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## Ghost Brothers of Darkland County Details

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# From Reader Review Ghost Brothers of Darkland County for online ebook

## Kathy says

What a cool, interesting story! When I first heard that Stephen King, John Mellencamp and T-Bone Burnett collaborated on a musical, I was very surprised! But they created something great! A haunting story with incredible music! How I wish I could see this performed! I definitely recommend this! You won't be sorry!

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## Danelle says

I got the ebook, which was a very interesting multimedia experience. I've never had this type of reading experience before. I can't say the story was that riveting, but the whole experience of the play/musical was worth the effort! And how can you NOT like Elvis Costello playing the devil?!

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## Denny says

It took me longer than it should've to finish this because I wanted to review the whole product, not just the libretto. This is a review of the libretto, the dvd, the soundtrack cd, and the cd containing the soundtrack as well as several snippets of dialogue from the play.

A play is rarely as good on the page as it is on stage, and this one is no exception (but see below!), but I did enjoy the story, which chiefly revolves around the frayed relationships of two sets of brothers, the first, Jack and Andy, who were alive in the 1960s but are ghosts in the present day, and the second, Frank and Drake, who are on the same dangerous path in the 2010s. For some reason, I have a harder time visualizing story elements when reading a play than I do when reading a book or story, so there were a few times while reading the libretto that I had a hard time keeping track of which set of brothers had done what. As expected, the story was dark, threatening, violent, and twisted. I was surprised (not unpleasantly), however, by how very bleak it ended up being. Although there are some upbeat melodies (with contrasting dark lyrics) and a few touching tender moments shared between family members, this is not a feel-good play. That's not a comment on its quality, though; it's a good story, and I liked it. If a live production comes to one of my local theatres, or if at some point it comes to an IMAX near me, I will pay money to watch.

The DVD included with the set was a nice touch but somewhat disappointing. It could have been more developed and included a lot more supporting material; the run time is under 15 minutes. All it has is a brief conversation, filmed in black & white, with Stephen King, John Mellencamp, and T Bone Burnett which is described on the official website as "a making of Ghost Brothers mini-documentary, featuring in-depth interviews with" the aforementioned three and a video of the in-studio recording, also in black and white, of one of the songs from the play, "The Truth", featuring Mellencamp with Lily & Madeleine Jurkiewicz and supporting musicians. The video of the song is great, but the comments of King, Mellencamp, and Burnett fall far short of what I would consider a satisfactory mini-documentary about the making of the play.

Enough of my complaining. As I mentioned, I liked it. But if I found tidbits to nitpick above, the opposite is true with the 2 audio CDs. CD 1 is a mixed soundtrack/dialogue disc and features well-chosen excerpts from

the libretto interspersed with the songs, and CD 2 is simply the studio soundtrack. Both discs impressed me; in fact, they kind of blew me away. The vocal and instrumental talent assembled for this project is phenomenal (and consists of too many artists to list here), and every singer and musician present gives a top-notch performance. If I had a little trouble visualizing the play or keeping details straight while reading the libretto, listening to the 1st CD later helped me to re-create the play in my mind as I listened, and the experience was such that I felt as if I had just finished watching the play at the end of the CD. Concerning CD 2, it's an outstanding production, and if it's recognizably T Bone Burnett, he's definitely at his best. There are a couple of songs that could stand alone as singles, and the album could almost work as a concept album, but some songs are understandable only in the context of the play. If it weren't for that, the music alone would be worth the price of the whole package.

If you are already a Stephen King fan, a John Mellencamp fan, or even just a T Bone Burnett fan, it'd be worth your while (and money) to buy this set. If you're a fan of all three, you really shouldn't miss it.

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### **Rick says**

First of all I have to admit that I am not a fan of C&W music. That being said this is not really C&W music although it is certainly inspired and influenced by that genre. This is really a tale of the Southern American Gothic fiction much in the vein of William Faulkner and Carson McCullers and others. While the supernatural elements are certainly very much in the tradition of contemporary dark fantasy - King's skills at development of characters is in full evidence and is only enhanced by John Mellencamp's songs. This is a unique and fascinating creative exercise and an amazing work for a first time collaboration when one takes into account that creating a musical is not something either of this talents has had experience with. It was certainly worth an evening's entertainment and I look forward to experiencing the story again and again on the CDs.

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### **Matt says**

I've got this in the form of a 120 page LP sized *Libretto* plus Music CD plus "Making-of" DVD (which I haven't watched yet).

The story is of two brothers and a girl committing murder/suicide 40 years ago, appearing as ghosts when their nephews are going to go down the same tragic path.

It's an interesting story, no doubt, but I would have preferred a novel by Stephen King only instead. I don't think the form of a musical works so well with this kind of story.

I also have some technical issues with this item: The format of the book is too large. You definitely need both hands to read it. It's printed with white text on black and that's hard for me to read. The lyrics to the songs are there (which is great), but the songs on the CD are not in the same order as they are in the libretto, making me skip back and forth on the CD player. Also, some songs from the libretto are missing on the CD altogether!

