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Angels In America: A Gay Fantasia On National Themes: Revised And Complete Edition



Synopsis

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Drama
Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes includes Part One, *Millennium Approaches* and Part Two, *Perestroika*; *Glorious*. A monumental, subversive, altogether remarkable masterwork
Details of specific catastrophes may have changed since this Reagan-era AIDS epic won the Pulitzer and the Tony, but the real cosmic and human obsessions—power, religion, sex, responsibility, the future of the world—are as perilous, yet as falling-down funny, as ever. —Linda Winer, *Newsday* "A vast, miraculous play... provocative, witty and deeply upsetting... a searching and radical rethinking of American political drama." - Frank Rich, *New York Times* "A victory for theater, for the transforming power of the imagination to turn devastation into beauty." - John Lahr, *New Yorker* "An enormously impressive work of the imagination and intellect, a towering example of what theater stretched to its full potential can achieve." —Philadelphia Inquirer "Angels in America is the finest drama of our time, speaking to us of an entire era of life and death as no other play within memory. It ranks as nothing less than one of the greatest plays of the twentieth century." - John Heilpern, *New York Observer* "Some playwrights want to change the world. Some want to revolutionize theater. Tony Kushner is that rarity of rarities: a writer who has the promise to do both." —New York Times
This new edition of Tony Kushner's masterpiece is published with the author's recent changes and a new introduction in celebration of the twentieth anniversary of its original production. One of the most honored American plays in history, *Angels in America* was awarded two Tony Awards for Best Play and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. It was made into an Emmy Award-winning HBO film directed by Mike Nichols. This two-part epic, subtitled "A Gay Fantasia on National Themes," has received hundreds of performances worldwide in more than twenty-six languages. Tony Kushner's plays include *Angels in America*; *Hydriotaphia, or the Death of Dr. Brown*; *The Illusion*, adapted from the play by Pierre Corneille; *Slavs!*; *A Bright Room Called Day*; *Homebody/Kabul*; *Caroline, or Change*, a musical with composer Jeanine Tesori; and *The Intelligent Homosexual's Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures*. He wrote the screenplays for Mike Nichols's film of *Angels in America* and for Steven Spielberg's *Munich* and *Lincoln*. His books include *The Art of Maurice Sendak: 1980 to the Present*; *Brundibar*, with illustrations by Maurice Sendak; and *Wrestling with Zion: Progressive Jewish-American Responses to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, co-edited with Alisa Solomon. Among many honors, Kushner is the recipient of a Pulitzer Prize, two Tony Awards, three Obie Awards, two Evening Standard Awards, an Olivier Award, an Emmy Award, two Oscar nominations, and the Steinberg Distinguished Playwright Award. He is a member of the American

Academy of Arts and Letters. In 2012, he was awarded a National Medal of Arts by President Barack Obama. He lives in Manhattan with his husband, Mark Harris.

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Customer Reviews

Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* is that rare entity: a work for the stage that is profoundly moving yet very funny, highly theatrical yet steeped in traditional literary values, and most of all deeply American in its attitudes and political concerns. In two full-length plays--*Millennium Approaches* and *Perestroika*--Kushner tells the story of a handful of people trying to make sense of the world. Prior is a man living with AIDS whose lover Louis has left him and become involved with Joe, an ex-Mormon and political conservative whose wife, Harper, is slowly having a nervous breakdown. These stories are contrasted with that of Roy Cohn (a fictional re-creation of the infamous American conservative ideologue who died of AIDS in 1986) and his attempts to remain in the closet while trying to find some sort of personal salvation in his beliefs. But such a summary does not do justice to Kushner's grand plan, which mixes magical realism with political speeches, high comedy with painful tragedy, and stitches it all together with a daring sense of irony and a moral vision that demands respect and attention. On one level, the play is an indictment of the government led by Ronald Reagan, from the blatant disregard for the AIDS crisis to the flagrant political corruption. But beneath the acute sense of political and moral outrage lies a meditation on what it means to live and die--of AIDS, or anything else--in a society that cares less and less about human life and basic decency. The play's breadth and internal drive is matched by its beautiful writing and unbridled

compassion. Winner of two Tony Awards and the 1991 Pulitzer Prize for drama, *Angels in America* is one of the most outstanding plays of the American theater. --Michael Bronski --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

