

sarah ruhl in the next room

Sarah Ruhl in the Next Room: Exploring the Intimacy and Innovation of a Modern Playwright

sarah ruhl in the next room immediately evokes a sense of curiosity and closeness, much like the play that carries this title. Sarah Ruhl, a celebrated contemporary playwright, is known for her unique ability to blend whimsy, emotion, and intellectual depth, and "In the Next Room (or The Vibrator Play)" stands as a testament to her distinctive storytelling style. This article delves into the world of Sarah Ruhl's compelling work, its themes, impact, and why it continues to resonate with audiences today.

The Essence of Sarah Ruhl's "In the Next Room"

Sarah Ruhl's "In the Next Room" is a theatrical piece that captures the complexities of human connection, sexuality, and the evolving landscape of medicine in the late 19th century. Set in a Victorian parlor, the play revolves around Dr. Givings, who uses the newly invented vibrator as a treatment for "hysteria" in women—a condition poorly understood at the time. The narrative unfolds not only through the medical procedures but also through the emotional lives of the characters, making it a rich exploration of intimacy and communication.

Why This Play Stands Out in Modern Theatre

What makes "In the Next Room" particularly striking is Sarah Ruhl's ability to tackle sensitive topics with both humor and compassion. She doesn't shy away from discussing female desire and repression, subjects often overlooked or handled clumsily in theatre. Instead, Ruhl invites the audience to consider the social constraints of the era, while drawing parallels to contemporary issues around gender and sexuality.

Her writing style is poetic, filled with lyrical dialogue that feels both natural and profound, which is a hallmark of Ruhl's broader body of work. The play's blend of historical context and emotional honesty makes it accessible and deeply moving, engaging theatergoers on multiple levels.

Sarah Ruhl's Signature Themes in "In the Next Room"

Throughout her career, Sarah Ruhl has been praised for weaving themes of love, loss, and transformation into her plays. "In the Next Room" encapsulates many of these motifs, particularly focusing on:

- **Intimacy and Connection:** The play examines how people communicate and connect, often highlighting the barriers that prevent true understanding.
- **Female Empowerment:** By shedding light on the medical treatment of hysteria, Ruhl critiques

the patriarchal systems that have historically silenced women's experiences.

- **Science and Emotion:** The contrast between the clinical environment and the characters' emotional lives offers a nuanced view of how science interacts with human vulnerability.

These themes make the play not only a period piece but also a commentary relevant to today's audiences, encouraging reflection on how far society has come and what challenges remain.

The Historical Context and Its Modern Resonance

Understanding the historical backdrop of "In the Next Room" enriches the experience. The late 1800s were a time when medical science was rapidly advancing, yet many treatments were based on limited knowledge—especially regarding women's health. The invention of the vibrator as a medical device to treat hysteria is both fascinating and troubling, revealing much about gender dynamics and medical ethics.

Sarah Ruhl's decision to set the play in this era allows her to critique past injustices while inviting viewers to think critically about current healthcare practices and the ongoing dialogue about women's autonomy. This blend of history and modern sensibility is a key reason why the play remains a staple in contemporary theater repertoires.

Exploring Sarah Ruhl's Writing Style Through "In the Next Room"

Sarah Ruhl's writing is often described as lyrical and imaginative, and "In the Next Room" exemplifies this beautifully. Her dialogue often feels like poetry, with a rhythm and cadence that bring the characters' emotions to life vividly.

Using Symbolism and Metaphor

One of Ruhl's strengths lies in her use of symbolism. In "In the Next Room," the device at the center of the story—the vibrator—serves as more than just a medical tool. It symbolizes the unspoken desires and frustrations of the characters, the invisible energy that drives human relationships, and the tension between repression and expression.

This symbolic layering adds depth to the narrative, inviting audiences to interpret the play on multiple levels. It's a technique that enriches the theatrical experience and encourages thoughtful discussion long after the curtain falls.

The Balance of Humor and Pathos

Another hallmark of Sarah Ruhl's work, evident in "In the Next Room," is her ability to balance humor with emotional weight. The play contains moments of lightness and wit that provide relief amid the more serious themes. This interplay makes the story feel authentic and relatable, allowing audiences to engage with difficult topics without feeling overwhelmed.

