1987

Play Reviews

C. Bartlett

Erin Caldwell

Gayanne Ramsden

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reading them offers enlightenment, wisdom, and perhaps some modicum of comfort. I found E. L. Doctorow's "The Writer in the Family" and Elizabeth Bowen's "The Visitor" to be especially effective, but there is uniformly high quality.

This second collection by Zolotow makes a valuable addition to a library's young adult short story collection; it joins An Overpraised Season (1973), her first selection of excellent short stories for young people. —Carol V. Oaks

**Play Reviews**


This is the story of a Jewish boy trying to understand his elders' obsession with "tradition." As he searches for a button to put on his great-great-grandfather's yarmulke, he comes into contact with many sentiments and traditions of the villagers. By the play's end, he has discovered that it is not the tradition itself but what is underneath that counts.

The characters tend to be stereotypes: the insistent Jewish mother, the wise Rabbi, the rebelling son. With all the references to events and items of Jewish culture, I doubt the play would be understood unless the audience had an understanding of Jewish background. It is relatively short, occasionally humorous, and expandable through the use of traditional Jewish music and dance. The cast can be quite large or, in some cases, double cast for production by a smaller group.

Staging is fairly simple and could be done almost anywhere with few props or set pieces. Production could be accompanied by discussions of the culture, thus becoming an educational tool for understanding the Jewish people. —C. Bartlett


*Thirteen Bells of Boglewood* is a play about fairies and their desires and efforts to protect their gold from leaving the forest. Two humans, Brian and Smith, have discovered a book that tells them how to steal the fairies' gold and how to avoid being trapped in the fairies' spells. Brian, a teenager, becomes aware of the fairies' need for the gold and tries to stop Smith from stealing it. The Bogle is an extremely greedy creature who, for his own gain, helps Smith steal the gold.

It is a rather interesting and fantastical play that not only deals with fairy tales but points out how greed can destroy your life. Honesty and integrity also play a big part in the story as Brian realizes that the fairies need the gold for survival so he must do everything he can to stop Smith from getting the gold. After I got through the exposition of this play, I really enjoyed it and became enthralled with the magic of the story. The characters are likable, and even Smith and the Bogle are characters that we can all relate to at one time or another.

This play could be performed by high school students as well as by adult actors, and audiences of all ages would enjoy it. I wouldn't recommend the play for touring because it could become technically elaborate and would be played better in a fixed facility.

—Erin Caldwell

*Darius the Dragon* is a farcical piece about a dragon who is unearthed by a bulldozer. He leads a group of young people on a crusade to save their park (and his home) from being turned into a parking lot. Darius acts as mediator between the kids and the city officials in resolving the conflict. He exacts promises from both sides to cooperate in maintaining the park, vowing to return occasionally to check up on them.

The moral is rather obvious, with a very simple story line, but it can be fun. Staging can be versatile and mobile, with easy adaptations for handicapped players. —C. Bartlett


In *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*, William Boot of Toecap Cottage inherits Talleyho Lodge of London. His cousin, Montmorency de Vere Boot, rides down to the country in a lorry to take William to his new inheritance. Montmorency is frightened of country sounds, owls, and dislikes country food. He can't wait to introduce William to a posh life in an elegant house in London. This new home for William contains a cat and two escaped pet mice, Miss Silver and Miss Snowy. When Miss Silver meets William, she is determined to make his stay in town as difficult as possible, but William, after many adventures, ends up rescuing her.

Vicky Ireland has taken an old tale and, with clever dialogue, made it into a play that moves quickly and is well written. The staging is somewhat simplistic and unimaginative, however; directors may want to develop a more complex set that would add variety to the production. It could be played by either adults or children, for kindergarten through second-grade audiences. —Gayanne Ramsden