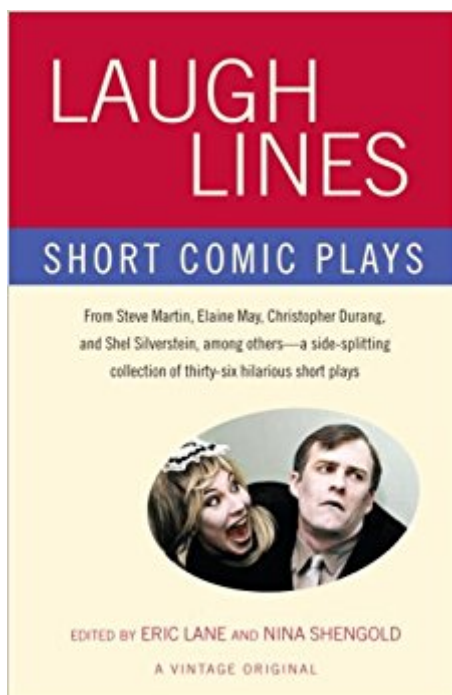


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# Laugh Lines: Short Comic Plays



## Synopsis

This one-of-a-kind anthology features thirty-six hilarious short plays by major American playwrights and emerging new voices, all guaranteed to send readers and audiences into peals of laughter. From the surrealistic wit of Steve Martin's "The Zig-Zag Woman" to the biting political satire of Steven Dietz's "The Spot," from Christopher Durang's wonderfully loopy "Wanda's Visit" to Shel Silverstein's supremely twisted "The Best Daddy," there's something in here to make everyone laugh. There are plays for casts of all sizes, from monologues to large ensembles, with diverse and challenging roles for actors of every age and type. Even the titles are funny: Mark O'Donnell's "There Shall Be No Bottom (a bad play for worse actors)," Elaine May's "The Way of All Fish," and Alan Ball's "Your Mother's Butt." A bonanza for theatergoers, performers, and comedy fans, Laugh Lines will bring down the house.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This set of 34 comic dramas, many of which would run 15 minutes at most in performance, by contemporary or nearly contemporary Americans, some famous, many not, ranges from the sublime to the tedious. The best pieces in the collection, such as Christopher Durang's divinely insane Wanda's Visit, are comic gems in miniature. Others, such as Pulitzer Prize winner David Auburn's comedy-sketch-sized Miss You, show the antic side of writers known mostly for more serious work. Other well-known names to be found in the wide-ranging anthology include Alan Ball, David Cale, David Lindsay-Abaire, Steve Martin, and Elaine May, all represented by rarely collected one acts. Still, the real strength of the book arises from editors Lane and Shengold's spirit of inclusiveness,

which allows obscure but hilarious writers to appear cheek by jowl with better-known funny women and men. Jack Helbig  
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Eric Lane and Nina Shengold have been editing contemporary theater anthologies for more than twenty years. Eric Lane's award-winning plays have been published and performed in the United States, Canada, Europe, and China. Plays include *Ride*, *Times of War*, *Heart of the City*, *Dancing on Checkers' Grave*, and *Filming O'Keeffe*. *Floating*, a PlayPenn finalist, was workshopped at Raven Theatre. Eric's short plays are published in *Best American Short Plays*, *Poems and Plays*, and the Foreign Language Press (Beijing). He wrote and produced the short films *First Breath* and *Cater-Waiter*, which he also directed; both films screened in more than forty cities worldwide. For TV's *Ryan's Hope* he received a Writers Guild Award. Honors include the Berrilla Kerr Playwriting Award, the La MaMa Playwright Award, and fellowships at Yaddo, VCCA, and St. James Cavalier in Malta. Eric is an honors graduate of Brown University, and artistic director of Orange Thoughts, a not-for-profit theater and film company in New York City. Nina Shengold's plays include *Finger Foods*, *War at Home*, *Homesteaders*, and *Romeo/Juliet*, and have been produced around the world. Her one-act *No Shoulder* was filmed by director Suzi Yoonessi, with Melissa Leo and Samantha Sloyan. Nina won a Writers Guild Award for her teleplay *Labor of Love*, starring Marcia Gay Harden; other teleplays include *Blind Spot*, with Joanne Woodward and Laura Linney, and *Unwed Father*. Her books include the novel *Clearcut*; *River of Words: Portraits of Hudson Valley Writers* (with photographer Jennifer May), and a growing posse of pseudonymous books for young readers. A graduate of Wesleyan, she is currently teaching creative writing at Manhattanville College. Nina lives in New York's Hudson Valley, where she has been books editor of *Chronogram* magazine since 2004.

Very funny short plays.

got here super quick. one of those textbooks that you just keep

What makes this great is there are all types of Comedy used in this anthology. You do not have to suffer through only silly plays or just a bunch of satirical plays, but get a solid display of all types of humorous material for all types of people.

Some are too adult for high school kids, but this is the best collection of short skits that I have found.

This is a great book of comic plays. I use it as a textbook to demonstrate the short comic play form to my class.

Material in this collection has garnered many, many awards for my students.

A lot of good material

I teach a comedy workshop for a community theater and Laugh Lines provides great material for practice sessions. Funny stuff and a very good variety of characters in short play format.

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