The Impact of "In the Next Room" on Contemporary Theatre

Since its debut, "In the Next Room" has garnered critical acclaim and multiple awards, including several Tony nominations. Its success has helped cement Sarah Ruhl's reputation as one of the most important voices in modern American theater.

Influence on Female-Centric Narratives

By foregrounding women's experiences and medical history, Sarah Ruhl has inspired a wave of playwrights and artists to explore similar themes. "In the Next Room" is often cited in discussions about how theater can challenge societal norms and open up conversations about gender and sexuality in meaningful ways.

Educational Value and Audience Engagement

Many educational institutions and theater companies use "In the Next Room" as a teaching tool to explore historical perspectives on gender and medicine. Its accessible yet thought-provoking content makes it ideal for sparking dialogue among students and audiences alike.

What Makes Sarah Ruhl's "In the Next Room" a Must-See Play

If you're wondering why this play continues to draw audiences, it's worth considering its unique blend of historical insight, emotional depth, and theatrical innovation. Here are some reasons to see or study Sarah Ruhl in the next room:

- **Rich Character Development:** Each character is nuanced, with personal struggles that feel real and relatable.
- **Engaging Storytelling:** The narrative flows seamlessly between humor and drama, keeping viewers invested throughout.

- **Thought-Provoking Themes:** The play challenges viewers to think critically about history, gender, and human connection.
- **Beautifully Crafted Dialogue:** Ruhl's poetic language enhances the emotional impact and leaves a lasting impression.

Experiencing this play offers more than entertainment; it provides a window into the complexities of intimacy and societal change.

Tips for Experiencing the Play

If you have the chance to watch a production of "In the Next Room," consider the following to deepen your appreciation:

1. **Research the Historical Context:** Understanding the era and medical practices of the late 1800s adds layers to the story.
2. **Pay Attention to Subtext:** Much of the play's meaning is conveyed through what's left unsaid or implied.
3. **Engage in Post-Show Discussions:** Sharing thoughts with others can enrich your understanding and reveal diverse interpretations.

Sarah Ruhl's work invites audiences not just to watch but to think and feel alongside the characters.

Whether you're a theater enthusiast, a student of modern drama, or simply curious about innovative storytelling, exploring Sarah Ruhl in the next room offers a memorable journey through history, emotion, and the art of human connection. Her ability to weave humor, history, and heartfelt narrative into a cohesive and compelling play makes this work a true gem in contemporary theater.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is Sarah Ruhl, the playwright of 'In the Next Room'?

Sarah Ruhl is an acclaimed American playwright known for her poetic and innovative works, including 'In the Next Room,' which explores themes of intimacy and technology in the Victorian era.

What is the main theme of Sarah Ruhl's play 'In the Next

Room'?

The main theme of 'In the Next Room' is the exploration of human intimacy and the impact of early medical technology on relationships and emotional connection.

When and where did Sarah Ruhl's 'In the Next Room' premiere?

'In the Next Room' premiered in 2009 at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre before moving to Broadway in 2010.

What historical period does 'In the Next Room' by Sarah Ruhl depict?

The play is set in the late 19th century, during the Victorian era, focusing on the use of the first electric vibrator in medical treatments.

How has Sarah Ruhl's 'In the Next Room' been received by critics?

The play received critical acclaim for its witty dialogue, emotional depth, and innovative treatment of themes related to sexuality and technology.

What significance does the title 'In the Next Room' have in Sarah Ruhl's play?

The title refers to the physical separation between the patients receiving treatment with the vibrator and the observers or doctors in the next room, symbolizing the emotional and social distances explored in the play.

Additional Resources

Sarah Ruhl in The Next Room: A Contemporary Exploration of Intimacy and Innovation

sarah ruhl in the next room represents a compelling intersection of theatrical innovation and delicate human themes. Known for her poetic and often whimsical writing style, Sarah Ruhl brings a distinctive voice to modern American theater, and The Next Room (or The Vibrator Play) stands as one of her most discussed works. This play, first premiering in 2009, delves into the early days of medical technology and the intimate lives of its characters, offering a nuanced exploration of sexuality, communication, and emotional release.

Thematic Depth and Artistic Approach

Sarah Ruhl's The Next Room is not merely a historical recounting; it is an intricate portrayal of human

connection, framed against the backdrop of the late 19th-century invention of the vibrator. The play's subtitle, "The Vibrator Play," draws attention to the pivotal device that catalyzes the narrative, but beneath this lies a rich tapestry of themes including repression, marital dynamics, and the quest for personal fulfillment.

