



Plays 1: Owners / Traps / Vinegar Tom / Light Shining in Buckinghamshire / Cloud Nine

Caryl Churchill

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The plays in this volume represent the best of Churchill's writing up to and including her emergence onto the international theatre scene with *Cloud Nine*. The volume also contains a new introduction by the author as well as short prefaces to each play.

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Buckinghamshire / Cloud Nine Caryl Churchill**

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Magdalena says

Never in my life have I read such a tosh!!!

Shannon Tapia says

Freaky Play and I loved it:)

Peter Orvetti says

I enjoy a wide range of types of plays, and have a fondness for the avant garde, but I found most of these plays impenetrable. I know Churchill is a polarizing playwright, and I can see why. "Owners" and "Vinegar Tom" were my two favorites from this collection. The surreal "Traps" was hard to get my head around -- I could not quite visualize it in my head, so I was not fully able to appreciate it. "Cloud Nine," which I understand is considered one of Churchill's greater works, did not do it for me at all. The sexual, racial, and temporal confusion of the characters was a baffling muddle.

Samuel says

This book of Churchill's early plays seem to show her trying out her literary potential in various areas - historical, experimental, even musical - leading up to Cloud Nine, by far the most accomplished and versatile play in this collection. Other good reads here though in Owners, a blackly funny, absurd-ish, domestic farce about property and capitalism; and Vinegar Tom, a feminist examination of the historical era of witch-hunting, complete with songs. She truly is one of the definitive dramatists of our age - always relevant and uncompromisingly brilliant.

Phillip says

Churchill is certainly one of the great feminist dramatists, and one of the great modern British dramatists. Cloud Nine is a masterpiece and deservedly brought her international acclaim. Its commentary on gender, sexualities, racial issues, colonialism, and power is fascinating because it seeks to destabilize these categories while simultaneously showing how powerfully affective they are.

The other plays in this collection are also good. I particularly liked Vinegar Tom and Light Shining in Buckinghamshire (I think I got that title right). These plays--similarly to Cloud Nine--reimagine a historical period or element to deal both with historical and contemporary concerns. Vinegar Tom deals with gender roles, power, violence, and humiliation during the period of English witch trials in the 16th century, which implicitly (and at times explicitly) comments on the continuing social construction of proper femininity and the punishments for failing to meet those standards. Buckinghamshire uses the millenian rhetoric of the

English civil war as a jumping off point for considering the failure of revolutionary movements when revolutionary leadership suddenly occupies a position of power, and the limits of faith in a world marked by exploitation, betrayal, and a seemingly endless wait for the second coming when all problems will be swept away.

Allison Rockwell says

We read Vinegar Tom and a couple others out of this volume. I quite liked Vinegar Tom--though it's completely different from her later works. The rest didn't leave much of an impression on me.

Joseph says

"Light Shining in Buckinghamshire" is brilliant. No excuse, though, for the blackface in "Cloud Nine".

Drew says

The four plays leading up to Churchill's first masterwork "Cloud Nine" tell an interesting story. There's the subversively funny "Owners" (admittedly indebted to Orton), the strangely cryptic "Traps" (which reminds me of Shepard's "Action" from a few years before), her breakthrough ensemble piece "Vinegar Tom," then the more deliberate, less effective "Light Shining in Buckinghamshire." Once Churchill clicked with "Cloud Nine," she went on to churn out a series of stunning plays: "Top Girls," "The Skriker," "A Number," "Love and Information"... It's really fun to see how it all began.

Iira says

Ensimmäisiä Churchillin näytelmiä, yllättävän konventionaalisia ja loogisia. Myöhemmät varmaan ovat niitä antoisempia luettavia.

Rosemary says

Obviously I'm a fan... this book has a preface before each play with notes on its development which are insightful.

Pimpawan says

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