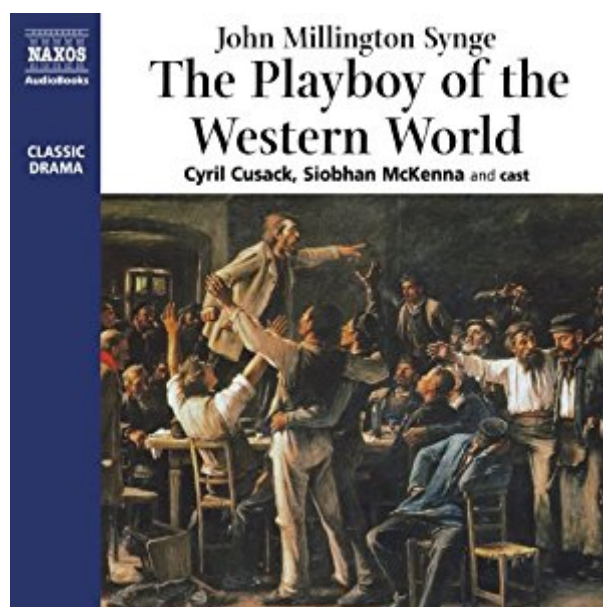


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The Playboy Of The Western World



Synopsis

This large print title is set in Tiresias 16pt font as recommended by the RNIB. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 1 hour and 28 minutes

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Customer Reviews

When this play was produced for the first time in 1907 at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, the Irish Independent noted that "a mob of howling devils" rioted at the end of Act I because Synge had used the word "shift," meaning "petticoat." The rioting continued on successive nights for a week, because the focus of the action is Christy Mahon, a fugitive, who ironically gains the adulation of a small village because he claims to have killed his father. Every newspaper in Dublin abhorred the play and the Dublin Evening Mail was appalled at its "libeling" of "the saintly Irish peasant." (Quotations from newspapers of the day are widely available and are a fascinating commentary on the period.) Today, a hundred years later, the play is not dated, feeling completely fresh and completely modern. Our on-going fascination with misdeeds and miscreants appears to be so universal that this wryly satiric play is now regarded as Synge's comic masterpiece. The plot is well known by now. Christy Mahon arrives at a small country inn in a panic, believing that the peelers are tracking him for the murder of his father. The locals at the inn's bar, instead of being horrified by his actions, admire his courage in taking on his father, and give the meek and timid Christy a feeling of accomplishment that he has never had at home. Pegeen Mike, daughter of the owner, hires him to work at the inn, where he becomes the focus of the town's women, both young and old, as he tells, again and again, the story of his (increasingly brave) fight with his slave-driving father. Christy,

however, has eyes only for Pegeen.

You really lose nothing in going for a used copy of the eleven year old edition, as it is exactly page for page, word for word the same all the way through, and with the same high quality one expects from the Oxford World Classics series. Only the cover design is altered, but with the same painting in detail from Sean Keating's Dun Aengus. Most lamentably and most cruelly and most incomprehensibly, this series remains entitled not only Oxford World's Classics, but also Oxford ENGLISH Drama. This is not English Drama, but Irish National Art, written for the Irish National Theatre directed by Mr. WB Yeats himself, with Lady Gregory in the Irish Renaissance of one hundred years ago. Upon these plays the Abbey Theatre thrived, and everyone involved, and all of the audience, all arise as one body to protest this misnomer. This is not English Drama; 'tis Irish through and through. This slander is like including Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney in an anthology of British Poetry. But let that not dissuade you from this book, this National treasure, ably edited by Ann Saddlemyer in 1995. Her learned fourteen page introduction is comprehensive without being wearisome, and provides fully the background of these great plays. The note on the text indicates the plays are drawn from Ms. Saddlemyer's 1968 Oxford University Press edition, which she crafted from a close examination of every available draft and worksheet. In the present edition (originally of 1995) she adds Explanatory Notes based most notably on Nicholas Grene's study of an Abbey Theatre promptbook and typescript presented in his 1982 CUA edition of the Synge play Well of the Saints, as well as other sources.

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