Ruhl's writing style is characteristically lyrical, blending humor with a certain poignancy that avoids melodrama. The dialogue is often poetic, inviting audiences to engage with the characters' internal worlds. Her work challenges conventional norms about sexuality and medical ethics, positioning the audience to reconsider societal taboos through a historical lens.

Plot Overview and Character Dynamics

Set in a Victorian parlor, *The Next Room* centers on Dr. Givings, a physician pioneering the use of the vibrator as a therapeutic device to treat "hysteria" in women. The narrative unfolds through the interactions between Dr. Givings, his wife Catherine, their patients, and household staff.

Catherine's emotional distance and longing for intimacy serve as a counterpoint to the clinical detachment of her husband's scientific pursuits. The patients' stories reveal broader societal constraints, highlighting issues of female agency and repression. The interplay of these characters creates a microcosm that reflects larger cultural debates about sexuality and emotional expression.

Innovative Use of Setting and Symbolism

One of the distinctive features of Sarah Ruhl in *The Next Room* is the use of space and props to underscore the themes. The play's confined setting — primarily the doctor's parlor and the "next room" where treatments occur — functions as both a physical and metaphorical boundary. This separation between rooms symbolizes the divide between public facades and private desires, between medical science and human emotion.

The vibrator itself is a potent symbol. While it was originally a medical device, within the play it embodies the tension between repression and release. It challenges Victorian notions of propriety, and its presence sparks conversations about the evolving understanding of women's health and pleasure.

Critical Reception and Cultural Impact

Since its debut, *The Next Room* has garnered significant attention from critics and audiences alike for its bold subject matter and inventive storytelling. Sarah Ruhl's nuanced approach to delicate topics has been praised for balancing wit and sensitivity, avoiding sensationalism while still engaging with taboo issues.

The play has been recognized in numerous theatrical circles, earning nominations and awards that underscore its impact. It has sparked discussions about the portrayal of female sexuality in theater and the historical context of medical practices, contributing to a broader cultural dialogue.

Comparative Analysis: Sarah Ruhl's Work in Contemporary Theater

When examining Sarah Ruhl in *The Next Room* alongside other contemporary works, her distinct voice becomes apparent. Unlike more conventional dramas, Ruhl's plays often incorporate surreal elements and poetic language, setting her apart from playwrights who favor realism or political commentary.

Her focus on intimate, often overlooked human experiences aligns her with a niche of playwrights emphasizing emotional subtlety and personal narratives. This approach contrasts with larger-scale productions that rely on spectacle or overt messaging, positioning Ruhl's work as a thoughtful and introspective contribution to modern theater.

Strengths and Limitations

- **Strengths:** The play's delicate handling of complex themes, innovative use of symbolism, and rich character development make it a standout piece in contemporary theater.
- **Limitations:** Some audiences may find the pacing slow or the focus on subtext challenging, particularly those expecting straightforward narratives.

Legacy and Continuing Relevance

More than a decade after its premiere, Sarah Ruhl in *The Next Room* continues to resonate with modern audiences. Its exploration of themes such as emotional repression, the evolution of medical ethics, and female empowerment remains pertinent in today's social climate. The play invites ongoing reflection on how far society has come in understanding intimacy and the body, while also acknowledging persistent challenges.

The continued staging of *The Next Room* in theaters worldwide, including regional and academic productions, speaks to its enduring appeal and relevance. It serves as a conversation starter for discussions on sexuality, gender roles, and the intersection of science and human experience.

Through *The Next Room*, Sarah Ruhl has crafted a work that transcends its historical setting to offer timeless insights into the human condition. Its layered storytelling and evocative imagery ensure that it remains a compelling piece for both theater aficionados and casual audiences interested in exploring the complexities of intimacy and innovation.