“*Angels in America* has proved to be a watershed drama, the most lyrical and ambitious augury of an era since Tennessee Williams’ *The Glass Menagerie*.” —John Lahr, *New Yorker* “A vast, miraculous play... provocative, witty and deeply upsetting... a searching and radical rethinking of American political drama.” —Frank Rich, *New York Times* “Daring and dazzling! The most ambitious American play of our time: an epic that ranges from earth to heaven; focuses on politics, sex, and religion; transports us to Washington, the Kremlin, the South Bronx, Salt Lake City and Antarctica; deals with Jews, Mormons, WASPs, blacks; switches between realism and fantasy, from the tragedy of AIDS to the camp comedy of drag queens to the death or at least absconding of God.” —Jack Kroll, *Newsweek* “Few plays have captured the spirit of an age more powerfully than *Angels in America*; and the passage of time has not clipped *Angels*’ wings.” —Paul Taylor, *Independent (London)* “Something rare, dangerous, and harrowing; a roman candle hurled into a drawing room.” —Nicholas de Jongh, *London Evening Standard* “*Angels* breaks all the rules to achieve the astonishing integrity of its vision; it is a play that has remained utterly of-the-moment.” —Jeremy Gerard, *Bloomberg* “The most influential American play of the last two decades.” —Patrick Healy, *New York Times* “That *Angels* came so close to the burning heart of the Zeitgeist left Kushner fearing he would never get there again. But in fact he has been there so often that he seems to have passed right through it; *Angels*, so much a cry in the dark about AIDS when it was written, seems now to be as much about the Earth’s potentially fatal illness as gay men’s.” —Jesse Green, *New York* “The greatest American play of the waning years of the twentieth century.” —Chris Jones, *Chicago Tribune*

This is one of my favorite plays of all time. All of the characters are as memorable as they are distinct, and you truly feel yourself become immersed in the storyline. Heck, I read the whole 7 hour play in 1 afternoon. I just couldn’t put it down! Kushner’s author’s notes are well worth reading as well, as I found them to be very interesting and it helped to put the setting of the play into perspective. With its perfect balance of humor, fantasy, and hard-hitting drama, it is definitely a

must-read for anyone, regardless of their interest in theatre.

One of the top 3 gay and AIDS related films of all time... The roster of star power is unmatched, really, while the direction by Mike Nichols is stellar! Al Pacino has, in my opinion, delivered the absolute best performance of his career while filming this made-for-TV (HBO) film, while Meryl Streep and Emma Thompson have outdone themselves as they each play 3-4 different roles in the same movie... Of outstanding quality was also Patrick Wilson's performance who masterfully managed to walk the line mixing good looks with brilliant acting... Of course, all this cinematic marvel would have never taken place if it hadn't been for Tony Kushner's brilliant script! This film, projected in two parts, is a must-see for everyone out there... Especially since it is somewhat based on real events and characters...

Kushner's play, more than being one of the great jewels of American drama, succeeds at achieving the great promise and potential of drama as a genre, to become a sacrament of empathy, an experience of cathartic compassion. The distinction between art for art's sake and its social purpose, as well as the false dichotomy of truth and beauty, are subsumed in the fires of emotional and intellectual passion of this "play."

One of the great American plays (well, two unless you take it as a whole). I don't think I've read anything as broad in its vision and as well written as *Angels in America*. Go out of your way to read this!

After watching the *Angels in America* DVD, I wanted to see how it was originally as a play, and it does not disappoint. In many ways, I think it's a better experience reading this play than it was to see it on my tiny television. *Angels in America* is essentially a theatrical work, and the miniseries came off just as that, a filmed stage play, especially in Part 1: *Millennium Approaches*, so that it seemed really static, even with, if not because of, Mike Nichols' direction. It was, on the other hand, tremendously faithful to the play script. As far as I could tell, not a word was changed. Part 2: *Perestroika*, however, had a few changes from the script to screen, and those changes worked well, making the filmed version far more dynamic than Part 1. There's some additional backstory that got dropped in the translation, but the spirit is very much the same. Ultimately, I recommend that you watch the DVD to get an idea of the characters' mannerisms and the staging, then read the script to fully appreciate the poetry of Tony Kushner's language. Buy it and love it!

This is a brilliant play. I had only ever seen the HBO miniseries before, but this is the full play as it originally was produced on the stage. You get so much more of the story out of this version, although the miniseries is still great. If you are looking for a play that deals with the problems of the HIV/AIDS epidemic without turning to *Rent*, this is a great option. Truly a masterpiece of theater. I am using this in my Women and Religion class for a paper I am writing discussing the popular images of Mormon women, particularly Harper, Hannah, and the Mormon Mother.

Got for class, an important read.

The use of queer and religious themes to theorize America, or at the very least, say something about the country, is compelling and dramatic. Sometimes the play gets lost in itself, and it falters for it, but otherwise it's very good, even if it's long.

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