

the shape of things play

the shape of things play is a compelling contemporary drama written by Neil LaBute that has captivated audiences and critics alike with its exploration of art, relationships, and the boundaries of human behavior. This article provides a comprehensive overview of the play, examining its plot, major themes, characters, critical reception, and cultural impact. Readers will discover how “the shape of things play” challenges conventional ideas about morality, identity, and the power dynamics inherent in romantic and artistic pursuits. Additionally, the article offers insights into the playwright’s intentions, production history, and the reasons why this thought-provoking work continues to resonate with theatergoers. Whether you are a student, theater enthusiast, or simply curious about modern plays, this guide will equip you with everything you need to know about “the shape of things play.” Read on to explore its intricacies and significance in contemporary theater.

- Overview and Background of the Shape of Things Play
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Overview and Background of the Shape of Things Play

Neil LaBute’s **the shape of things play** premiered in 2001 and quickly established itself as a provocative work in modern theater. Renowned for his exploration of uncomfortable truths and social taboos, LaBute uses this play to examine the intersection of art and personal relationships. Set in a small Midwestern university, the play’s intimate environment amplifies its psychological tension and themes.

The title itself alludes to the transformative nature of both art and human connection, suggesting that the “shape” of things can be molded, changed, and redefined. LaBute’s direct, minimalist style allows the audience to focus on dialogue and character development, making each interaction crucial to the unfolding narrative. The play is notable for its sharp wit, emotional intensity, and the controversial questions it raises about ethics and manipulation.

Plot Summary

At the heart of **the shape of things play** is the story of Adam, a shy and awkward university student, whose life takes a radical turn after he meets Evelyn, a graduate art student. Their meeting sparks a relationship that becomes the catalyst for dramatic changes in Adam's appearance, confidence, and worldview.

Evelyn encourages Adam to transform himself, urging him to lose weight, change his hairstyle, and alter his wardrobe. As Adam's metamorphosis unfolds, his friends Jenny and Philip become increasingly concerned about the extent of Evelyn's influence. The tension escalates as their friendships are tested, culminating in a shocking revelation: Evelyn's relationship with Adam was, in fact, an art project intended to push the boundaries of artistic expression and ethical conduct.

The play concludes with Evelyn's public presentation, where she unveils Adam's transformation as the centerpiece of her thesis, leaving the characters—and the audience—grappling with the implications of her experiment.

Major Themes in the Shape of Things Play

Art and Morality

One of the central themes of **the shape of things play** is the conflict between artistic freedom and moral responsibility. Evelyn's use of Adam as a living canvas raises questions about the ethical limits of art and whether creativity justifies emotional manipulation. The play invites viewers to consider the consequences when art intrudes on real lives, blurring the lines between creation and exploitation.

Transformation and Identity

Adam's journey through self-improvement and reinvention highlights the fluidity of identity. The play examines how external influences—be they romantic partners or societal expectations—can shape an individual's sense of self. LaBute cleverly interrogates whether these changes are empowering or destructive, and whether our authentic selves can survive the pressures of transformation.

Power Dynamics in Relationships

The relationship between Adam and Evelyn serves as a case study in power imbalance. Evelyn's dominance and manipulation expose the vulnerabilities inherent in romantic and interpersonal connections. The play scrutinizes how trust can be exploited for personal or artistic gain, prompting audiences to reflect on the nature of consent and agency in their own relationships.

Truth and Deception

Deception is a recurring motif throughout **the shape of things play**. Characters grapple with lies, half-truths, and the hidden motives that drive their actions. The final act's revelation forces the audience to reconsider everything that preceded it, emphasizing the profound impact that dishonesty can have on both individuals and communities.

- Art versus Ethics
- Physical and emotional transformation
- Relationship power struggles
- The consequences of deception

Key Characters and Relationships

Adam

Adam is portrayed as an everyman—introverted, insecure, and eager to please. His transformation is central to the play's narrative, serving as both a literal and metaphorical exploration of change. Adam's vulnerability makes him susceptible to Evelyn's influence, and his arc raises questions about self-worth and autonomy.

Evelyn

Evelyn is a charismatic and enigmatic graduate student whose passion for art drives the play's conflict. Her manipulative tendencies and intellectual prowess make her a fascinating antagonist. Evelyn's actions challenge conventional ideas about artistic license and ethical boundaries, positioning her as both creator and destroyer.

Jenny and Philip

Jenny and Philip, Adam's friends, provide a counterbalance to the central relationship. Jenny's empathy and concern highlight the emotional toll of Adam's transformation, while Philip's skepticism brings tension and realism to the group dynamic. Their interactions with Adam and Evelyn deepen the play's exploration of friendship, loyalty, and betrayal.

1. Adam: The protagonist, whose transformation is at the core of the play

2. Evelyn: The artist, whose project challenges ethical norms
3. Jenny: Adam's friend, representing empathy and caution
4. Philip: Adam's friend, embodying skepticism and realism

Production History and Adaptations

Since its debut, **the shape of things play** has been produced by numerous theater companies worldwide. Its compact cast and minimal set requirements make it ideal for both professional and amateur productions. The play's provocative subject matter has inspired lively post-show discussions and critical essays, further cementing its place in modern theater repertoire.

