



Thirteen Hands And Other Plays

Carol Shields

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With a Foreword by the Author

“Before becoming a playwright I was a novelist, and one who was often impatient with the requisite description of weather or scenery or even with the business of moving people from room to room. I was more interested in the sound of people talking to each other, reacting to each other, or leaving silences for others to fall into.” -- Carol Shields

From one of Canada’s most beloved authors comes a collection of four works written for the stage, including her most popular and highly acclaimed play *Thirteen Hands*.

The theatrical form allows Carol Shields’ strength as a master of dialogue to shine at its brightest, as she returns to themes she explores in her prose: love, family, friendship, and the hidden meanings and larger truths found beneath the surface of the minutiae of daily life. **Thirteen Hands and Other Plays** is an exhilarating introduction to Shields’ considerable achievements as a playwright.

Departures and Arrivals (1990) dramatizes how lives are heightened and enlarged when taken within the frame of public spaces -- airports, train stations, public streets -- so that we all become, in a sense, actors. *Thirteen Hands* (1993), a musical, valorizes a consistently overlooked group in our society, “the blue-rinse set” -- also known as “the white glove brigade” or “the bridge club biddies” -- and has had the strongest professional run of all Shields’ plays. *Fashion, Power, Guilt and the Charity of Families* (1995), written with her daughter, Catherine Shields, interrogates the ambivalence felt towards families, the drive we all share to find or create some kind of family, and the equally strong desire to escape the family’s fury. *Anniversary* (1998), written with Dave Williamson, is a domestic drama of discontented, middle class suburbanites. One couple in the play are married and pretending to be close to separation. Another couple, who are separated, are pretending to be married. The additional irony is that the separated couple are still emotionally together, while the married couple have already emotionally separated.

From the Trade Paperback edition.

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Frances Williamson:

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Dewayne Campbell:

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Karl Henderson:

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