[Sarah Ruhl In The Next Room](#)

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sarah ruhl in the next room: Modern American Drama: Playwriting 2000-2009 Julia Listengarten, Cindy Rosenthal, 2019-11-14 The Decades of Modern American Drama series provides a comprehensive survey and study of the theatre produced in each decade from the 1930s to 2009 in eight volumes. Each volume equips readers with a detailed understanding of the context from which work emerged: an introduction considers life in the decade with a focus on domestic life and conditions, social changes, culture, media, technology, industry and political events; while a chapter on the theatre of the decade offers a wide-ranging and thorough survey of theatres, companies, dramatists, new movements and developments in response to the economic and political conditions of the day. The work of the four most prominent playwrights from the decade receives in-depth analysis and re-evaluation by a team of experts, together with commentary on their subsequent work and legacy. A final section brings together original documents such as interviews with the playwrights and with directors, drafts of play scenes, and other previously unpublished material. The major playwrights and their plays to receive in-depth coverage in this volume include: * Theresa Rebeck: *Omnium Gatherum* (2003), *Mauritius* (2007), and *The Understudy* (2008); * Sarah Ruhl: *Eurydice* (2003), *Clean House* (2004), and *In the Next Room (or the Vibrator Play)* (2009); * Lynn Nottage: *Intimate Apparel* (2003), *Fabulation or Re-Education of Undine* (2004), and *Ruined* (2008); * Charles Mee: *Big Love* (2000), *Wintertime* (2005), and *Hotel Cassiopeia* (2006).

sarah ruhl in the next room: *The Drama and Theatre of Sarah Ruhl* Amy Muse, 2018-07-26 Sarah Ruhl is one of the most highly-acclaimed and frequently-produced American playwrights of the 21st century. Author of eighteen plays and the essay collection *100 Essays I Don't Have Time to Write*, she has won a MacArthur "Genius" Grant and the Steinberg Distinguished Playwright Award, been nominated for a Tony Award for *In the Next Room or the vibrator play* and twice been a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for *The Clean House* and *In the Next Room*. Ruhl is a writer unafraid of the soul. She writes not about "this or that issue," but "about being," creating plays that ask "big questions about death, love, and how we should treat each other in this lifetime." In this volume, Amy Muse situates Ruhl as an artist-thinker and organizes her work around its artistic and ethical concerns. Through a finely-grained account of each play, readers are guided through Ruhl's early influences, the themes of intimacy, transcendence, and communion, and her inventive stagecraft to dramatize "moments of being" onstage. Enriched by essays from scholars Jill Stevenson, Thomas Butler, and Christina Dokou, an interview with directors Sarah Rasmussen and Hayley Finn, and a chronology of Ruhl's life and work, this is a companionable guide for students of American drama and theatre studies. Amy Muse specializes in dramatic literature and performance studies at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota, where she is Associate Professor and Chair of the English Department. She is the author of "Sarah Ruhl's Sex Ed for Grownups" (Text & Presentation 2013) and essays on Romantic drama, intimate theatre, female Hamlets, and travel in Romantic Circles, *Romanticism: The Journal of Romantic Culture & Criticism*, *Frontiers*, and other journals. METHUEN DRAMA CRITICAL COMPANIONS Series Editors: Patrick Lonergan (National University of Ireland, Galway) and Kevin J. Wetmore, Jr. (Loyola Marymount University, USA)

sarah ruhl in the next room: Text & Presentation, 2013 Graley Herren, 2014-02-14 Text & Presentation, 2013 gathers some of the best work presented at the 2013 Comparative Drama Conference in Baltimore. Subjects ranging from Ancient Greece to 21st century America are covered with a variety of approaches and formats. Celebrated playwright Edward Albee's presentation is the lead piece, followed by 12 research papers, one review essay, and seven book reviews. This volume represents the latest research in the fields of comparative drama, performance, and dramatic textual analysis.

sarah ruhl in the next room: Old Stories, New Readings Miriam López-Rodríguez, Alfonso

Ceballos Muñoz, Inmaculada Pineda-Hernández, 2015-02-27 Whether imaginary or based on real events, stories are at the core of any culture. Regardless of their length, their rhetoric strategies, or their style, humans tell stories to each other to express their innermost fears and needs, to establish a point within an argument, or to engage their listeners in a fabricated composition. Stories can also serve other purposes, such as being used for entertainment, for education or for the preservation of certain cultural traits. Storytelling is at the heart of human interaction, and, as such, can foster a dialogic narrative between the person creating the story and their audience. In literature, this dialogue has been traditionally associated with narrative in general, and with the novel in particular. However, other genres also make use of storytelling, including drama. This volume explores the ways in which American theatre from all eras deals with this: how stories are told onstage, what kinds of stories are recorded in dramatic texts, and how previously neglected realities have gained attention through the American playwright's telling, or retelling, of an event or action. The stories unfolded in American drama follow recent narratology theories, particularly in the sense that there is a greater preference for those so-called small stories over big stories. Despite the increase in the production of this type of texts and the growing interest in them in the field of narratology, small stories are literary episodes that have been granted less critical attention, particularly in the analysis of drama. As such, this volume fills a void in the study of the stories presented on the American stage.