In 2003, Neil LaBute adapted the play into a feature film, retaining the original cast and much of the stage dialogue. The film brought the play's themes to a broader audience and preserved its intimate, character-driven storytelling. The success of both stage and screen versions underscores the enduring relevance of the play's exploration of human nature and artistic ambition.

Over the years, "the shape of things play" has been translated into multiple languages and performed in diverse cultural contexts, each production offering a unique perspective on its central questions.

Cultural Impact and Critical Reception

Upon its premiere, **the shape of things play** generated significant discussion in the theater community, praised for its incisive dialogue and bold thematic content. Critics lauded Neil LaBute's willingness to tackle uncomfortable subjects, while audiences were divided over Evelyn's motivations and the ethics of her art project.

The play's influence extends beyond the stage, inspiring debates about contemporary art, personal transformation, and the responsibilities of creators toward their subjects. Its legacy endures through academic analysis, theater workshops, and ongoing performances. The film adaptation further broadened its cultural footprint, attracting viewers who might not otherwise engage with stage plays.

"The shape of things play" continues to be referenced in discussions about modern dramaturgy, ethics in art, and the psychological complexities of human relationships, proving its lasting importance in the canon of contemporary theater.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the main plot of the shape of things play?

A: The play follows Adam, a university student who becomes romantically involved with Evelyn, an art student. Evelyn encourages Adam to change his appearance and behavior, ultimately revealing that their relationship was part of her art project exploring transformation and manipulation.

Q: Who wrote the shape of things play?

A: Neil LaBute is the playwright of the shape of things play. He is known for his provocative works that examine complex human relationships and ethical dilemmas.

Q: What are the major themes in the shape of things play?

A: The play explores themes such as art versus ethics, power dynamics in relationships, personal transformation, and the consequences of deception.

Q: How does Evelyn manipulate Adam in the play?

A: Evelyn encourages Adam to make significant changes to his physical appearance and lifestyle, all while documenting his transformation as part of her secret art project.

Q: Is the shape of things play based on a true story?

A: No, the play is a work of fiction created by Neil LaBute, although it draws inspiration from real-life issues related to art, identity, and interpersonal dynamics.

Q: Has the shape of things play been adapted into a film?

A: Yes, Neil LaBute adapted the play into a film in 2003, featuring the original stage cast and closely following the dialogue and plot of the play.

Q: What makes the shape of things play controversial?

A: The play's controversial nature stems from its exploration of manipulation, ethical boundaries in art, and the emotional impact of deception within relationships.

Q: What is the significance of the title, "the shape of things"?

A: The title refers to the ways in which people, relationships, and artistic creations can be shaped, molded, and transformed—often raising questions about authenticity and intent.

Q: Where has the shape of things play been performed?

A: The play has been staged internationally, including major theater hubs in the United States, United

Kingdom, and other countries, in both professional and amateur productions.

Q: How does the shape of things play challenge viewers?

A: By presenting uncomfortable truths about manipulation, identity, and morality, the play encourages viewers to question their assumptions and reflect on the ethical dimensions of art and relationships.

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The Shape of Things Play: Exploring the Power of Form and Function

Introduction:

Have you ever noticed how the shape of an object can dramatically influence its function and even our emotional response to it? From the ergonomic design of a chair to the sleek lines of a sports car, "the shape of things" plays a crucial role in our daily lives. This post delves into the fascinating world of form and function, exploring how design choices impact everything from usability and aesthetics to cultural significance and even psychological impact. We'll examine various examples across different fields, highlighting the subtle yet powerful influence of shape. Prepare to see the world – and the objects within it – in a whole new light.

The Impact of Shape on Usability and Ergonomics

H2: Understanding Ergonomics and Design:

Ergonomics is the science of designing workplaces, products, and systems to fit the people who use them. A key element of good ergonomic design is considering the shape of the object. For example, a well-designed chair needs to support the natural curves of the spine, preventing discomfort and potential long-term health issues. The shape of the chair's backrest, seat, and armrests are all carefully considered to optimize comfort and efficiency.

H3: Examples of Ergonomic Design:

Think about the difference between a poorly designed, rigid plastic chair and an ergonomic office chair with lumbar support and adjustable features. The shape directly impacts the user experience. Similarly, the shape of a keyboard or mouse can dramatically affect typing speed and comfort, reducing the risk of repetitive strain injuries.

The Aesthetics of Shape: Beauty and Perception

H2: The Psychology of Shape and Form:

Beyond functionality, the shape of an object significantly impacts its aesthetic appeal. Certain shapes evoke specific emotions and associations. For example, sharp angles might suggest power and aggression, while soft curves often convey elegance and serenity. This connection between shape and emotion is deeply rooted in our psychology.

H3: Cultural Significance of Shapes:

Different cultures attach unique meanings to various shapes. Circles can symbolize wholeness and infinity, while triangles often represent stability and strength. Understanding these cultural associations is crucial for designers who aim to create objects that resonate with specific audiences. Misinterpretations can lead to unexpected and even negative reactions.

Shape and Innovation: Pushing the Boundaries of Design

H2: The Role of Shape in Technological Advancement:

The shape of an object is often intrinsically linked to its function, particularly in technological advancements. Consider the aerodynamic design of airplanes, which is crucial for efficiency and speed. The shape minimizes drag and maximizes lift, allowing for faster and more fuel-efficient travel. Similarly, the shape of a car's body impacts its fuel economy and performance.

