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#### \* ABOUT THE ARTIST \*

STEPHEN ALCORN is an internationally known painter and printmaker. While born in the United States, he spent his formative years in Florence, Italy, where he first became acquainted, at a very early age, with the art of printmaking. Major American and European publishers alike have made extensive use of his prints and paintings, and his work hangs in many important private and permanent collections throughout the world. Alcorn currently is working on an Abraham Lincoln anthology to be published by HBJ in the fall of 1993. He lives with his wife and two daughters in Cambridge, New York, and dedicates the linocuts in this volume to Tiberio Antinori.

Literary and illustration credits begin on p. 1051.

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STUDYING DRAMA IS MORE THAN READING PLAYS; IT REQUIRES US TO STUDY THE theaters where plays were produced, the cultures that framed those theaters, and the critical and interpretive history that has framed the meanings of drama over time. What distinguishes THE HBJ ANTHOLOGY OF DRAMA is its sense that the meaning of drama arises in two contexts: in the play's original theater and the society that sustained it and in *our* culture where the play continues to live both as literature and as theatrical performance.

- \* \* THE HBJ ANTHOLOGY OF DRAMA offers a collection of classic plays from the European and American repertory, as well as a challenging body of new plays. It is organized into units focusing on significant moments in history of Western drama and theater: Athens in the fifth century B.C., England in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, France and England in the late seventeenth century, industrial Europe from 1850 to 1950, twentieth-century America, and the contemporary world stage. Such lists of traditionally significant plays often seem—and become in practice—prescriptive. Throughout, however, the book raises the opportunity to question the making of such canons, and "canonicity" provides the organizing theme of the final unit.
- THE HBJ ANTHOLOGY OF DRAMA responds to the ways that drama and theater are studied and taught today. Its thirty-eight plays (and one screenplay) include a substantial selection of Greek drama (four plays), medieval and Renaissance drama (four plays), and Restoration and Neoclassical drama (three plays); it provides a wide-ranging survey of modern European plays (seven plays), an excellent introduction to American drama (twelve plays), and an unusually rich selection of contemporary drama drawn from the United States, Europe, Latin America, and Africa (sixteen plays and one screenplay). THE HBJ ANTHOLOGY OF DRAMA is designed to be used in a variety of drama and theater courses: in general surveys of drama and theater, in courses on tragedy and/or comedy, or in classes on tradition and innovation in the modern theater. More than most anthologies, THE HBJ ANTHOLOGY OF DRAMA enables students and teachers to explore the issues of representation in the theater, the ways that culture shapes issues of identity, of

gender and power, of race. Some of these issues are raised in later units, in plays like Jean Genet's *The Blacks*, Ntozake Shange's *spell #7*, Caryl Churchill's *Vinegar Tom*, Manuel Puig's *The Kiss of the Spider Woman*, Wole Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*, Luis Valdez's *Los Vendidos*, Brian Friel's *Translations*, Maria Irene Fornes's *Mud*, and David Henry Hwang's M. *Butterfly*. However, plays such as Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Aphra Behn's *The Rover*, Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll House*, Susan Glaspell's *Trifles*, or Eugene O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones* allow students and instructors to explore identity, power, and other issues throughout the history of Western drama and theater.

Each unit begins with an extensive introduction, placing drama in the context of a particular historical era and using illustrations of theater design to develop a precise sense of stage practice. Each play is accompanied by a brief biography of the playwright and a short introduction to the play. Each unit concludes with a selection of critical readings, including essays that reflect the esthetic and cultural concerns of the period. The past, though, is not static. We create and recreate it in relation to the present, that is, in relation to our own understanding, beliefs, and circumstances. Each unit, then, concludes with a "Contemporary Perspectives" essay by an important scholar, critic, or theater practitioner. These essays renovate traditional thinking about drama and theater in relation to literary history, theater practice, questions of social practice and empowerment, and issues of gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality. THE HBJ ANTHOLOGY OF DRAMA includes classic essays by Aristotle, Sir Philip Sidney, Friedrich Nietzsche, Émile Zola, Mikhail Bakhtin, Northrop Frye, Roland Barthes, Bertolt Brecht, Antonin Artaud, Arthur Miller, Raymond Williams, George Steiner, Martin Esslin, and others. It also includes recent interventions by Sue-Ellen Case, Lynda E. Boose, Katharine Maus, Michael Goldman, Amiri Baraka, Fredric Jameson, and Lynda Hart. Presenting drama and theater in relation to the community of the past and the community of the present, the twenty-seven critical readings - including four reviews of recent plays - focus our attention on how drama contributes to the richly contested field of contemporary culture.

