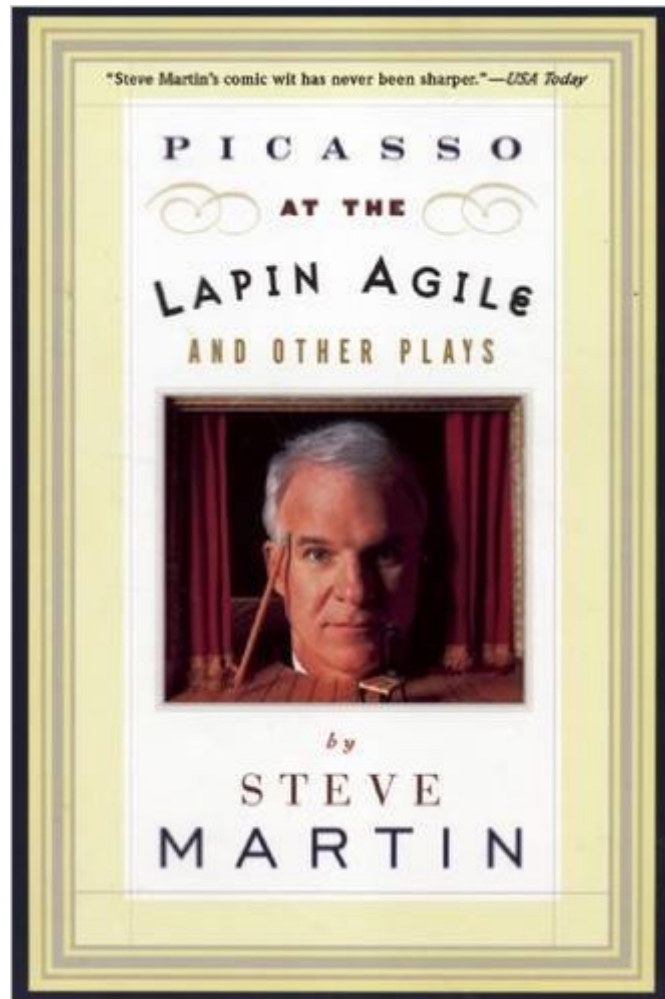


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Picasso At The Lapin Agile And Other Plays



Synopsis

Steve Martin is one of America's most treasured actors, having appeared in some of the most popular movies of our time. He is also an accomplished screenwriter who has in the past few years turned his hand to writing plays. The results, collected here, hilariously explore serious questions of love, happiness and the meaning of life; they are rich with equal parts of pain and slapstick humour, torment and wit.

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Customer Reviews

Picasso at the Lapin Agile is a wonderful play, with a great deal of tongue-in-cheek humor, dry wit, and intelligent riddles. In this play, Martin has set out a very amusing treatise on some very important aspects of the 20th century, especially regarding art and science. There are, however, three other plays in this collection. Two of them, Zig-Zag Woman and Patter for a Floating Lady, can hardly be called plays. They're not even one-acts. They have the appearance of just being filler that Martin wrote to pass the time. Wasp, the fourth play in the collection, has many high points, including an hilarious monologue the father delivers to the son. It contains enough dark humor and sarcasm to make it a good read. Picasso at the Lapin Agile alone is worth buying this collection, but don't expect the other plays to live up to Picasso's status. It is, though, a good collection for anyone interested in this type of humor or drama.

Steve Martin's "Picasso at the Lapin Agile" is a well-constructed and amusing read. Seeing it performed is ideal, but reading it is also rewarding. The use of subtle humor and irony by Martin

provides the reader with a quick and enjoyable read. With all of the recent talk about the entrance into the 21st century, the play's references to the turning of the 20th are especially funny. I recommend this play highly to anyone.

Steve Martin has always been a "serious" writer, in that he is interested in using humor to make people think and to highlight ideas in new ways. "Picasso at the Lapin Agile" is a delightful piece of theatrical slight of hand wherein he creates the meeting of the century that never happened between the most influential scientist and the most influential artist and, after a wonderful setup, does a quantum leap into the absurd. It's fun to read and on stage (I saw the production at Ford's Theater in D.C.) it is fantastic. Recently on a trip to Paris I climbed Montmartre Butte to find the site of the Lapin Agile, the bistro in which Martin's play is set. It is still there and still in business, but alas, never saw nor will see a coming together of intelligence, talent and ego such as that envisioned by Steve Martin in this play. This is very smart comedy but funny enough in other ways to work for most audiences. I highly recommend it.

For anyone looking to direct a wonderful, challenging one act play, try this collection! I directed WASP (which is full of fantastic monologues, just right for auditions for both men and women) and have been constantly thinking of new ways in which it could be interpreted. There is a lot of room for a director to innovate within the text. The other plays in this collection -- I have read them happily, thinking of their surprisingly poignant possibilities. I highly recommend this collection to anyone who is ready for a fun, compelling artistic challenge!

Picasso and Einstein meet for coffee. I saw this produced at Cambridge's American Repertory Theater and returned twice in order to get my fill. To date, this is Martin at his finest. His theme, the dependant and invisible relationship between the seemingly disparate worlds of art and mathematical science, is deftly explored with the whimsy of his previously published short stories. Please, do not be swayed by previous reviewers who are thrown by effects based on simple theatrical devices such as asides or sotto voces. These forays into the audience (to me) represented the Theory of Relativity's elastic concept of time and space as applied to the artistic presentation of story. Without having to bow to the box-office-numbers God of film, Martin is free to run with his wonderful intellect. I suggest you come along for the ride.

Not only is "Picasso" a hilarious romp into Steve Martin's genius imagination, the play also tackles

the "Big Issues" that make our culture tick. While discussing Art (capital "A") and Existence (capital "E"), the characters also hum with humanity and integrity. Leave it to Martin to bring Einstein to the masses.

I think in reality this probably deserves 4 stars, but I love "Picasso at the Lapin Agile" too much to rate it anything below 5. It's a great read and a lot of fun to act. It's funny on so many levels - everything from wacky and silly to crude to smart to dry humor down to the very subtle (like having an "e-shaped pie."... it's a math joke (pi)). The ideas in it are great, and I especially enjoyed comparing science to art. It's as much fun to think about intellectually as it is to see the different characters bounce off of each other. It's the kind of play that reaches everyone differently - especially through the various types of humor. The other plays are so-so, some better than others. I like them for their read, but it's harder to see them as plays - perhaps I'm wrong. I liked Floating Lady because of the emotions and intensity I imagined as I performed it in my head. I liked Zig-Zag Woman because it was kind of cute, but I think I expected too much of the ending as I read it, so was a little disappointed. WASP was also somewhat interesting to read and draw ideas from, but as a play in and of itself I didn't enjoy it very much. Hope that helps. In the end, just buy it for "Picasso..."

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