H3: Shape in Sustainable Design:

In today's world, sustainable design is paramount. Shape plays a critical role in minimizing material waste and optimizing resource utilization. Innovative designs often incorporate shapes that maximize space efficiency and reduce the overall environmental impact of the product.

The Shape of Things Play: A Case Study

H2: Analyzing a Specific Example:

Let's take a look at the humble bottle. The shape of a water bottle, for instance, can influence its portability, durability, and even how much liquid it can hold. A sleek, cylindrical bottle might be easy to grip but may not be as durable as a more robust, square-shaped container. Different shapes optimize for different needs and preferences, demonstrating the vital interplay of form and function.

Conclusion:

The shape of things isn't merely an aesthetic consideration; it's a powerful force that shapes our interactions with the world. From the ergonomic design of tools to the emotional impact of art, form and function are inextricably linked. Understanding the subtle interplay of shape, functionality, and cultural significance allows us to appreciate the design choices around us and contributes to creating more user-friendly, aesthetically pleasing, and ultimately, better products.

FAQs:

1. How does shape influence marketing and branding? Shape plays a significant role in branding by contributing to a product's overall visual identity. A unique or memorable shape can increase brand recognition and memorability.
2. Can shape impact a product's price? Yes, the complexity and precision required to manufacture certain shapes can impact production costs, which in turn can affect the final price of a product.
3. Are there any universal principles of shape and design? While cultural nuances exist, some principles like symmetry and balance tend to be universally appreciated, suggesting an inherent human preference for certain shapes.
4. How can I learn more about shape and design? Explore resources on ergonomics, industrial design, and visual arts. Many online courses and books delve into the principles of form and function.
5. What's the future of shape in design? Future trends likely include greater integration of technology, personalized designs based on individual needs and preferences, and a stronger focus on sustainable and ethical design practices.

the shape of things play: The Shape of Things Neil LaBute, 2001-11-15 How far would you go for love? For art? What would you be willing to change? Which price might you pay? Such are the painful questions explored by Neil LaBute in *The Shape of Things*. A young student drifts into an ever-changing relationship with an art major while his best friends' engagement crumbles, so unleashing a drama that peels back the skin of two modern-day relationships, exposing the raw meat and gristle that lie beneath. The world premi re of *The Shape of Things* was presented at the Almeida, London, in May 2001.

the shape of things play: *The Shape of Us* Lisa Ireland, 2017-03-28 A wonderful story, full of emotional depth and heart. Rachael Johns *FOUR DIFFERENT WOMEN. THE SAME BIG PROBLEM. ONE MAGICAL SOLUTION?* Mezz is overweight and overworked: she's convinced it's only a matter of time until her husband starts to stray. Jewels is fat and fabulous, but if she wants the baby she craves, the Tim Tams have to go. Ellie's life looks perfect to her London friends on Facebook: she keeps her waistline out of the photos and her loneliness to herself. Kat will do anything to keep her daughter Ami happy and safe. If she can just lose that baby weight, she's sure Ami's dad will stick around. In this heartwarming, heartbreaking story, four women who meet online in a weight loss forum learn that losing weight might not be the key to happiness, but believing in the ones you love - and yourself - just might be. MORE PRAISE FOR THE SHAPE OF US 'Lisa Ireland gets right to the heart of female friendship, exploring topics every woman can relate to.' Rachael Johns, author of *The Art of Keeping Secrets* 'Every so often a book comes along which captures your thoughts so well it could have been written with you in mind. *The Shape of Us* is a thought-provoking and perceptive glance into the lives of women (and men) grappling with confidence and self-image problems and the impact it has on their lives.' Queensland Times 'The Shape of Us is a heart-warming, heart-breaking tale of women's friendship.' Daily Examiner 'Will make you both laugh and cry...Lisa Ireland believes people are worth so much more than numbers on a scale or what clothing they can fit into - and her book shows how important that is.' The Weekly Times 'A highly relatable story on many levels...ultimately, a book about friendship and support.' Beauty & Lace

the shape of things play: *The Shape of Things* Neil LaBute, 2003 In a modern version of Adam's seduction by Eve, this play pits gentle, awkward, overweight Adam against experienced, analytical, amoral Evelyn, a graduate student in art.

the shape of things play: *The Shape of Things to Come* H. G. Wells, 2016-09-14 First published in 1933, *The Shape of Things to Come* is science fiction novel written by H. G. Wells. Within it, world events between 1933 and 2106 are speculated with a single superstate representing the solution to all humanity's problems. A classic example of Wellsian prophesy, this volume is highly recommended for fans of his work and of the science fiction genre. Herbert George Wells (1866 - 1946) was a prolific English writer who wrote in a variety of genres, including the novel, politics, history, and social commentary. Today, he is perhaps best remembered for his contributions to the science fiction genre thanks to such novels as *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Invisible Man* (1897), and *The War of the Worlds* (1898). Many vintage books such as this are becoming increasingly scarce and expensive. We are republishing this book now in an affordable, modern, high-quality edition complete with a specially commissioned new biography of the author.

the shape of things play: *The Shape of Things* Dayle Ann Dodds, 1996 A square is just a square until it becomes a house in this clever book. A circle becomes a spinning ferris wheel, and when some string and a tail are added, it becomes a kite flying high in the sky. With sprightly rhymes and energetic illustrations, this book reveals that shapes are everywhere. Full color.

