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The Misanthrope, Tartuffe, And Other Plays (Oxford World's Classics)



Synopsis

This unique volume brings together four of Molière's greatest verse comedies covering the best years of his prolific writing career. Actor, director, and playwright, Molière (1622-73) was one of the finest and most influential French dramatists, adept at portraying human foibles and puncturing pomposity. *The School for Wives* was his first great success; *Tartuffe*, condemned and banned for five years, his most controversial play. *The Misanthrope* is his acknowledged masterpiece, and *The Clever Women* his last, and perhaps best-constructed, verse piece. In addition this collection includes a spirited attack on his enemies and a defense of his theater, in the form of two sparkling short plays, *The School for Wives Criticized* and *The Impromptu at Versailles*. About the Series: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the broadest spectrum of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, voluminous notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.

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Customer Reviews

Slater has an extraordinary gift for translating French into English. She manages to carry over the wit and verve of the original without leaving the original behind. While retaining the rhyme scheme, Slater manages to give the verse a contemporary, modern feel. Go to "look inside" and read her on

"note on translation," pp. xxiv-xxv. You can scroll back from first pages until you get to it. You'll see what I mean.

Translation is always a dodgy business. Translating verse is even trickier. Translating rhyming verse seems to beg the impossible. And yet Maya Slater has done itâ "and done so with beautiful results. Slater produces a remarkably faithful rendition in English of Molière's rhyming Alexandrine couplets written in French. These justly famous plays are a joy to read, and readers will be left in awe not only of the great dramatist's skills but of Slater's own stunning accomplishment.

The author of this collection of comedy died on stage. Yet there are legends who doubt the existence of this character and say he was a senior official of the court or the king himself. They base their claim on the fact that in these comedies the author makes fun of everything about the court of the powerful King Louis XIV, the Sun King, the most powerful in the world at that time. And Louis XIV not only allowed this criticism disguised as satire but attending them. Go figure. The truth is that if you are an entertaining story even to this day and his works are still represented. It mocks everything, not just what the court of the king but of society in general. Interesting.

Tartuffe is a famous play written by Moliere in the 17th century, under the reign of Luis XIV. It is about the guy, Tartuffe, who is seemingly a very humble man devoted to the church, but in fact has completely different plans and ideas. He meets Orgon, a rich noble man, at a church, and impresses him so much, that Orgon promises him his daughter's hand as well as the whole household. The rest of the Orgon's family realizes very fast that Tartuffe is a hypocrite, but they cannot oppose Orgon because in that period of time no one was going against the "King" of a family. The only person, who is openly opposing Orgon and trying to convince him that he is wrong about Tartuffe, is Dorine the maid, who brings the fresh air of the working class people of pre-revolutionary France in this noble family with a strict order. Eventually, Orgon finds out that he has been "dragged by the nose" after he witnesses how Tartuffe tried to seduce his wife. After I read this play I realized why the name Tartuffe became a synonym for hypocrisy. There have always been people who passionately preach something that they don't strongly believe in. The play vividly describes those types of individuals, and shows a paradigm for that kind of behavior.

This translation and moliere skillful control of verse makes the play highly readable to the modern reader. Love how the notes are asterisked so you can easily return back to the text after reading it.

One of the best translations of a very funny set of plays. Our French Professor says it is a very good translation, and the rhyme is sublime.

"Tartuffe" is a play written by Moliere in 17th Century France. It begins with the family of Orgon, a rich nobleman, who is being deceived by Tartuffe, a fake "Man of God". Tartuffe himself is not actually introduced until in middle of the play, which I think, gives an affect of making the audience wait in anticipation for the main character. Orgon is completely fooled by Tartuffe's ways and will not believe any ill words about him. So much so, that Orgon plans on giving his daughters hand in marriage to Tartuffe, while Tartuffe makes advances on Orgons wife, and Orgon will not believe it. The rest of the family sees right through this bogus Tartuffe, but for most of the play Orgon will not accept it. Finally, Orgons wife is able to set up a trap in which Tartuffe was caught in the act. Tartuffe already had the rights to all of Orgons property signed over to him, through his deceit, but when Tartuffe went to the king, the king saw right through him, and the play ends happily. The play does end happily, while showing the king in a good light, which was the proper thing to do during that time period. However, because of it's criticism to the Catholic church, the play was actually banned on more than one occasion. The devout people of the Catholic church felt that Tartuffe was showing them in a bad light, because that is what Tartuffe was posing as.

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