react fearfully and the stories begin.-4 women, 7 men

First published in 2004. English stage comedy has weathered centuries of social and theatrical change. How did it survive? English Stage Comedy 1490–1990 is a unique and beautifully written study of the comedy of the English stage from the Tudor period to the late twentieth century. Organized thematically, it shows how this remarkably enduring genre has dealt with the tensions of social life, using its conventions as tools for social inquiry. Through an examination of comedy Alexander Leggatt demonstrates that an approach through genre, neglected in recent criticism, can have much to say about our current concerns with the relations between literature and society. English Stage Comedy 1490–1990 surveys five centuries of classic comic drama, focusing on major playwrights such as: Shakespeare, Jonson, Etherege, Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh, Goldsmith, Sheridan, Wilde, Shaw, Coward, Orton, Ayckbourn and many lesser-known figures.

Covers plays produced in New York, theater awards, details of productions, prizes, people, and publications, as well as the editors' choices of the ten best plays.

Neil Cornwell's study, while endeavouring to present an historical survey of absurdist literature and its forbears, does not aspire to being an exhaustive history of absurdism. Rather, it pauses on certain historical moments, artistic movements, literary figures and selected works, before moving on to discuss four key writers: Daniil Kharms, Franz Kafka, Samuel Beckett and Flann O'Brien. The absurd in literature will be of compelling interest to a considerable range of students of comparative, European (including Russian and Central European) and English literatures (British Isles and American) – as well as those more concerned with theatre studies, the avant-garde and the history of ideas (including humour theory). It should also have a wide appeal to the enthusiastic general reader.

The Crafty Art of Playmaking

Table Manners

A Casebook of Major British, Irish, and American Playwrights

Contemporary British Drama, 1970–90

A Guide for Actors, Directors and Playwrights

Improbable Fiction

Now in paperback, the hugely acclaimed, authorised biography of Britain's most popular playwright Alan Ayckbourn is Britain's most popular playwright and its most private. He has won numerous awards for his plays and has worked with some of theatre's most celebrated names, yet he spends most of his time away from the limelight in a Yorkshire seaside town not writing at all but running a small repertory theatre. This is a portrait of a man who - from *Relatively Speaking* in 1965 to his double play *House and Garden* at the National Theatre in 2000 - has chronicled human behaviour, our aspirations and insecurities, while shaping the theatrical experience of millions. "Mr Allen's book makes me want to start reading the entire Ayckbourn canon over again...splendid stuff" Hugh Leonard, *Sunday Independent* "Paul Allen has come up with a wise, well-informed book that not only persuades us of Ayckbourn's genius but also helps to explain this complex, driven man" Michael Billington, *Country Life* "Lucid, meticulously researched ... this impressively detailed account benefits from Paul Allen's rich inside knowledge of theatre" Terry Eagleton, *Times Literary Supplement* "Thorough and enjoyable" Christopher Hirst, *Independent*

Six aspiring authors meet on a winter's evening to discuss their work. The chairman, Arnold, attempts to get the rest of the group out of a rut by suggesting that they collaborate on a piece of writing, an idea that is received without enthusiasm. However, as Arnold is clearing up after the meeting there is a clap of thunder, a black-out. For the first time, Alan Ayckbourn shares all of his tricks of the playwright's trade. From helpful hints on writing to tips on directing, the book provides a complete primer for the newcomer and a refresher for the more experienced. Written in Ayckbourn's signature style that combines humor, seriousness, and heady air of theatrical sophistication that Noel Coward would envy, *The Crafty Art of Playmaking* is a must-have for aspiring playwrights and students of drama.

This book focuses exclusively on the exciting and provocative plays produced in England in the last two decades. The primary aim of the collection is to celebrate the truly remarkable range of British drama since 1970, by examining the work of fourteen important and representative playwrights. This emphasis on range applies not only to the dramatists chosen for inclusion but to the critics as well - specifically to the diversity of critical methodology demonstrated in their essays.

The absurd in literature

Essays from Modern Drama

A Play

This is where We Came in

The Story of Drama

Confusions

Stage Right is a refreshingly abrasive account of the state of British theatre since 1979, offering an account of the development of a new mainstream formed in conscious opposition to the work of the politically committed dramatists of the 70s and an analysis of the plays of the most successful playwrights of the new mainstream: Nichols, Gray, Frayn, Bennett, Ayckbourn and Stoppard.