the shape of things play: *The Shape of Home* Rashin Kheiriyeh, 2021-09-14 It's Rashin's first day of school in America! Everything is a different shape than what she's used to: from the foods on her breakfast plate to the letters in the books! And the kids' families are from all over! The new teacher asks each child to imagine the shape of home on a map. Rashin knows right away what she'll say: Iran looks like a cat! What will the other kids say? What about the country YOUR family is originally from? Is it shaped like an apple? A boot? A torch? Open this book to join Rashin in discovering the true things that shape a place called home.

the shape of things play: *Shape of Things* Vilém Flusser, 2013-06-01 This book presents for the first time in English an array of essays on design by the seminal media critic and philosopher Vilém Flusser. It puts forward the view that our future depends on design. In a series of insightful essays on such ordinary things as wheels, carpets, pots, umbrellas and tents, Flusser emphasizes the interrelationships between art and science, theology and technology, and archaeology and architecture. Just as formal creativity has produced both weapons of destruction and great works of art, Flusser believed that the shape of things (and the designs behind them) represents both a threat

and an opportunity for designers of the future.

the shape of things play: Your Friends and Neighbors Neil LaBute, 1998-10-30 Your Friends & Neighbors is a searing display of the war between the sexes, delivered with the kind of wit used by the great Restoration playwrights to expose the hypocrisies in male/female relationships. Neil Labute's debut feature, in the company of men, was described by Variety as a dark, probing, truly disturbing exploration of yuppie angst and male anxieties. In Your Friends & Neighbors, male anxiety is again on show, but in a much wider context, revealing the rabid desire of people-regardless of sex- to serve their own interests at any cost.

the shape of things play: The Shape of Thunder Jasmine Warga, 2021-05-11 An extraordinary new novel from Jasmine Warga, Newbery Honor-winning author of Other Words for Home, about loss and healing—and how friendship can be magical. Cora hasn't spoken to her best friend, Quinn, in a year. Despite living next door to each other, they exist in separate worlds of grief. Cora is still grappling with the death of her beloved sister in a school shooting, and Quinn is carrying the guilt of what her brother did. On the day of Cora's twelfth birthday, Quinn leaves a box on her doorstep with a note. She has decided that the only way to fix things is to go back in time to the moment before her brother changed all their lives forever—and stop him. In spite of herself, Cora wants to believe. And so the two former friends begin working together to open a wormhole in the fabric of the universe. But as they attempt to unravel the mysteries of time travel to save their siblings, they learn that the magic of their friendship may actually be the key to saving themselves. The Shape of Thunder is a deeply moving story, told with exceptional grace, about friendship and loss—and how believing in impossible things can help us heal.

the shape of things play: The Shape of My Heart Mark Sperring, 2013-01-17 The world is filled with shapes. A bird, a car, the stars in the sky - what shapes can you see? Children will love spotting familiar shapes on every page. With bright illustrations and a heartwarming message about the shape of something very special - love. Brilliantly read by Katy Ashworth. Please note that audio is not supported by all devices, please consult your user manual for confirmation.

the shape of things play: The Shape of Content Ben Shahn, 1957 A modern painter discusses meaning and form in contemporary painting and offers advice to aspiring artists.--

the shape of things play: The Lieutenant of Inishmore Martin McDonagh, 2003 A family is the subject of THE ARCHITECTURE OF LOSS, Ms. Cho's touching new play...[The] scenes are very strong; they run deep. --NY Times. ...THE ARCHITECTURE OF LOSS is the kind of play one wishes there were more of: totally unpretentious, of the utmost s

the shape of things play: The Shape of the Pain Chris Thorpe, Rachel Bagshaw, 2018-02-20 One woman attempts to articulate her experience of physical pain. Pain with no apparent cause. Also, she's met someone, and they want to make this work. Words, light and an original sound score collide in a new piece from this Scotsman Fringe First award-winning team - exploring life in extremity, and the joy that can be found there.

the shape of things play: The Shape of Craft Ezra Shales, 2017-10-15 Today when we hear the word "craft," a whole host of things come immediately to mind: microbreweries, artisanal cheeses, and an array of handmade objects. Craft has become so overused, that it can grate on our ears as pretentious and strain our credulity. But its overuse also reveals just how compelling craft has become in modern life. In The Shape of Craft, Ezra Shales explores some of the key questions of craft: who makes it, what do we mean when we think about a crafted object, where and when crafted objects are made, and what this all means to our understanding of craft. He argues that, beyond the clichés, craft still adds texture to sterile modern homes and it provides many people with a livelihood, not just a hobby. Along the way, Shales upends our definition of what is handcrafted or authentic, revealing the contradictions in our expectations of craft. Craft is—and isn't—what we think.

the shape of things play: The Shape of Design Frank Chimero, 2012

the shape of things play: Shape of a Boy Kate Wickers, 2022-04-05 Shape of a Boy is a hilarious memoir of one family's travels across the world, filled with funny anecdotes from exotic

locations.

