



The Unseen Hand and Other Plays

Sam Shepard

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The complete scripts to six Sam Shepard plays: The Unseen Hand, Forensic and the Navigators, The Holy Ghostly, Back Bog Beast Bait, Shaved Splits, 4-H Club.

The Unseen Hand and Other Plays Details

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Author : Sam Shepard

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From Reader Review The Unseen Hand and Other Plays for online ebook

Spectacles says

I thought this was a really interesting play, but it just didn't quick sit with me well. It was just a bit too strange for me. Basically, it's a modern play that breaks down time. It's got elements from different time periods all mashed into one (new modern races, wild west behavior and the present with its many highways).

Needless to say, it's just not a play I would read on my own time. It's not bad for a Fantasy/Sci-Fi class or even for just a Literature class, but if it were my choice; no thanks.

review cross-posted on my blog: SpectacleAglow

William says

This a collection of Shepard's early work. The development and direction of his style is evident in every piece. There's a raw, rough quality and having read Shepard's thought on these plays, he should taken more time in refining the work. His stream of conscientiousness writing didn't serve him well in these short plays and taking more time, going back, and reworking them would've have made them more enduring.

But reading them of course is important but not necessary to appreciate his later accomplishments.

Will says

In the early 1980s I had my Sam Shepard phase. Nostalgia took me back to his early plays. Some fell flat. But others took me back to what I'd found so captivating. The desert settings. (In the late Seventies I went to college in California and had my own crazy escapades out in the deserts.) The mythic imagination. The food fights. The goofball mystics. Reading these plays again, I notice the religious quality, the yearning for transcendence in a cartoon world of broken cowboys and UFOs. I'm glad nostalgia took me back!

Henri Maddocks says

Maybe I'm just not a Sam Shepard fan after all.

Nick says

"The Unseen Hand" is wonderful absurdist/expressionist drama. Three brothers who are mythological incarnations of old west figures, are confronted by a contemporary urban youth who gets alien messages via an "Unseen Hand". Kid Blue, the Cisco Kid and the Sycamore Kid have to face the viability of their own

existence as mythological figures in a modern world that contains enough schizophrenia as to make them seem tame.

This collection also contains three superb one-acts which won Obie awards, "Chicago," "Icarus' Children," and "Red Cross" all take on different aspects of contemporary suburban life, turning the ideas on their head in the face of unexpected situations. In "Red Cross" for instance, a man turns his back on a beautiful young wife when he suddenly and unexpectedly falls deeply in love with a sarcastic, depressed and out-of-shape cleaning lady whom he just met at a motel room. "Chicago" and "Icarus' Children" are also about young marrieds trying to cope with a contemporary life they find surreal. The surreal theatre of Sam Shepard fits these dark, angstful stories wonderfully.

Brandon says

These are some crazy freaking plays, and I like it. Just couldn't figure out what the hell was going on in some of them, but they all would be fun to perform or see performed.

j_ay says

The Unseen Hand ***oo
The Rock Garden ****o
Chicago **000
Icarus's Mother **ooo
4-H Club ***oo
Fourteen Hundred Thousand **000
Red Cross ***oo
Cowboys #2 **000
Forensic & The Navigators ***oo
The Holy Ghostly ***oo
Operation Sidewinder ***oo
The Mad Dog Blues **ooo
Back Bog Beast Bait **ooo
Killer's Head **ooo

Some early signs of great plays to come.

Ali says

Reading what so ever written by Shepard means going through a shortened social history of America after WW II, and up till the end of 20.century. Plots are so simple and dialogues are not very much sophisticated. Maybe some of works by Shepard are not as interesting as the others, but for those whom are interested in sociology, and drama as writing-art, will enjoy reading or watching works by Shepard. Reading simple and plain plays by Shepard gives you dare to sit and write about whatsoever plot you have in your mind. Many of his plays are so easy, but honest, fluent and great as well. After watching Paris, Texas by Wenders, I believe

Wenders shots matches with Shepard's atmosphere and dialogues. "Few American playwrights have exerted as much influence on the contemporary stage as Sam Shepard. His plays are performed on and off Broadway and in all the major regional American theatres. They are also widely performed and studied in Europe, finding both a popular and a scholarly audience" .

Alfavat says

ok
yes
read

Drew says

You can see why Shepard confesses to being embarrassed about some works in this collection. (Good luck finding a first edition with the misogynist "Shaved Splits.") But there's excitingly bold and risky stuff here too. I don't know why one-act festivals don't surface "4-H Club," "Red Cross," "Icarus's Mother" or "Cowboys #2" more often. The full-length "Back Bog Beast Bait" is waiting for rediscovery by a young director with balls. Early Shepard is an ongoing experiment ready to begin. Ka-boom.