\* \* Finally, THE HBJ ANTHOLOGY OF DRAMA is designed for both beginning and advanced students. An extensive photo essay traces the development of performance style and theater design, and also provides a glimpse of some memorable productions of the twentieth century. An introduction to writing about drama and theater furnishes beginning students with an outline of the formal and rhetorical practices used in writing about plays. This book also includes a useful glossary of dramatic, theatrical, and literary terms; an extensive bibliography of drama and theater history and theory, and of works about plays and playwrights included in the volume; and a selected list of video, film, and sound recordings. As a whole, THE HBJ ANTHOLOGY OF DRAMA provides a wideranging survey of Western drama and theater, one that both presents traditional issues and provides the materials to interrogate that tradition.

- W.B.W.

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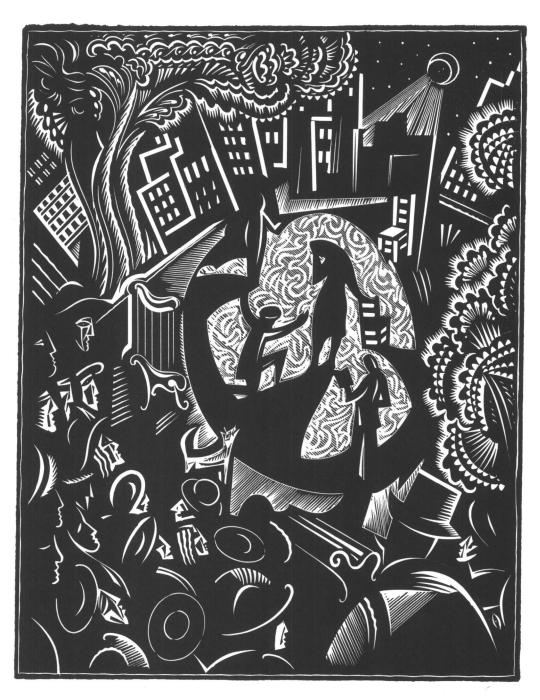
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INTRODUCTION: DRAMA, THEATER, AND CULTURE

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THE MANY KINDS OF

literature, drama is perhaps the most immediately involved in the life of its community. Drama shares with such other literary modes as lyric poetry, the novel, the epic, and romance the ability to represent and challenge social, political, philosophical, and esthetic attitudes. But unlike most literature, drama has generally been composed for performance, confronting the audience in the public, sociable confines of a theater.

To understand DRAMA, we need to understand THEATER, because the theater forges the active interplay between drama and its community. 1 On a practical level, for instance, the community must determine where drama will take place, and it is in the theater that a space is carved out for dramatic performance. Not surprisingly, the place of the theater in a city's social and physical geography often symbolizes drama's place in the culture at large. In classical Athens, the theater adjoined a sacred precinct, and plays were part of an extensive religious and civic festival. Greek drama accordingly engages questions of moral, political, and religious authority. In seventeenth-century Paris, the close affiliation between the theater and the court of Louis XIV is embodied in the drama's concern with power, authority, and the regulation of rebellious passions. In the United States today, most live theater takes place either in the privileged setting of colleges and universities, or in the "theater districts" of major cities, competing for an audience alongside movie theaters, nightclubs, and other entertainments. Drama also seems to be struggling to define itself as at once part of an established cultural tradition reaching back to Aeschylus and as part of the live diversity of contemporary popular culture. Social attitudes are reflected in the theater in other ways, too; during performance, the theater constructs its own "society" of performers and spectators. Staging a play puts it immediately into a dynamic social exchange: the interaction between dramatic characters, between characters and the actors who play them, between the performers and the audience, between the drama onstage and the drama of life outside the theater.