the shape of things play: The Mercy Seat Neil LaBute, 2016-10-18 Set on September 12, 2001, THE MERCY SEAT continues Neil LaBute's unflinching fascination with the often-brutal realities of the war between the sexes. In a time of national tragedy, the world changes overnight. A man and a woman explore the choices now available to them in an existence different from the one they had lived just the day before. Can one be opportunistic in a time of universal selflessness? There is no playwright on the planet these days who is writing better than Neil LaBute ... THE MERCY SEAT is ... the work of a master. --John Lahr, The New Yorker An intelligent and thought-provoking drama that casts a less-than-glowing light on man's dark side in the face of disaster ... The play's energy lies in LaBute's trademark scathing dialogue. --Robert Dominguez, Daily News Though set in the cold, gray light of morning in a downtown loft with inescapable views of the vacuum left by the twin towers, THE MERCY SEAT really occurs in one of those feverish nights of the soul in which men and women lock in vicious sexual combat, as in Strindberg's DANCE OF DEATH and Edward Albee's WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF? --Ben Brantley, The New York Times [A] powerful drama ... LaBute shows a true master's hand in gliding us amid the shoals and reefs of a mined relationship. --Donald Lyons, New York Post Uncomfortable yet fascinating ... THE MERCY SEAT makes for provocative theater -- sharp, compelling and more than a little chilling. --Michael Kuchwara, Newsday LaBute's intriguing [new play] is most compelling when it is daring to look into [a] character's heart to explore the way self-interest, given the opportunity, can swamp all our nobler instincts. --Charles Isherwood, Variety In THE MERCY SEAT ... LaBute has given us his most compelling portrait of male inner turmoil. --Brendan Lemon, Financial Times LaBute [is] the dark shining star of stage and film morality. --Linda Winer, Newsday Sharply funny and incisive SEAT is not a response to September 11, but a response to the response to September 11 -- an emotionally jarring consideration of the self-serving exploitation of tragedy for personal gain ... Perhaps it's time we stop thinking of LaBute as a mere provocateur, a label that condescends to an artist of grand ambition and a nimble facility with language. With this gripping ... new drama, he probes deeper than he ever has before. --Jason Zinoman, Time Out New York A nihilistic yet brutally honest work ... As complex and unfathomable as human motivations ... THE MERCY SEAT is haunting. --David A. Rosenberg, Backstage LaBute risks offending contemporary sensibilities by using a historic tragedy as his turning point for a drama regarding a morally empty American ... [THE MERCY SEAT is] controversial and compelling. --Michael Sommers, The Star-Ledger LaBute ... is holding up a pitiless mirror to ourselves. We may not like what we see, but we can't deny that -- if only in some dark corner of our soul -- it is there. --Jacques le Sourd, The Journal News

the shape of things play: The Way We Get By Neil LaBute, 2017-03-16 Meet Beth and Doug, two people who have no problems getting dates with their partners of choice. After a drunken party and a hot night, they wake up to a blurry morning where the rules of attraction, sex, and society are waiting for them before their first cup of coffee. It's very awkward—and it also leads the pair to ponder how much they really know about each other, and how much they really care about what other people think. THE WAY WE GET BY is a play about love and lust and the whole damn thing.

the shape of things play: The Shape of Sound Fiona Murphy, 2021-03-30 A vivid and essential memoir of deafness, disability and identity by Australian writer Fiona Murphy

the shape of things play: Reasons to Be Pretty Neil LaBute, 2011-11-15 Greg is overheard admitting that his girlfriend Steph is no beauty, but that he wouldn't change her for the world. She is devastated; he can't see what he's done wrong. Meanwhile, Greg's friend Kent alternates between boasting about how gorgeous his wife Carly is and chasing after a hot new colleague. The final part of Neil LaBute's 'beauty trilogy' (following The Shape of Things and Fat Pig) about society's obsession with looks, Reasons to Be Pretty premiered in the UK at the Almeida Theatre, London, in November 2011. '[The Shape of Things] is LaBute's thesis on extreme feminine wiles, as well as a disquisition on how far an artist can go in the name of art . . . Like a chiropractor for the soul, LaBute is looking for realignment, listening for the crack.' Elle 'A heart-warming tale from America's master misanthrope.' Independent on Fat Pig

the shape of things play: *Let Me Hear You Whisper* Paul Zindel, 2012-10-01 From Pulitzer Prize-winning author Paul Zindel comes this touching, humorous, and delightful play that earned wide recognition in its National Educational Television (NET) Network production. The action is set in the laboratory of the American Biological Association Development for the Advancement of Brain Analysis, where curious experiments involving various mammals are taking place. Helen, a newly engaged cleaning lady, is particularly drawn to a dolphin and is shocked when she learns that, having failed to talk as hoped for, it is slated for brain dissection. She makes a desperate attempt to rescue the dolphin from the scientists, incurring first their indignation and then, when the dolphin does indeed talk for Helen, their futile pleas that she change her mind about leaving and stay on to help them in their experiments. But the gentle Helen has had enough—both of Custodial Engineering and of schemes to change man's relationship to the other creatures with whom the world must be shared. Comedy/Drama One Act 5 women (or can be divided between men and women): 5 total Interior

the shape of things play: *In a Forest, Dark and Deep* Neil LaBute, 2016-05-09 She's a college professor with a prim demeanor, and he's a carpenter with a foul mouth and violent streak. Betty has a history of promiscuity that Bobby won't let her forget, and from their first taunting exchanges there are intimations also of the history between them. Yet on the night when Betty urgently needs help to empty her cabin in the woods--the cabin she's been renting to a male student--she calls on Bobby. In this exhilarating play of secrets and sibling rivalry, which had its premiere in London's West End in 2011, Neil LaBute unflinchingly explores the dark territory beyond, as Bobby sneeringly says, the lies you tell yourself to get by.

