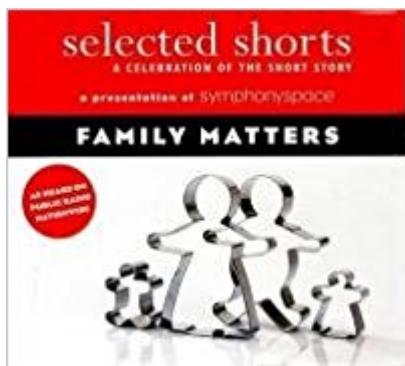


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Selected Shorts: Family Matters (Selected Shorts: A Celebration Of The Short Story)



Synopsis

Recorded live at the Peter Norton Symphony Space in New York City and at venues across the United States, these audio anthologies feature short stories from the Selected Shorts program that airs nationwide. More than 300,000 listeners tune in to this offering weekly to hear some of their favorite tales read aloud by an assortment of distinguished actors. Hilarious and colorful episodes in the lives of families; many depicted from a kid's-eye-view; are the theme for this compilation. They include, Shirley Jackson's "Charles" read by Lois Smith, Etgar Keret's "Pride and Joy" read by Robert Sean Leonard, Diane Leslie's "A Life of Crime" read by Jill Eikenberry, Rick Moody's "Boys" read by B. D. Wong, Frank O'Connor's "First Confession" read by Malachy McCourt, Grace Paley's "The Loudest Voice" read by Linda Lavin, and Touré's "Solomon's Big Day: A Children's Story" read by Daniel Alexander Jones.

Book Information

Series: Selected Shorts: A Celebration of the Short Story

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Average Customer Review: 2.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

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Customer Reviews

Best AudioBooks of 2007, AudioFile Magazine

Symphony Space is a performing arts center based in New York City that fosters artistically and culturally diverse performing arts, literary, and film programs that bring artists and audiences together in an atmosphere of exploration and intimacy. This organization reaches audiences throughout New York City, the wider metropolitan area, and through

distribution of programs via media such as radio, recordings, podcasts, and touring—the nation.

Our family had a cassette recording of "First Confession", so I was delighted to find this CD version. But since one can not download each track separately, one must take their chances with the 3-disc set. To begin with, Malachy McCourt's reading of "First Confession" is THE most hilarious recording I've ever heard. Not only was Frank O'Connor one of Ireland's most gifted short story writers, but McCourt is a superb actor. Catholic or not, your family is guaranteed to have tears streaking down your cheeks while listening to this riotous account of a boy's first confession. And underneath the humor, O'Connor makes some deeper spiritual points as well. The other track on disc 1, Shirley Jackson's "Charles" (from "Living With Savages") is also guaranteed to bring a smile to every parent. Lois Smith reads in a deadpan tone that perfectly matches the story. Grace Paley's "The Loudest Voice" is found on disc 2. This is the story of a young Jewish girl forced to participate in a Christmas play and resonates better with Jewish listeners, but is funny thanks to Linda Lavin's boisterous reading - she even cracks herself up. And now the problems start. For while one might think that a CD set entitled "Family Matters" would be suitable for all ages, the other four tracks are simply not kid-friendly. For one thing, they are too sophisticated, too interested in relating interior motivation, then is realistic for stories about children. "Pride and Joy" is either a sophisticated allegory, or a pretty dumb fairy tale. Either way, it won't go over well with the under 18 set. More seriously, the other three stories bring up sexual topics. I'm not being prudish, but the buyer should be aware that "Solomon's Big Day", "A Life of Crime", and "Boys" mention some pretty adult behavior. I don't know what motivated the selected shorts folks to choose these particular stories, but the collection is not a unified whole. In the final analysis, "First Confession" towers over everything else on this set. So you'll have to decide whether it is worth the cost to get it on CD and possibly throw out the other 2 CDs - that's what we did.

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