The Greek word for "theater" — theatron — means "seeing place," and plays performed in the theater engage their audiences largely through visual means. Less than a century ago, live plays could be seen only on the stage; today, most of us see drama in a variety of media: on film and television as well as in the theater. Yet for the past five hundred years or so we have also had access to plays in another, nontheatrical venue: by reading them in books. To see a play performed and to read it in a book are two very different activities, but these distinct experiences of drama can be made to enrich one another in a number of ways.

In the theater, a dramatic text is fashioned into an event, something existing in space and time. The space of the stage, with whatever setting is devised, becomes the place of the drama. The characters are embodied by specific individuals. How a given actor interprets a role tends to shape the audience's sense of that dramatic character; for the duration of the play, it is difficult to imagine another kind of performance, a different Oedipus, Lear, or Miss Julie than the one standing before us in the flesh. The drama onstage is also bound by the temporal exigencies of performance. The process of performance is irreversible; for the duration of the performance, each moment becomes significant and yet unrecoverable—

READING
DRAMA AND
SEEING
THEATER

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Terms are defined in the Glossary.

we can't flip back a few pages to an earlier scene, or rewind the videotape. When a company puts a play into stage production, it inevitably confronts these material facts of the theater: a specific cast of actors, a given theatrical space, so much money to spend, and the necessity of transforming the rich possibilities offered by the play into a clear and meaningful performance. To make the drama active and concrete, theatrical production puts a specific interpretation of the play on the stage. Whether or not to play Caliban in Shakespeare's The Tempest as a native of the West Indies; whether to play Torvald Helmer in Ibsen's A Doll House as a patriarchal autocrat or as someone bewildered by a changing world; whether to set Phaedra in a classical, neoclassical, or a modern setting; whether to use cross-gender or intercultural casting in The Homecoming — these are some of the kinds of questions that a production must face, and how the production decides such issues inevitably leads the audience toward a particular sense of the play. Everything that happens onstage becomes meaningful for an audience, something to interpret. Even apparently irrelevant facts — a short actor cast to play King Lear in Shakespeare's play, or a beautiful actress playing Brecht's Mother Courage — become part of the audience's experience of the play, particularizing the play, lending it a definite flavor and meaning.

Reading plays presents us with a different experience of the drama. Reading plays is. first of all, a relatively recent phenomenon. In early theaters, like those of classical Athens and Rome, medieval Europe, and even Renaissance Europe of the sixteenth century, drama was almost entirely a theatrical mode, rather than a mode of literature. Although the texts of plays were written down, by and large, audiences came into contact with drama primarily through theatrical performance. By the late sixteenth century, though, the status of drama began to change. The recovery and prestige of Greek and Latin literature led to pervasive familiarity with classical texts, including plays. Throughout Europe, schooling was conducted mainly in Latin, and the plays of Roman playwrights like Plautus, Terence, and Seneca were frequently used to teach Latin grammar and rhetoric; these plays were widely imitated by playwrights writing drama in vernacular languages for emerging secular. commercial theaters. Printing made it possible to disseminate texts more widely, and plays slowly came to be regarded as worthy of publication and preservation in book form. By the late nineteenth century, widespread literacy created a large reading public and a great demand for books; continued improvements in printing technology provided the means to meet the demand. Playwrights often published their plays as books before they could be produced onstage, with some profound effects. The detailed narrative stage directions in plays by Bernard Shaw, Eugene O'Neill, or Henrik Ibsen, for instance, are useful to a stage director and set designer, but they principally fill in a kind of novelistic background for the reading audience who will experience the play only on the page.