the shape of things play: *The Break of Noon* Neil LaBute, 2010-10-10 What if God told you to be a better person but the world wouldn't allow it? Such is the dilemma facing Joe Smith, a run-of-the-mill white-collar businessman who survives an office shooting and is subsequently touched by what he believes to be a divine vision. His journey toward personal enlightenment—past greed and lust and the other deadly sins—is, by turns, tense, hilarious, profane, and heartbreaking. Exploring the narrow path to spiritual fulfillment and how strewn it is with the funny, frantic failings of humankind, *The Break of Noon* showcases Neil LaBute at his discomfiting best.

the shape of things play: *Fat Pig* Neil LaBute, 2014-04-30 Cow. Slob. Pig. How many insults can you hear before you have to stand up and defend the woman you love? Tom faces just that question when he falls for Helen, a bright, funny, sexy young woman who happens to be plus-sized and then some. Forced to explain his new relationship to his shallow (although shockingly funny) friends, Tom comes to terms with his own preconceptions of the importance of conventional good looks. Neil LaBute's sharply drawn play not only critiques our slavish adherence to Hollywood ideals of beauty but boldly questions our own ability to change what we dislike about ourselves. The most emotional engaging and unsettling of Mr LaBute's plays since *BASH* ... A serious step forward for a playwright who has always been most comfortable with judgmental distance. -Ben Brantley, *The New York Times* One of Neil LaBute's subtler effort ... Demonstrates a warmth and compassion for its characters missing in many of LaBute's previous works [and] balances black humor and social commentary in ... beautifully written, hilarious ... dissection of how societal pressures affect relationships ... Astute and up-to-the-minute relevant. -Frank Scheck, *New York Post* Will make you squirm in your seat. It's theater without novocain [from] an author with a uniquely truthful voice. -Jacques le Sourd, *The Journal News*

the shape of things play: *The Shape of Me and Other Stuff: Read & Listen Edition* Dr. Seuss, 2013-10-22 Even in silhouette, the fun and fanciful art of Dr. Seuss is instantly recognizable in this Bright and Early Book classic: a bug, a balloon, a bed, a bike. No shapes are ever quite alike. Looking at ordinary shapes is great when seen through the eyes of the remarkable Dr. Seuss, but of course it's the extraordinary shapes that really make an impression. Would you want to be shaped like a BLOGG? Bright and Early Books are perfect for beginning beginner readers! Launched by Dr. Seuss in 1968 with *The Foot Book*, Bright and Early Books use fewer and easier words than Beginner Books. Readers just starting to recognize words and sound out letters will love these short

books with colorful illustrations. This Read & Listen edition contains audio narration.

the shape of things play: In My Heart Jo Witek, 2014-10-14 Celebrate feelings in all their shapes and sizes in this New York Times bestselling picture book from the Growing Hearts series! Happiness, sadness, bravery, anger, shyness . . . our hearts can feel so many feelings! Some make us feel as light as a balloon, others as heavy as an elephant. In My Heart explores a full range of emotions, describing how they feel physically, inside, with language that is lyrical but also direct to empower readers to practice articulating and identifying their own emotions. With whimsical illustrations and an irresistible die-cut heart that extends through each spread, this gorgeously packaged and unique feelings book is sure to become a storytime favorite.

the shape of things play: The Shape of Water Guillermo del Toro, Daniel Kraus, 2018-03-06 The 2018 Academy Award's Best Picture of the Year and New York Times-bestselling novel, *The Shape of Water*. From visionary storyteller Guillermo del Toro and celebrated author Daniel Kraus comes this haunting, heartbreaking love story. [A] phenomenally enrapturing and reverberating work of art in its own right...[that] vividly illuminates the minds of the characters, greatly enhancing our understanding of their temperaments and predicaments and providing more expansive and involving story lines. —Booklist It is 1962, and Elisa Esposito—mute her whole life, orphaned as a child—is struggling with her humdrum existence as a janitor working the graveyard shift at Baltimore's Occam Aerospace Research Center. Were it not for Zelda, a protective coworker, and Giles, her loving neighbor, she doesn't know how she'd make it through the day. Then, one fateful night, she sees something she was never meant to see, the Center's most sensitive asset ever: an amphibious man, captured in the Amazon, to be studied for Cold War advancements. The creature is terrifying but also magnificent, capable of language and of understanding emotions...and Elisa can't keep away. Using sign language, the two learn to communicate. Soon, affection turns into love, and the creature becomes Elisa's sole reason to live. But outside forces are pressing in. Richard Strickland, the obsessed soldier who tracked the asset through the Amazon, wants nothing more than to dissect it before the Russians get a chance to steal it. Elisa has no choice but to risk everything to save her beloved. With the help of Zelda and Giles, Elisa hatches a plan to break out the creature. But Strickland is on to them. And the Russians are, indeed, coming. Developed from the ground up as a bold two-tiered release—one story interpreted by two artists in the independent mediums of literature and film—*The Shape of Water* is unlike anything you've ever read or seen. "Most movie novelizations do little more than write down what audiences see on the screen. But the novel that's accompanying Guillermo del Toro's new movie *The Shape of Water* is no mere adaptation. Co-author Daniel Kraus' book and the film tell the same story, of a mute woman who falls in love with an imprisoned and equally mute creature, in two very different ways." —io9 Praise for *The Shape of Water* directed by Guillermo del Toro Winner of the 2018 Academy Award for Best Picture Winner of the 2018 Academy Award for Best Director Winner of the 2018 Academy Award for Music (Original Score) Winner of the 2018 Academy Award for Production Design Winner of the 2018 Golden Globe Award for Best Director of a Motion Picture With encouragement from critics and awards voters, discerning viewers should make Fox Searchlight's December release the season's classiest date movie—for perhaps the greatest of *The Shape of Water*'s many surprises is how extravagantly romantic it is." —Variety A visually and emotionally ravishing fantasy that should find a welcome embrace from audiences starved for imaginative escape." —The Hollywood Reporter Awarded the Golden Lion for Best Film at the 74th Annual Venice International Film Festival