A practical, accessible and thorough guide to identifying and using rhetorical devices in drama, using examples from both classical and contemporary plays. An unprecedented reference and handbook for actors, directors, playwrights and teachers; written by practitioners for practitioners. Little has been written about how dramatists draw on rhetorical devices, and how a study of these can unlock a text for a performer or director, or indeed inspire contemporary playwrights. This book addresses in detail – yet in straightforward terms – the many different rhetorical forms used in drama, and enables the reader to identify and analyse them. Dramatic Adventures in Rhetoric may be read cover to cover, or it may be dipped into; it is both an analytic tool and a reference aid for use in the classroom or rehearsal room, revealing how careful study of language is one of the best ways of accessing the richness of texts both classical and contemporary. The Methuen Drama Dictionary of the Theatre is an essential reference tool and companion for anyone interested in the theatre and theatre-going. Containing over 2500 entries it covers the international spectrum of theatre with particular emphasis on the UK and USA. With biographical information on playwrights, actors and directors, entries on theatres and theatre companies, explanation of technical terms and theatrical genres, and synopses of major plays, this is an authoritative, trustworthy and comprehensive compendium. Included are: synopses of 500 major plays biographical entries on hundreds of playwrights, actors, directors and producers definitions of nearly 200 genres and movements entries on over 100 key characters from plays information about more than 250 theatres and companies Unlike similar products, The Methuen Drama Dictionary of the Theatre avoids a dry, technical approach with its sprinkling of anecdotal asides and fascinating trivia, such as how Michael Gambon gave his name to a corner of a racing track following an incident on BBC's Top Gear programme, and under 'advice to actors' the sage words of Alec Guinness: 'First wipe your nose and check your flies', and the equally wise guidance from the master of his art, Noël Coward: 'Just know your lines and don't bump into the furniture.' As a companion to everything from the main stage to the fringes of theatrical fact and folklore, this will prove an irresistible book to all fans of the theatre.

How Ms Poopay Dayseer, a twenty-first century Specialist Sexual Consultant, whilst peddling her 'services' to an elderly hotel room client unexpectedly finds herself running for her life. How her flight through a communicating door brings her face to face with her own past and with Ruella who apparently died under suspicious circumstances twenty years earlier. And how Poopay's gradual friendship with that remarkable woman changes the future for both of them... A time-travelling comedy thriller, Communicating Doors was published to coincide with the West End opening in 1995.

Three Plays

The Cambridge History of British Theatre

House & Garden

Two Plays

Wildest Dreams

The Library Journal Book Review

This is a trilogy of plays by the most performed playwright in the world, all set in a flat in Docklands. Lynette's teenage daughter comes up with a surprising way to save the family finances. A night of passion takes a mysterious and dangerous turn. An important family occasion is thrown into chaos by the arrival of some uninvited guests.

A scathing comedy of social striving in the suburbs, Absurd Person Singular follows the fortunes of three couples who turn up in each other's kitchens on three successive Christmases, to hilarious and devastating effect.

Explores the rich and complex histories of English, Scottish and Welsh theatres in the 'long' twentieth century since 1895.

Breaking new ground in the study of performance theory, this maverick and powerful project from

renowned Renaissance scholar and queer theorist Simon Shepherd presents a unique take on theory and the physical reality of theatre. Examining a range of material, *Theatre, Body, Pleasure* addresses a significant gap in the literary and drama studies arenas and explores the interplay of bodily value, the art of bodies and the physical responses to that art. It explains first how the body makes meaning and carries value. Then it describes the relationships between time and space and body. The book's features include: * large historical range, from medieval to postmodern * case studies offering close readings of written texts * examples of how to 'read for the body', exploring written text as a 'discipline' of the body * breadth of cultural reference, from stage plays through to dance culture * a range of theoretical approaches, including dance analysis and phenomenology Writing in accessible prose, Shepherd introduces new ways of analyzing dramatic text and has produced a book which is part theatre history, part dramatic criticism and part theatrical tour de force. Students of drama, theatre and performance studies and cultural studies will find this an absolute must read.

A Comedy

Modern Dramatists

Theatre, Body and Pleasure

Haunting Julia, Sugar Daddies, Drowning on Dry Land, Private Fears in Public Places

Alan Ayckbourn: Plays 3

Communicating Doors

Two dazzling new interconnected plays from the acclaimed author of *Communicating Doors*. Two plays -- designed to be performed simultaneously and involving the same characters -- set in the same English country house on the same August day, are Alan Ayckbourn's vehicle for a sharp and hilarious scrutiny of the destructive nature of human behavior and emotions. Friends, neighbors, and hired help are gathered in preparation for a garden fête at which the guest of honor, a French movie star, is an alcoholic, promiscuous French movie star. The surly gardener steadfastly ignores various intrigues being rather noisily conducted in the bushes and garden sheds, the film star's agent is mistakenly assumed to be a chauffeur and is sent to the pub for her lunch, the dog does his share of alerting passersby to cover his liaisons, the kitchen maid breaks everything she touches, and an amoral London writer observes the goings-on with a knowing eye. As the action, and the storm clouds, build toward the afternoon's deluge, politics, friendship, marriage, children, the interactions of the social classes, and the absurd anachronisms of the remaining landed gentry are all scrutinized to Ayckbourn's penetrating gaze.