sarah ruhl in the next room: Fearless Femininity by Women in American Theatre, 1910s to 2010s Lynne Greeley, 2015-08-06 In this unprecedented, fascinating book which covers women in theatre from the 1910s to the 2010s, author Lynne Greeley notes that, for the purposes of this study, feminism is defined as the political impulse toward economic and social empowerment for females or the female-identified, a position perceived by many feminists as oppositional to ideas of femininity that they see as personally and politically constraining and that femininity comprises social behaviors and practices that mean as many different things as there are women, some of which are empowering and others of which are not. This book illuminates how throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, playwrights and artists in American theatre both embodied and disrupted the feminine of their times. Through approaches as wide ranging as performing their own recipes, energizing silences, raging against war and rape, and inviting the public to inscribe their naked bodies, theatre artists have used performance as a site to insert themselves between the physicality of their female presence and the liminality of their disrupting the role of the feminine. Capturing that place of liminality, a neither-here-nor-there place that is often unsafe, where the established order is overturned by acts as banal as raising a plant, women have written and performed and disrupted their way through one hundred years of theatre history, even within the constraints of a variably rigid and usually unsympathetic social order. Creating a feminist femininity, they have reinscribed their place in the culture and provided models for their audiences to do the same. This comprehensive tome, part of the Cambria Contemporary Global Performing Arts headed by John Clum (Duke University) is an essential addition for theater studies and women's studies.

sarah ruhl in the next room: The Methuen Drama Guide to Contemporary American Playwrights Christopher Innes, Peter Paul Schnierer, Martin Middeke, Matthew C. Roudané, 2013-12-19 Unrivalled in its coverage of recent work and writers, The Methuen Drama Guide to Contemporary American Playwrights surveys and analyses the breadth, vitality and development of theatrical work to emerge from America over the last fifty years. This authoritative guide leads you through the work of 25 major contemporary American playwrights, discussing more than 140 plays in detail. Written by a team of 25 eminent international scholars, each chapter provides: · a biographical introduction to the playwright's work; · a survey and concise analysis of the writer's most important plays; · a discussion of their style, dramaturgical concerns and critical reception; · a bibliography of published plays and a select list of critical works. Among the many Tony, Obie and Pulitzer prize-winning playwrights included are Sam Shepard, Tony Kushner, Suzan-Lori Parks, August Wilson, Paula Vogel and Neil LaBute. The abundance of work analysed enables fresh,

illuminating conclusions to be drawn about the development of contemporary American playwriting.

sarah ruhl in the next room: Amerikanische Literaturgeschichte Hubert Zapf, Timo Müller, 2024-07-15 In der 4. Auflage ist das Buch umfassend neu konzipiert worden. Neben den Kapiteln von den Puritanern bis zur Postmoderne, die als Klassiker in der Amerikanistik gelten und nur wenig verändert beibehalten werden, sind alle anderen Kapitel entweder neu geschrieben oder stark revidiert worden. Die ausführlichen Porträts der indigenen und der Latino/a-Literatur, der afro- und asiatisch-amerikanischen Literatur tragen der ausgeprägten Diversität der literarischen Kultur der USA Rechnung. Kernstück ist ein ganz neu verfasstes, umfangreiches Kapitel zur Literatur der Gegenwart.

sarah ruhl in the next room: American Theatre Ensembles Volume 2 Mike Vanden Heuvel, 2021-01-28 A companion to American Theatre Ensembles Volume 1, this volume charts the development and achievements of theatre companies working after 1995, bringing together the diffuse generation of ensembles working within a context of media saturation and epistemological and social fragmentation. Ensembles examined include Rude Mechs, The Builders Association, Pig Iron, Radiohole, The Civilians and 600 Highwaymen. Introductory chapters provide a sweeping overview of ensemble-based creation within the general historical and cultural contexts of the period, followed by a detailed study of the evolution of ensemble-based work. Contributors examine matters such as influence, funding, production and legacies, as well as the forms of collective devising and creation, while presenting close readings of the companies' most prominent works. The volume features detailed case studies of the 6 companies from the period and cover: * A history of development and methods * Key productions and projects * Critical reception * A chronology of significant productions US ensemble companies since 1995 have revolutionized the form and content of contemporary performance, influencing experimental as well as mainstream practice. This volume provides the first encompassing study of this vital development in contemporary American theatre by mapping its evolution and key developments.