the shape of things play: The Shape of My Heart Ann Aguirre, 2014 Some people wait decades to meet their soul mate. Courtney Kaufman suspects she met hers in high school--only to lose him at seventeen. Since then, Courtney's social life has been a series of meaningless encounters, though she's made a few close friends along the way. Especially her roommate, Max Cooper, who oozes damaged bad-boy vibes from every pore. Max knows about feeling lost--he's been on his own since he was sixteen. Now it's time to find out if he can ever go home again, and Courtney's the only one he trusts to go with him. But the trip to Providence could change everything.... It started out so simple. One misfit helping another. Now Max will do anything to show

Courtney that for every heart that's ever been broken, there's another that can make it complete.

the shape of things play: *The Shape Game* Anthony Browne, 2004 Anthony Browne describes how his mother's wish to spend her birthday visiting an art museum with her family changed the course of his life forever. A sophisticated picture book.

the shape of things play: *Arrow* Sumita Chakraborty, 2020-09-24 Winner of the Seamus Heaney First Collection Poetry Prize 2021 Shortlisted for the Michael Murphy Memorial Poetry Prize 2021 Arrow is a debut volume extraordinary in ambition, range and achievement. At its centre is 'Dear, beloved', a more-than-elegy for her younger sister who died suddenly: in the two years she took to write the poem, much else came into play: 'it was my hope to write the mood of elegy rather than an elegy proper,' following the example of the great elegists including Milton, to whose *Paradise Lost* she listened during the period of composition, also hearing the strains of Brigit Pegeen Kelly's *Song*, of Alice Oswald and Marie Howe. The poem becomes a kind of kingdom, 'one that is at once evil, or blighted, and beautiful, not to mention everything in between'. As well as elegy, Chakraborty composes invocations, verse essays, and the strange extended miracle of the title poem, in which ancient and modern history, memory and the lived moment, are held in a directed balance. It celebrates the natural forces of the world and the rapt experience of balance, form and - love. She declares a marked admiration for poems that 'will write into being a world that already in some way exists'. This is what her poems achieve.

the shape of things play: *Bash* Neil LaBute, 2014-12-01 Evil wears an all-American glow in Neil LaBute's *BASH: LATTERDAY PLAYS ...* The characters in this transfixing evening of monologues have that sheen of idealized, corn-country wholesomeness that Madison Avenue has always put such a premium on: clear skin, sparkling eyes and teeth to make an orthodontist cheer. To look at, they're the human equivalents of a glass of milk. But if you know anything about Mr. LaBute ... you probably know already that the milk is laced with arsenic. The stories told in *BASH*, even the one that occurs beneath a police-interrogation light, all begin with a comforting air of familiarity that goes down bland and easy. Then comes a moment when the taste turns sour, and you feel like gagging. It's as though characters from *Ozzie and Harriet* had suddenly pulled a shiv on you ... For all its ostensible cynicism, *BASH* is informed with an earnest, probing moralism as fierce as that of Nathaniel Hawthorne ... That's what Mr. LaBute does best, finding the acid in the blandest substances. -Ben Brantley, *The New York Times*

the shape of things play: *THE SHAPE OF ILLUSION* William E. Barrett, 1972

the shape of things play: *The Shape of the Ruins* Juan Gabriel Vásquez, 2018-09-25 SHORTLISTED FOR THE 2019 MAN BOOKER INTERNATIONAL PRIZE A sweeping tale of conspiracy theories, assassinations, and twisted obsessions -- the much anticipated masterpiece from Juan Gabriel Vásquez. *The Shape of the Ruins* is a masterly story of conspiracy, political obsession, and literary investigation. When a man is arrested at a museum for attempting to steal the bullet-ridden suit of a murdered Colombian politician, few notice. But soon this thwarted theft takes on greater meaning as it becomes a thread in a widening web of popular fixations with conspiracy theories, assassinations, and historical secrets; and it haunts those who feel that only they know the real truth behind these killings. This novel explores the darkest moments of a country's past and brings to life the ways in which past violence shapes our present lives. A compulsive read, beautiful and profound, eerily relevant to our times and deeply personal, *The Shape of the Ruins* is a tour-de-force story by a master at uncovering the incisive wounds of our memories.

