The Caucasian Chalk Circle

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written in exile during the second world war the story of brecht's classic play subverts an ancient chinese tale echoed in the judgement of solomon in which two women claim the same child the message of brecht's parable is that resources should go to those who will make best use of them thanks to the rascally judge azdak one of brecht's most vivid creations this story has a happy outcome the child is entrusted to the peasant grusha who has loved and nurtured it published in methuen

Bertolt Brecht Bertolt Brecht Aldwych Theatre Glynis Rigsby Shu P'ing Chow Bertolt Brecht Jacob P. Rast Frank R. Harvey

drama's modern classics series this edition features an extensive introduction brecht's own notes on the play and a full appendix of textual variants it is the standard critical edition of the work in an acclaimed translation by james and tania stern with whauden

the people of two farms in georgia republic of russia debate over land ownership in a socialistic society the play raises the question of private property of who bears the right to ownership should something someone be owned by the one who possesses it or by the one who can make the best use of it

a morality masterpiece the caucasian chalk circle demonstrates brecht s pioneering theatrical techniques this version by frank mcguinness was first presented by the national theatre in 1997 and revived in 2007 opening at the gulbenkian theatre canterbury on 8 january pub desc

the caucasian chalk thing is by richard baines but freely adapted from the eric bentley translation of the play by bertolt brecht why tinker with the caucasian chalk circle it s a long play it s a complicated play the propaganda can become a bit repetitive epic theatre as brecht s theatre is called is like a row of boxcars each scene standing on its own and so the sets are constantly changing most school productions would take a knife to the original text our version simplifies and streamlines the production extra lines are added without taking away the spirit and mood of the original there are parts here for twenty or more actors half of them playing several characters but this is brecht his poetry is here his humour is here his characters continue to be amusing because of their blatantly self centred approach to life many of them are caricatures but that is what makes them fun to play this is not stanislavski actors do not need to be talented thespians to take part in a brecht play so have fun with it as drama directors are wont to say on opening nights

bertolt brecht s classic drama the caucasian chalk circle centres on a trial to discover the true mother of a young boy where two women one rich one poor must risk killing him to prove their love it tackles fundamental questions of human nature social justice law and lawlessness love in revolutionary times and the bond between a mother and her child this clear and accessible study guide includes author s biography and writing of the play synopsis scene by scene analysis and commentary introduction to brecht s epic theatre the caucasian chalk circle as an example of brechtian theatre conclusion major themes and overall interpretation topics for discussion

a year 12 drama production held at the westminster school campus in the michael murray centre for performing arts 9 11 september program includes portraits of cast members and some crew members

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