Tracing the history of tragedy and comedy from their earliest beginnings to the present, this book offers readers an exceptional study of the development of both genres, grounded in analysis of landmark plays and their context. It argues that sacrifice is central to both genres, and demonstrates how it provides a key to understanding the grand sweep of Western drama. For students of literature and drama the volume serves as an accessible companion to over two millennia of drama, organised by period, and reveals how sacrifice represents a through-line running from classical drama to today's reality TV and blockbuster movies. Across the chapters devoted to each period, Day explores how the meanings of sacrifice change over time, but never quite disappear. He charts the influences of religion, social change and politics on the status and purpose of theatre in each period, and on the drama itself. But it is through a close study of key plays that he reveals the contexts and themes centred around sacrifice that persist and which illuminate aspects of human psychology and social organisation. Among the many plays and events considered are Aeschylus' trilogy *The Oresteia*, Aristophanes' *Women at the Thesmophoria*, Menander's *The Bad-Tempered Man*, the spectacles of the Roman Games, Seneca's *The Trojan Women*, Plautus's *The Braggart Soldier*, the Cycle plays and *Everyman* from the Middle Ages, Shakespeare's *King Lear* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Middleton's *The Revenger's Tragedy*, Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour*, Thomas Otway's *The Orphan*, William Wycherley's *The Country Wife*, Wilde's *A Woman of No Importance*, Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, Tennessee Williams's *Streetcar Named Desire*, Suzan-Lori Parks's *Topdog/Underdog*, Sarah Kane's *Blasted* and Charlotte Jones' *Humble Boy*. The conclusion examines the persistence of ideas of sacrifice in today's reality TV and blockbuster movies.

In two plays, a man and his daughter seem to meet each other for the first time when they are united after twenty years while traveling by car a father relates a mythical tale to his child

In this third volume of his collected plays, Alan Ayckbourn takes his signature acerbic wit into the territory of the lowly and isolated, focusing on everyone from the fantastically famous to the lowliest of Eleanor Rigbys. Collected here are *Haunting Julia*, *Sugar Daddies*, *Drowning on Dry Land*, and the universally acclaimed *Private Fears in Public Places*, described by *Newsday's* Linda Winer as "an exquisitely modulated chamber sextet about the unpredictable depths and overlapping absurdities of middleage melancholy."

Damsels in Distress

The Best Plays Theater Yearbook

Woman in Mind

Absurd Person Singular

Second Person Singular

A Novel

This wide-ranging Companion to Modern British and Irish Drama offers challenging analyses of a range of plays in their political contexts. It explores the cultural, social, economic and institutional agendas that readers need to engage with in order to appreciate modern theatre in all its complexity. An authoritative guide to modern British and Irish drama. Engages with theoretical discourses challenging a canon that has privileged London as well as white English males and realism. Topics covered include: national, regional

and fringe theatres; post-colonial stages and multiculturalism; feminist and queer theatres; sex and consumerism; technology and globalisation; representations of war, terrorism, and trauma.

"Part comedy of manners, part psychological mystery . . . Issues of nationalism, religion, and passing collide with quickly changing social and sexual mores." —Boston Globe From one of the most important contemporary voices to emerge from the Middle East comes a gripping tale of love and betrayal, honesty and artifice, which asks whether it is possible to truly reinvent ourselves, to shed our old skin and start anew. *Second Person Singular* follows two men, a successful Arab criminal attorney and a social worker-turned-artist, whose lives intersect under the most curious of circumstances. The lawyer has a thriving practice in the Jewish part of Jerusalem, a large house, a Mercedes, speaks both Arabic and Hebrew, and is in love with his wife and two young children. In an effort to uphold his image as a sophisticated Israeli Arab, he often makes weekly visits to a local bookstore to pick up popular novels. On one fateful evening, he decides to buy a used copy of Tolstoy's *The Kreutzer Sonata*, a book his wife once recommended. To his surprise, inside he finds a small white note, a love letter, in Arabic, in her handwriting. I waited for you, but you didn't come. I hope everything's all right. I wanted to thank you for last night. It was wonderful. Call me tomorrow? Consumed with suspicion and jealousy, the lawyer slips into a blind rage over the presumed betrayal. He first considers murder, revenge, then divorce, but when the initial sting of humiliation and hurt dissipates, he decides to hunt for the book's previous owner—a man named Yonatan, a man who is not easy to track down, whose identity is more complex than imagined, and whose life is more closely aligned with his own than expected. In the process of dredging up old ghosts and secrets, the lawyer tears the string that holds all of their lives together. A Palestinian who writes in Hebrew, Sayed Kashua defies classification and breaks through cultural barriers. He communicates, with enormous emotional power and a keen sense of the absurd, the particular alienation and the psychic costs of people struggling to straddle two worlds. *Second Person Singular* is a deliciously complex psychological mystery and a searing dissection of the individuals that comprise a divided society.