Theater audiences are bound to the temporality and specificity of the stage, but readers have the freedom to compose the play in much more varied ways. A reader can pause over a line, teasing out possible meanings, in effect stopping the progress of the play. Readers are not bound by the linear progress of the play's action, in that they can flip back and forth in the play, looking for clues, confirmations, or connections. Nor are readers bound by the stringent physical economy of the stage, the need to embody the characters with individual actors, to specify the dramatic locale as a three-dimensional space. While actors and directors must decide on a specific interpretation of each moment and every character in the play, readers can keep several competing interpretations alive in the imagination at the same time.

Both ways of thinking about drama are demanding, and students of drama should try to develop a sensitivity to both approaches. Treating the play like a novel or poem, decomposing and recomposing it critically, leads to a much fuller sense of the play's potential meanings, its gaps and inconsistencies; it allows us to question the text without the need to come

to definite conclusions. Treating the play as a design for the stage forces us to make commitments, to articulate and defend a particular version of the play, and to find ways of making those meanings active onstage, visible in performance. As readers, one way to develop a sense of the reciprocity between stage and page is to think of the play as constructed mainly of actions, not of words. Think of seeing a play in an unknown language: the *action* of the play would still emerge in its larger outlines, carried by the deeds of the characters. Not knowing the words would not prevent the audience from understanding what a character is doing onstage — threatening, lying, persuading, boasting.

When reading a play, it is easy to be seduced by the text, to think of the play's language as mainly narrative, describing the attitudes of the character. For performers onstage, however, speech—language in action—is always a way of doing something. One way for readers to attune themselves to this active quality of dramatic writing is to ask questions of the text from the point-of-view of performers or characters. What do I—Lysistrata, Everyman, Miranda—want in this speech? How can I use this speech to help me get it? What am I trying to do by speaking in this way? Although questions like these are still removed from the actual practice of performance, they can help readers unfamiliar with drama begin to read plays in theatrical terms.

Another way to enrich the reading experience of drama is to imagine staging the play: How could the design of the set, the movements of the actors, the pacing of the scenes affect the play's meaning, make the play mean something in particular? Questions of this kind can help to make the play seem more concrete, but they have one important limitation. When asking questions like these, it is tempting to imagine the play being performed in today's theaters, according to our conventions of acting and stagecraft, and within the social and cultural context that frames the theater now. To imagine the play on our stage is, of course, to produce it in our contemporary idiom, informed by our notions both of theater and of the world our theater represents. However, while envisioning performance, we should also imagine the play in the circumstances of its original theater, a theater located in a different culture and possibly sharing few practices of stagecraft with the modern theater. How would King Lear's nighttime scenes on the stormy heath - "Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks. Rage, blow" - have appeared on the Globe theater's empty platform stage on a sunny afternoon in London in the summer of 1605? Are there ways in which Shakespeare's text capitalizes on this dissonance between the fictive setting and the visible circumstances of the stage? In a theater where a complete, "realistic" illusion was not possible (and, possibly, not even desirable), how does Shakespeare's play turn the conditions of theatrical performance to dramatic advantage? Both reading drama and staging drama involve a complex double-consciousness, inviting us to see the plays with contemporary questions in mind, while at the same time imagining them on their original stages. In this doubleness lies an important dramatic principle: plays can speak to us in our theater but perhaps always retain something of their original accents.

Throughout its development in Western culture, dramatic art has changed as the theater's place in the surrounding society has changed. The categories that we apply to drama and theater today—art vs. entertainment, popular vs. classic, literary vs. theatrical—are categories of relatively recent vintage. They imply ways of thinking about drama and theater that are foreign to the function of theater in many other cultures. Much as drama and theater today emerge in relation to other media of dramatic performance like film and television, so in earlier eras the theater defined itself in relation to other artistic, social, and religious institutions. Placed in a different sphere of culture, drama and theater gained a different kind of significance than they have in the United States today.

DRAMA AND THEATER IN HISTORY