sarah ruhl in the next room: The Playwright at Work Rosemarie Tichler, Barry Jay Kaplan, 2012-06-30 Rosemarie Tichler and Barry Jay Kaplan take us behind the scenes in conversations with thirteen of today's most distinguished playwrights, including Tony Kushner, John Guare, Wallace Shawn, Suzan-Lori Parks, David Henry Hwang, and Sarah Ruhl. To familiarize the reader with the world of each playwright, Tichler and Kaplan introduce us to the environments in which the work happens, conducting their interviews in the playwright's home, a dark theater, or a coffee shop. Topics of conversation range from the playwrights' earliest memories of the theater to finding their unique voices, and from their working relationships with directors, actors, and designers to their involvement in the purely commercial aspects of their profession. Taken together, these conversations constitute a collectively taught master class in the art and craft of writing for the stage.

sarah ruhl in the next room: A Spectator Per K. Brask, 2014-12-22 A Spectator is the first published collection of ekphrastic poetry by poet, author, playwright and dramaturge Per K. Brask. Ekphrasis" is defined as literary commentary on a work of art. Think John Keat's poems Ode on a Grecian Urn or On Seeing the Elgin Marbles for the First Time. A Spectator is a modern take on this poetic tradition. Written in plain speech, these 50 accessible and insightful poems express the poet's playful attention to live performances, works of art, exhibits or life moments. Readers will be delighted and inspired by these beautifully wrought personal reflections on concrete things. A Spectator contains many insights from watching theatrical performance, but its greatest accomplishment is its practice of ekphrasis. Adopting a highly dramatic form for his literary account of theatrical events, Brask offers an ongoing behind-the-scenes look at how one might attend to a work of performed art, as well as a fine example of the affect of dramatic writing. A Spectator offers an engaging series of reflections from an engaged spectator with a playwrights pen. Reviewed by AOM

sarah ruhl in the next room: Pious Rebel Jory Post, 2020-11-01 After her partner dies suddenly, Lisa Hardrock realizes how little she knows about the life she's been living — and starts

exploring her questions in a blog that unexpectedly goes viral. Following the sudden death of her domineering partner, Lisa Hardrock begins to discover how little she really knows about the life she's been living for the last seven years — and the man she was living it with. As she confronts the secrets and unpaid debts her partner left behind, Lisa also begins to investigate the mysteries of her own life by beginning to write. Begun as a journal for her daily thoughts, her blog ends up going viral. Along the way, Lisa discovers the truths and lies about those she has considered friends, learns more about Central Valley motorcycle gangs than she ever thought she needed to know, and unexpectedly ends up with a pantry full of sockeye salmon for her cat, Eloise.

sarah ruhl in the next room: The Art of Dramaturgy Anne Cattaneo, 2021-09-21 An introduction to the mysterious theater role of a dramaturg by a legend in the field Anne Cattaneo was among the first Americans to fill the role of dramaturg, one of theater's best kept secrets. A combination of theater artist, scholar, researcher, play advocate, editor, and writer's friend, it is the job of a dramaturg to "reflect light back on the elements that are already in play," while bringing a work of theater to life. Cattaneo traces the field from its beginnings in the eighteenth century to the present and chronicles the multitude and variety of tasks a dramaturg undertakes before, during, and after a production is brought to the stage. Using detailed stories from her work with theater artists such as Tom Stoppard, Wendy Wasserstein, Robert Wilson, Shi-Zheng Chen, and Sarah Ruhl, as well as the discovery of a 'lost' play by Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston, Cattaneo provides an invaluable manual to those studying, working in, and interested in this most fascinating profession.

