



Forbidden Acts: Pioneering Gay & Lesbian Plays of the 20th Century

Ben Hodges

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(Applause Books). Applause Theatre & Cinema Books is proud to announce the publication of the first collected anthology of gay and lesbian plays from the entire span of the twentieth century, sure to find wide acceptance by general readers and to be studied on campuses around the world. Among the ten plays, three are completely out of print. Included are *The God of Vengeance* (1918) by Sholom Ash, the first play to introduce lesbian characters to an English-language audience; Lillian Hellman's classic *The Children's Hour* (1933), initially banned in London and passed over for the Pulitzer Prize because of its subject matter; and Oscar Wilde (1938) by Leslie and Sewell Stokes, a major award-winning success that starred Robert Morley. More recent plays include Mart Crowley's *The Boys in the Band* (1968), the first hit "out" gay play that was the most realistic and groundbreaking portrayal of gays on stage up to that time; Martin Sherman's *Bent* (1978), which daringly focused on the love between two Nazi concentration camp inmates and starred Richard Gere; William Hoffman's *As Is* (1985), which was one of the first plays to deal with the AIDS crisis and earned three Tony Award nominations; and Terrence McNally's *Love! Valour! Compassion!* (1994), which starred Nathan Lane and won the Tony Award for Best Play. The other plays are Edouard Bourdet's *The Captive* (1926), Ruth and Augustus Goetz's *The Immoralist* (1954) and Frank Marcus' *The Killing of Sister George* (1967). *Forbidden Acts* includes a broad range of theatrical genres: drama, tragedy, romance, comedy and farce. They remain vibrant and relevant today as a testament of art's ability to persevere in the face of oppression.

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