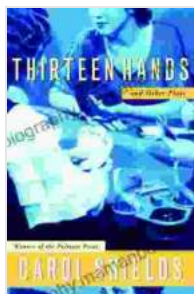


# Thirteen Hands and Other Plays: A Look into American Literature's Darker Side



## Thirteen Hands And Other Plays by Carol Shields

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 2640 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Print length : 432 pages



*Thirteen Hands and Other Plays* is a collection of seven plays by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Mac Wellman. The plays were written between 1975 and 1995, and they explore a wide range of dark and disturbing themes, including violence, death, and the meaninglessness of life. Wellman's plays are characterized by their use of absurdist techniques, dark humor, and social commentary.

## The Plays

The seven plays in *Thirteen Hands and Other Plays* are:

\* *Terminal Hip* (1975) \* *36 Exposures* (1978) \* *400 Rabbits* (1982) \* *The Big Meal* (1985) \* *Sincerity Forever* (1991) \* *Crowbar* (1993) \* *Thirteen Hands* (1995)

Each play is a unique work of art, but they are all united by their dark and disturbing themes. In *Terminal Hip*, a group of young people are trapped in

a dead-end town and they resort to violence and drug use to escape their boredom. In *36 Exposures*, a photographer becomes obsessed with photographing a young woman, and his obsession leads to tragedy. In *400 Rabbits*, a group of people are stranded on a deserted island, and they are forced to confront their own mortality.

*The Big Meal* is a black comedy about a family that gathers for a Thanksgiving dinner that turns into a nightmare. In *Sincerity Forever*, a group of actors are rehearsing a play about a utopian society, but their rehearsals are interrupted by a group of terrorists. In *Crowbar*, a man is haunted by the memory of his dead wife, and he becomes obsessed with finding her killer.

*Thirteen Hands* is the longest and most complex play in the collection. It tells the story of a group of people who are living in a world that has been ravaged by war. The play is full of violence and despair, but it also offers a glimmer of hope for the future.

## Themes

The plays in *Thirteen Hands and Other Plays* explore a wide range of dark and disturbing themes, including:

\* **Violence:** Violence is a central theme in many of Wellman's plays. His characters are often victims of violence, and they often resort to violence themselves. Wellman's plays explore the causes and consequences of violence, and they offer a powerful critique of the violence that is present in our society. \* **Death:** Death is another major theme in Wellman's plays. His characters are often confronted with death, and they often struggle to come to terms with it. Wellman's plays explore the meaning of death, and they

offer a unique perspective on the human condition. \* **The meaninglessness of life:** Wellman's plays often explore the theme of the meaninglessness of life. His characters often search for meaning in their lives, but they often come up empty-handed. Wellman's plays offer a sobering look at the human condition, and they challenge us to find meaning in our own lives.

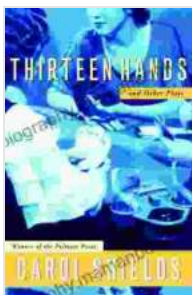
## **Techniques**

Wellman's plays are characterized by their use of absurdist techniques, dark humor, and social commentary.

\* **Absurdist techniques:** Wellman's plays often use absurdist techniques, such as illogical dialogue, unexpected plot twists, and non-realistic characters. These techniques create a sense of alienation and estrangement, and they force the audience to confront the meaninglessness of life. \* **Dark humor:** Wellman's plays often use dark humor to explore his dark and disturbing themes. His characters often find themselves in absurd and ridiculous situations, and they often make jokes about their own misfortunes. Wellman's dark humor is a way of coping with the harsh realities of life. \* **Social commentary:** Wellman's plays often contain social commentary. He explores issues such as violence, poverty, and racism in his plays. Wellman's social commentary is often subtle, but it is always present. He uses his plays to challenge the status quo and to promote social change.

*Thirteen Hands and Other Plays* is a powerful and disturbing collection of plays that explore the darker side of American literature. Wellman's plays are characterized by their use of absurdist techniques, dark humor, and

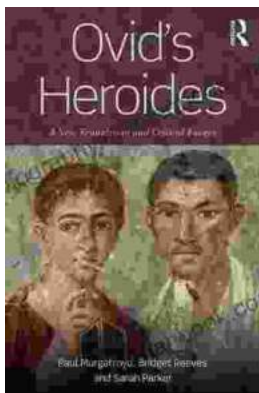
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