



Brecht Collected Plays: 5: Life of Galileo; Mother Courage and Her Children (World Classics)

Bertolt Brecht

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Published by Methuen Drama, the collected dramatic works of Bertolt Brecht are presented in the most comprehensive and authoritative editions of Brecht's plays in the English language.

The fifth volume in the Brecht Collected Plays series brings together two of Brecht's best-known and most frequently performed and studied plays: Life of Galileo and Mother Courage and Her Children. Galileo, which examines the conflict between free inquiry and official ideology, contains one of Brecht's most human and complex central characters. Temporarily silenced by the Inquisition's threat of torture, and forced to abjure his theories publicly, Galileo continues to work in private, eventually smuggling his work out of the country. As an examination of the problems that face not only the scientist but also the whole spirit of free inquiry when brought into conflict with the requirements of government or official ideology, Life of Galileo has few equals.

Mother Courage is usually seen as Brecht's greatest work. Remaining a powerful indictment of war and social injustice, it is an epic drama set in the seventeenth century during the Thirty Years' War. The plot follows the resilient Mother Courage who survives by running a commissary business that profits from all sides. As the war claims all of her children in turn, the play poignantly demonstrates that no one can profit from the war without being subject to its terrible cost also.

The translations are ideal for both study and performance. The volume is accompanied by a full introduction and notes by the series editor John Willett and includes Brecht's own notes and relevant texts as well as all the important textual variants.

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