"Featuring scenes from the ten best plays"--Jacket.

The Lisbon Traviata, is a powerfully moving tragicomedy about a crumbling homosexual marriage. And in *Frankie and Johnnie in the Claire de Lune*, a man and a woman, not young, not old, no great beauties, either one, come together in a fresh and witty display of emotional fireworks. McNally himself describes the final piece, the biting honest and uproariously funny *It's Only a Play*, as his attempt to describe what it was like to work in Broadway in the 1980s.

Bedroom farce

Tragedy, Comedy and Sacrifice from the Greeks to the Present

A Farce

A Comedy in Two Acts

Three Plays by Terrence McNally

Dramatic Adventures in Rhetoric

"Roland, a hard drinking tycoon, is considering buying an old Victorian house, once a brothel. His solicitor and the vendor, a builder, arrive to complete the deal. Also in the house are his wife, a frustrated dancer who is always considering leaving him, her brother and later the brother's fiancée, who is uncertain whether or not to run away. In the course of one hectic night and morning, with continual running up and downstairs and in and out of rooms, these characters, each immersed in a personal problem, try to sort themselves out. The first act curtain finds the solicitor in bed with the wife thinking her to be a ghost and the fiancée inadvertently shut in the attic cupboard by the distraught tycoon who has taken refuge there in the spare bed. All this takes place in a highly ingenious and original setting in which all the rooms, passages and stairs are on a single level"--

A play set in the foreseeable future when everything has changed except human nature; a future where TV daytime soaps are performed by android actors emotionally programmed by the control room. One, JC 31333, finds herself humanized as Jacie Triplethree, complete with a sense of humour and Adam, a young scriptwriter, falls for her.

First published in 1992. Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an informa company.

The central character of Alan Ayckbourn's new play is Susan, a parson's wife, 'one of the most moving and devastating that he has created...' Robin Thornber reviewing the first production in Scarborough in the *Guardian*.

A Companion to Modern British and Irish Drama, 1880 - 2005

The Methuen Drama Dictionary of the Theatre

Time and Time Again

The Cambridge Introduction to Comedy

A Survey of Modern English

Stage Right

Meet three couples in their three kitchens on the Christmas Eves of three successive years. The "lower class" but very much up and coming Hopcrofts are in their bright new, gadget filled kitchen anxiously giving a little party for their bank manager and his wife and an architect neighbor. Next there are the architect and his wife in their neglected, untidy flat. Then the bank manager and his wife are in their large, slightly modernized, old Victorian style kitchen. Running like a dark thread through the wild comedy of behind the scenes disasters at Christmas parties is the story of the advance of the Hopcrofts to material prosperity and independence and the decline of the others. In the final stages the little man is well and truly on top, with the others, literally and unnervingly, dancing to his tune.

Funny, gripping and wrenchingly truthful, these three blackly comic plays slice into the soul of suburbia. Couples - often mismatched, sometimes disorientated - dominate the action. The settings are simple - a kitchen, a bedroom, a party - all familiar terrains where husbands and wives meet, bewildered, puzzled and angry. 'In the hilarious delineation of marital pain there is no one to touch Alan Ayckbourn' Eric Shorter in the Daily Telegraph.

Stanley, Hazel, Warren and Rick make the weekly escape from their real life nightmares into a role-playing board game peopled by dragons and monsters. A safe world where the dangers are of their own imagining; where they are free to become heroes of their own devising. But

how clear is the dividing line between what they choose to be and what they really are? What would it take for them to lose sight of it altogether? All it requires is Marcie. Loveable, understanding, sympathetic Marcie - destined to become the new demon to haunt their wildest dreams.

This comprehensive collection gathers critical essays on the major works of the foremost American and British playwrights of the 20th century, written by leading figures in drama/performance studies.

Comic Potential

Grinning At The Edge

English Stage Comedy 1490-1990