

**ECLECTIC READERS GROUP**  
**MAY 15, 2010**  
**DRAMA & PLAYS**

822.02      Bushnell, Adelyn  
B9793      **EIGHT RADIO PLAYS FOR CLASSROOM AND  
AMATEUR BROADCAST**

“I found the content and language from 1947 to be really fun. It’s interesting to read the stage directions, things you have to hear but not see. What a lost art. Our society now is so visually oriented. A different perspective of life then. Fun” - Karen G.



\*      **THE KING OF MASKS**

“This film was made in China in 1996 by film director Wu Tianming. It had a limited US release in 1999 and won numerous international film awards. Set in rural China in the 1930s. It is about an itinerant performer who can perform the special Sichuan opera mask changing art very well.

He picks up a young boy at a child market, but is dismayed to discover the boy is really a girl. He keeps her as a servant and teaches her tumbling and contortionism, but he cannot teach her his mask tricks. Only boys can learn that. At one point in the movie, Doggie and the King of Masks watch a famous ‘castrati’ opera star perform the role of Guanyin in a traditional opera. The fact that Guanyin is a woman who can be worshipped gives Doggie ideas that challenge the society's traditional assessment of women. It is a powerful and wonderful story. It really tugs the heart strings without being too maudlin” - Teresa

812.508      Schulman, Michael  
PLAY      **PLAY THE SCENE: THE ULTIMATE COLLECTION OF  
CONTEMPORARY AND CLASSIC SCENES AND MONOLOGUES**

“I like this because it’s all scenes from plays, not monologues written for drama classes and auditions. I enjoyed the scene from *Fast Girls* by Diana Amsterdam best. I even got a friend to read it with me. Good for schools or just for fun” - Karen M.



812.54      Simon, Neil  
SIMO      **LAUGHTER ON THE TWENTY-THIRD FLOOR**

“This is the only play I’ve ever seen on Broadway, back in 1994. It’s about a group of TV comedy writers in New York in 1953, based on Simon’s experiences writing for Syd Caesar’s *Your Show of Shows*. The writers are a colorful collection of characters, but none of them outdo star Max Prince for sheer drama and hilarity. Max drinks too much and takes too many pills and sometimes he goes crazy and punches holes in the wall. The dialogue is hilarious, esp. Max’s interpretation of Marlon Brando playing Julius Caesar. It’s not all fun, though, as the specter of the McCarthy hearings and NBC’s cost-cutting measures and demands to dumb down the show hang over the group. I enjoyed reading the play and it brought back memories of my Broadway visit” - Linda

\* Wilde, Oscar

**THE PLAYS OF OSCAR WILDE**

“I read *Lady Windermere’s Fan*, written in 1892. It’s a comedy of manners, and errors, as everyone jumps to the wrong conclusion without asking the right questions. Lady Windermere, a naive young married woman, becomes convinced her husband is having an affair when she hears of his frequent visits to Mrs. Erlynne, a mysterious newcomer to town. Lord Darlington, who fancies himself in love with Lady W., pleads with her to run away with him. When her husband invites Mrs. E. to their home, Lady W. impulsively runs to Lord Darlington. Mrs. E. is actually Lady W’s mother who similarly abandoned her husband and family many years ago. Mrs. E. goes to Lady W. and convinces her to go home at the risk of her own future and reputation. All comes out right in the end, of course. It is a comedy. It’s a fun read though nowhere near as funny as Wilde’s *The Importance of Being Ernest*” - Linda



**Wild Card Recommendations:**

\* Apple, R. W., Jr.

**FAR-FLUNG AND WELL-FED: THE FOOD WRITINGS  
OF R. W. APPLE JR.**

“It was advertised in the NY Times Book Review as ‘Words To Make Your Mouth Water’, and it is fifty-plus essays on food from around the world. It begins with four sections on American regional cuisine, then South America, and then moves around the world, and I’ve learned about Maryland blue crabs, and how the Brits make marmalade, and the Scots make whiskey. Yet to come is Europe, and Asia and Australia—it’s 394 pages, meant to be read slowly, just as one would deliberately savor each course of a wonderful meal... recommend it highly--this guy knew how to eat (you can tell that from his author photo on the dust jacket) and he knew how to write, too” - Ruth



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\* Not in APL system

Disclaimer: All books reviewed herein were checked out of the library or purchased by the reviewer. None were provided free of charge for the purpose of an endorsement.