sarah ruhl in the next room: Scenes and Monologues of Spiritual Experience from the Best Contemporary Plays Roger Ellis, 2013-10-01 In this anthology, theater expert Roger Ellis culls together dramatic scenes and monologues that all deal with spiritual experience. From various religious and non-religious perspectives, the book explores various aspects of spirituality - religious faith, martyrdom, death and afterlife, fate and destiny, mercy, and romantic love. The material comes from contemporary plays by some of the most gifted playwrights - Arthur Miller, Tony Kushner, John Patrick Shanley, John Pielmeier, Tammy Ryan, Elie Wiesel, Karen Sunde, and others. Perfect for high-school through college-age students, as well as for actors and general readers, this volume contains nearly 100 scenes, ranging from comic to serious, grouped in five categories: "Scenes for a Man and a Woman " "Scenes for Two Women " "Scenes for Two Men " "Monologues for Women " and "Monologues for Men." In addition to the monologues, Ellis includes notes on staging to help actors and directors bring these scenes to life. Some of the plays sourced for this anthology include *The Crucible*, *Doubt*, *In the Shape of a Woman*, *Agnes of God*, *Epic Proportions*, *Our Lady of 121st Street*, *Angels in America*, and *Affection in Time*.

sarah ruhl in the next room: The Oberammergau Passion Play Kevin J. Wetmore, Jr., 2017-02-06 Every ten years since 1634, the Bavarian village of Oberammergau has performed the world's most famous Passion Play, recounting the last days of Jesus Christ. In 2010, presenting the play for the 41st time, the village broke with tradition to offer a new interpretation for a post-millennial, international audience. Drawing on interviews with villagers and international responses, this collection of new essays provides an analysis of the play by scholars who attended. Topics include changes in response to charges of anti-Semitism, how the play defines the village, how the performance changes the audience, and a comparison of Oberammergau 2010 with American Passion Plays, Indian pilgrimage drama and other German Passion Plays.

sarah ruhl in the next room: The Theatre of Paula Vogel Lee Brewer Jones, 2023-06-15 In this volume, Lee Brewer Jones examines Paula Vogel as both a playwright and renowned teacher, analyzing texts and early reviews of Vogel's major plays-including *Indecent*, *Desdemona*, *How I Learned to Drive*, and *The Baltimore Waltz*-before turning attention to her influence upon other major American playwrights, including Sarah Ruhl, Lynn Nottage, and Quiara Alegría Hudes. Chapters explore Vogel's plays in chronological order, consider her early influences and offer detailed accounts of her work in performance. Enriched by an interview with Lynn Nottage and essays from scholars Ana Fernández-Caparrós and Amy Muse, this is a vibrant exploration of Paula

Vogel as a major American playwright. By the time Paula Vogel made her Broadway debut with her 2017 Rebecca Taichman collaboration *Indecent*, she was already an accomplished playwright, with a Pulitzer Prize for *How I Learned to Drive* (1998) and two Obie Awards. She had also enjoyed a brilliant career as a professor at Brown and Yale with students such as Sarah Ruhl, a MacArthur "Genius" Grant winner, Pulitzer Prize winners Nilo Cruz, Quiara Alegría Hudes, and the only woman to win two Pulitzers for Drama, Lynn Nottage. Vogel's theatre draws upon Russian Formalist Viktor Shklovsky and uses devices such as "defamiliarization" and "negative empathy" to challenge conventional definitions of protagonists and antagonists.

sarah ruhl in the next room: *Theater and Human Flourishing* Harvey Young, 2023 The Humanities and Human Flourishing series publishes edited volumes that explore the role of human flourishing in the central disciplines of the humanities, and whether and how the humanities can increase human happiness. This volume presents essays on the significance of theater to wellbeing and human flourishing. Combining scholarship in psychology and positive psychology with new perspectives in theater and performance studies, the volume features eleven prominent theater and performance studies scholars who offer original, previously unpublished examinations of the social benefits of theater and performance. This volume explores the questions: Why is theater considered a social good? And what makes theater a valuable contribution to happiness and wellbeing? Contributors point to theater as a rich source of community and examine the unique value of live, theatrical performance as a medium through which trauma as well as socio-political differences can be expressed. The personal, societal, and artistic benefits of theater are examined through chapters on actors' suffering and acting training, community theater, theater and trauma, breaking social barriers through theater, etiquette in the theater, and the theatrical community as a refuge for minoritized groups. Like other titles in this series, *Theater and Human Flourishing* uses an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach, which here breaches the divide between science-focused fields that study human flourishing and the artistry of theatrical performance.

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