It may be a good watch on stage. And it's a good listen of the music. But, alas, it's not a good read.

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### **Rhianne Larson says**

Joe hill

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### **Terri Melton says**

"Too late always comes too early," ...great quote from the book.

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### **John J Questore says**

I wish this musical was coming closer than 7 hours away! It was a great story and the music was awesome! I highly recommend reading the libretto and listening to the soundtrack.

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### **Ken French says**

I'm a big Stephen King fan, but never really liked John Mellencamp. So I was surprised that I found the story here a little hackneyed but enjoyed the songs a lot.

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### **Marie says**

I heard about this from watching The Colbert Report. It sounded intriguing - so I bought the CD and hardcoverd "script". I found after they arrived that I didn't need to have purchased both. Stephen King has written it in play form. John Mellencamp's music is great. It is about 2 sets of brothers connected by Joe. There are 2 young women of questionable character. The setting is a small cabin in the woods of Darkland County. It is a very quick read. After reading 2 other books about dysfunctional brothers (The Prophet and The Burgess Boys), this took dysfunction to a whole new level.

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### **Stanley says**

This was a pretty odd multimedia project that while doing alot, didn't really accomplish much. I missed the play when it was touring, which I think I may have actually enjoyed. Here, however, you have a sort of screenplay, a disc with just the songs, a disc with approximately 1 minute story itros and then the songs, and a disc with an 8 minute interview with the creators, a live style "music video", and an ebook of the script.

I discovered as things moved along that some songs were out of order from where they are in the story, there are a couple of songs that aren't there and there are a half dozen or so songs that appear, but there is no version of on the discs.

I was shocked that they had gotten some pretty good voice actors to read a couple minutes worth of lines apiece for the intro plot, but for some reason didn't use them to make a sort of radio play or even audiobook based on the script. Due to this, the best way to consume this since the play had a very limited run and they didn't release a video version of it is probably just reading it.

However, what I did was read the setup and dialogue and then play the intro and the song, pause, and read until the next song. However, with those songs not being in the same order as they were in the story, it made this process much more difficult than it had any reason to be.

On top of this frustration, the story and the songs were pretty basic in the composition and to not hold up in any way outside of the production. I have no desire to listen to these songs again and while the story was better than the songs, it feels like it might have been better as a novel than what was written here. Again, though, this was intended to be performed, so I am taking that into my rating as well.

I wouldn't go so far as saying that this is bad, but I would say that it is frustrating and underwhelming and should probably be consumed as something extra for someone who has seen the performance instead of someone's introduction to it.

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## **Greg Van Vorhis says**

To be very up front about this, with the exceptions of *Les Miserables* and *Chicago*, I pretty much hate musicals. But I'm dying to see this one.

This e-book made for iBooks is like no other book I have ever read. It has audio of the actors performing their lines, it has music (my favorites being "So Goddamn Smart," though the music is the part I like, not the lyrics, and "Jukin"); it has videos, and rudimentary cartoons. This is a full-on multimedia experience.

The third act moves so fast (with some expected action and with some surprises) that I was surprised it was over so fast.

The way I understand it, this book uses all of the songs, but only highlights some of the actual dialogue of the play. The reason I say that is that for the parts where we can hear the actors performing, the parts are out of order, and do not match (by a long shot) the words on the printed page. Take the character of Dan, for instance (This is NOT a spoiler). We are told what his future looks like, and yet that story is never told in this book. I assume it is told in the play.

I also found a few spelling errors, and there are parts where the lyrics are offered for you to read, but not all of those sections of lyrics have the music (play button included) to go along with it.

Another downfall of this book (although I have to own some of the responsibility for this) is that whenever I conjure up a picture of the character named "The Shape" in this book, all I can visualize is Dr. Facilier, who is the villain in the Disney film *The Princess and the Frog* (<http://disney.go.com/disneypictures/p...>).

It is for these few errors/omissions (and for one reason that is all my own) that I give this book four stars. I really want to see the play.

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### **Jen Greene says**

Really enjoyed listening to this music and libretto. So many talents combined to tell this story! Definitely different, but totally King.

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### **Robert says**

This was not a Stephen King book, per se, but rather a play in interactive media form on the iPad. It included ~100 pages of text (in libretto form -- i.e., a play), plus various bits of audio dialogue and a full soundtrack (that you listen to as you're reading the play). It also includes a few other interactive extras.

The story itself isn't that "deep" but considering it's written in terms of being performed on stage, I thought it was great. I definitely recommend it if you own an iPad (as and especially if you are a Stephen King fan) and want to read something in a different (interactive) format.

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### **Marc-Antoine says**

Stephen King, John Mellencamp and T-Bone Burnett put their talents together and create a musical. How can you go wrong? An awesome multimedia experience, I only wish it could last longer. An awesome cast of actors and singers also come together to make it happen featuring Kris Kristofferson, Rosanne Cash, Elvis Costello, Matthew McConaughey, Meg Ryan, Sheryl Crow and many more.

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