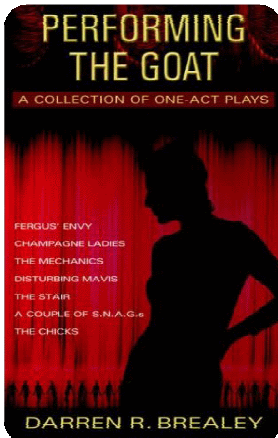


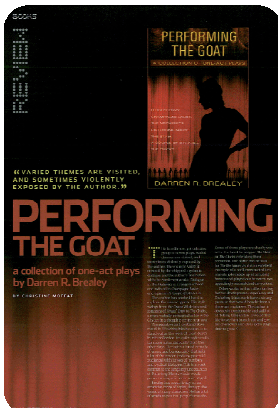
Performing The Goat – A Collection Of One Act Plays



Book Review Written By: Marks Sykes
Position: Consultant Editor –In-Chief
Publisher: Athena Press
Dated: December 2005

There is a rather curious market for new and original plays. This book holds a very interesting group of plays. They seem to hit their targets very precisely, as the settings do not have a locale-specific context. I get the feeling that Darren Brealey writes with some facility; I think he gets an idea, sits down bubbling with gusto and knocks off a one-actor. Maybe then in the morning he reads it and bins it if it hasn't worked.

The settings do not have a locale specific context. Richly humorous, sometimes extreme in its language, and devastating in its portrayal of social pitfalls, this collection of one-actors will make you laugh out loud, and then wonder about it all. 'The Goat' in the title is surely a reference to the Greek tragos, which gave us tragedy ... something you may feel, tinges many of our lifetime antics.



Book Review Written By: Christine Moffat
Position: Arts Journalist
Publisher: Arts In The City
Dated: November 2006

This is a diverse, yet cohesive group of seven plays. Varied themes are visited and sometimes violently exposed by the author. Their single voice is created by the chipped rhythmic dialogue and the author's fascination with the Aussie vernacular.

The author has worked hard to explore the one-act genre. His style swings from the Oscar Wilde inspired romance of *Fergus' Envy* to *The Chicks*, a more verbally pornographic *Sex in the City*. The sensitive and contemplative mood in *Disturbing Mavis* causes it to stand out as the work of most depth in this collection.

The Stair is a broad comedy of errors and bureaucracy with its sea of numbers and cyclical dialogue. This is a stark contrast to the simplicity and stillness of *Disturbing Mavis*, which would present a magnetic scene once staged.

Brealey has much to say on an extensive range of topics, through the voices of many characters. *The Mechanics* is an excellent example of a well-constructed ten-minute play made up of amusing banter and played out between two appealingly mismatched co-workers.

Other works in this collection beg further development. *Fergus' Envy* and *Disturbing Mavis* each have a strong premise that would benefit from a three-act makeover. The author is obviously comfortable and skilful at 'telling tales in ten'. I would also like to see him branch out and give his characters and ideas extra stage time to grow.