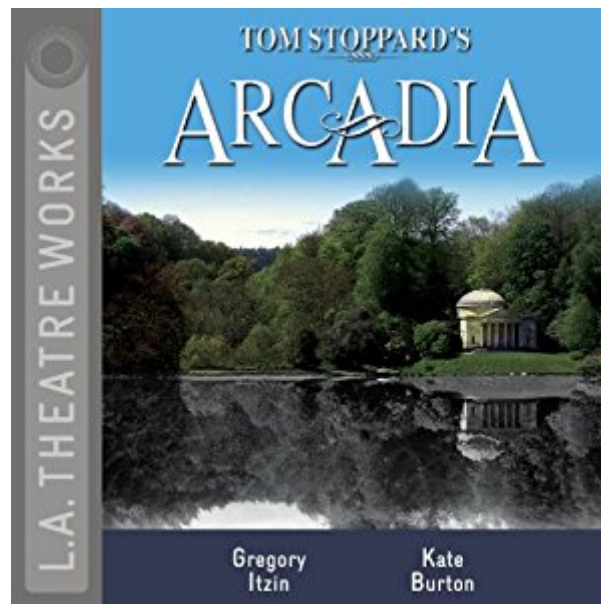


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# Arcadia



## Synopsis

Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia* merges science with human concerns and ideals, examining the universes influence in our everyday lives and ultimate fates through relationship between past and present, order and disorder and the certainty of knowledge. Set in an English country house in the year 1809-1812 and 1989, the play examines the lives of two modern scholars and the house's current residents with the lives of those who lived there 180 years earlier. A L.A. Theatre Works full-cast performance featuring: Kate Burton, Mark Capri, Jennifer Dundas, Gregory Itzin, David Manis, Christopher Neame, Peter Paige, Darren Richardson, Kate Steele, Serena Scott Thomas and Douglas Weston. *Arcadia* is part of L.A. Theatre Works' Relativity Series featuring science themed plays. Major funding for the Relativity Series is provided by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to enhance public understanding of science and technology in the modern world. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I just recently attended a performance of this play by a local theater group. During the intermission, I overheard many people talking about how badly this play was written and how it was completely unrepresentative of Stoppard, and it wasn't even funny at all. I thought about explaining the concept of "thoughtful laughter" to these people, but refrained, because my age is approximately one-third to one-fourth of theirs. I don't agree. I found this play exceedingly entertaining, if I listened only for the puns, jokes, double entendres, and other language manipulations. On a level beyond that, the stories of the characters themselves can be wittily playful one minute and poignantly touching the

next. Deeper still were the philosophical implications of what Stoppard said, how the intellectual and the emotional have to meet (as they did, in one character). Basically, the play is about two groups of people, one in 1809, and one in the present. Those in 1809 are dealing with scandals, schoolwork, and sitting rooms, while those in the present are researching the characters that appear in the other part. It is nice to know a bit about chaos theory, thermodynamics, Lord Byron, and botany (can you recognize a dahlia on sight?) when reading or seeing this play, but it's not necessary. (I.E., if you've read Jurassic Park, that's all you need to know about chaos theory. If you know what a reversible equation is, then you're fine there, and, well, Lord Byron was a English Romantic poet.) The person with whom I attended this play made a very cogent comment about the play: "If you only get one joke in five, then that's enough to think it's funny."

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