LA TURTUFFLE

A lot of the time our experiences of plays is limited to what we are exposed to in our school life. A lot of us have grown up reading about iconic British plays, from Romeo and Juliet to Hamlet. Shakespeare remains the common thread for many even when foreign productions become more mainstream.

This begs the question: is it the language barrier that limits us or are we afraid to step out of our comfort zone? French theatre is one of the many foreign productions that have unwittingly made it into the mainstream, Hollywood world. For example, many of you may have heard the famous “Habanera” from the Carmen opera in films such as Pixar’s “Up” (2009) or “Bohemian Rhapsody” (2018) or the song “Non Je Ne Regrette Rien” by Edith Piaf in films such as “Inception” (2010).

<https://youtu.be/KJ_HHRJf0xg>

<https://youtu.be/Q3Kvu6Kgp88>

If you'd like to see a French play and brush up on your language skills, here are a few iconic plays that you can watch.

# 1.Les Belles-soeurs (Michel Tremblay)

If you're interested in learning more about French Canadian culture this is the play to see. This play is mostly spoken in a French dialect frowned upon by the upper class, and is based around women as opposed to most plays that are centered around men. It follows a housewife, Germaine as she calls women from her neighborhood to help her stick grocery stamps so she can exchange them for food. The women are so involved in discussing their lives and husbands that Germaine does not realize they stole all her stamps.

# 2.Le Tartuffe (Molière)

Molière is labelled within the list of great, if not best playwrights . His willingness to make people laugh or weep and his emblematic role in the theatre world is why he is a “must include” for us. We highly recommend you see Tartuffe because it's a satirical play that you'll have a lot of fun watching. This five-act play was published in the 17th century but is still up to the present day. The story showcases a man named Orgon and his mother who falls under the influence of Tartuffe, a holy man. The rest of the family are realizing that Tartuffe is a fake and trying to persuade Orgon and his mother, but fall perfectly into his trap and even allowing Tartuffe to marry the daughter.

# Les Bonnes (Jean Genet)

Les Bonnes is a perfect example of a modern theater classic by the French dramatist Jean Genet. The play was first shown in 1947 and is said to be a loose adaptation of the notorious French maid sisters Christine and Léa Papin, who, in 1933 murdered the wife and daughter of their boss by beating them with a knife, a hammer and a pewter pot. Genet was influenced by this horrible tale and wrote his play about two maids who performed elaborate sadomasochistic rituals while they were alone in the house in which they were employed. Their sexual role-playing consisted of murdering their boss and they took turns so that every woman could be the assassin and the murderer. While an interesting play, we give a disclaimer: don't try this at home!

If you have any recommendations for foreign plays, do let us know – we want to be exposed to the world of theatre as much as we can so we can bring the essence of this knowledge into our own productions.