the shape of things play: *Tennessee Williams* John Lahr, 2014-09-25 SHORTLISTED FOR THE 2014 NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FOR NONFICTION The definitive biography of America's most impassioned and lyrical twentieth-century playwright from acclaimed theatre critic John Lahr 'A masterpiece about a genius' Helen Mirren 'Riveting ... masterful' *Sunday Times*, Books of the Year On 31 March 1945, at The Playhouse Theatre on Forty-Eight Street the curtain rose on the opening night of *The Glass Menagerie*. Tennessee Williams, the show's thirty-four-year-old playwright, sat hunched in an aisle seat, looking, according to one paper, 'like a farm boy in his Sunday best'. The Broadway premiere, which had been heading for disaster, closed to an astonishing twenty-four

curtain calls and became an instant sell-out. Beloved by an American public, Tennessee Williams's work – blood hot and personal – pioneered, as Arthur Miller declared, 'a revolution' in American theatre. Tracing Williams's turbulent moral and psychological shifts, acclaimed theatre critic John Lahr sheds new light on the man and his work, as well as the America his plays helped to define. Williams created characters so large that they have become part of American folklore: Blanche, Stanley, Big Daddy, Brick, Amanda and Laura transcend their stories, haunting us with their fierce, flawed lives. Similarly, Williams himself swung high and low in his single-minded pursuit of greatness. Lahr shows how Williams's late-blooming homosexual rebellion, his struggle against madness, his grief-struck relationships with his combustible father, prim and pious mother and 'mad' sister Rose, victim to one of the first lobotomies in America, became central themes in his drama. Including Williams's poems, stories, journals and private correspondence in his discussion of the work – posthumously Williams has been regarded as one of the best letter writers of his day – Lahr delivers an astoundingly sensitive and lively reassessment of one of America's greatest dramatists. Tennessee Williams: Mad Pilgrimage of the Flesh is the long-awaited, definitive life and a masterpiece of the biographer's art.

the shape of things play: Big Box of Shapes Wiley Blevins, 2016-01-01 Triangles, circles, squares. To most of us, these are just simple shapes. But in the imaginations of Lulu and Max, these shapes found in a box take on exciting new meanings. What will you see?

the shape of things play: Mouse Shapes Ellen Stoll Walsh, 2017-09-12 Three mice make a variety of things out of different shapes as they hide from a scary cat.

the shape of things play: The Distance from Here Neil LaBute, 2003-03-25 His films *In the Company of Men* and *Your Friends and Neighbors* both gained critical renown for their biting satire and caustic wit. Now, with *The Distance from Here*, he has written his most riveting play yet, an intense look at the dark side of American suburbia. With little to occupy their time other than finding a decent place to hang out—the zoo, the mall, the school parking lot—Darrell and Tim are two American teenagers who lack any direction or purpose in their lives. When Darrell's suspicion about the faithlessness of his girlfriend is confirmed and Tim comes to her defense, there is nothing to brake their momentum as all three speed toward disaster.

the shape of things play: Neil LaBute: Plays 2 Neil LaBute, 2017-09-05 'LaBute takes us to shadowy places we don't like to talk about, sometimes even to think about.' *Newsday* Obsession with surface and secrets runs through this second collection of Neil LaBute's work. *The Shape of Things* peels back the skin of modern-day relationships to ask how far someone might change themselves for love, or for art. In *Fat Pig*, a man confronts his friends' - and his own - fixation with Hollywood ideals of beauty when he falls for a 'plus size' young woman. In *a Dark Dark House* and *In a Forest*, Dark and Deep are twin tales of sibling conflict. In the first, estranged brothers must reconcile conflicting memories, after one asks for corroboration of childhood abuse. In the second, a man's offer to help his sister clear out her cottage brings a terrible confession into the light. *The Shape of Things* 'What initially seems a touching study of student romance develops instead into a passionate discussion about the way art feeds on life.' *Daily Telegraph* *Fat Pig* 'As large as Helen is, the tender heart of the play is easily twice as big.' *Variety* In *a Dark Dark House* 'LaBute toys with expectations and takes pleasure in our discomfort... The play does lead to a pretty dark place - but the ending is not without hope.' *Daily Mail* In *a Forest*, *Dark and Deep* 'It is billed as being about sibling rivalry, but in fact majors on far deeper, dangerous things: the yearning to be understood, female manipulation, and fascinated male disgust at a sister's lurid sexuality.' *The Times*

the shape of things play: Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge Mem Fox, 2017 Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge lives next door to a nursing home. When he finds out that his special friend, Nancy Alison Delacourt Cooper, is losing her memory he sets out to find what a memory is.

the shape of things play: Autobahn Neil LaBute, 2016-10-18 This collection includes seven short plays: *FUNNY*, *BENCH SEAT*, *ALL APOLOGIES*, *MERGE*, *LONG DIVISION*, *ROAD TRIP*, and *AUTOBAHN*. Be it the medium for clandestine couplings, arguments, shelter, or ultimately transportation, the automobile is perhaps the most authentically American of spaces. In

AUTOBAHN, Neil LaBute's provocative collection of one-act plays set within the confines of the front seat, the playwright employs his signature plaintive insight to great effect, investigating the inchoate apprehension that surrounds the steering wheel. Each of these seven brief vignettes explore the ethos of perception and relationship -- from a make-out session gone awry to a kidnapping thinly disguised as a road trip, a reconnaissance mission involving the rescue of a Nintendo 64 to a daughter's long ride home after her release from rehab. The result is an unsettling montage that gradually reveals the scabrous force of words left unsaid while illuminating the delicate interplay between intention and morality, capturing the essence of middle America and the myriad paths which cross its surface.

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