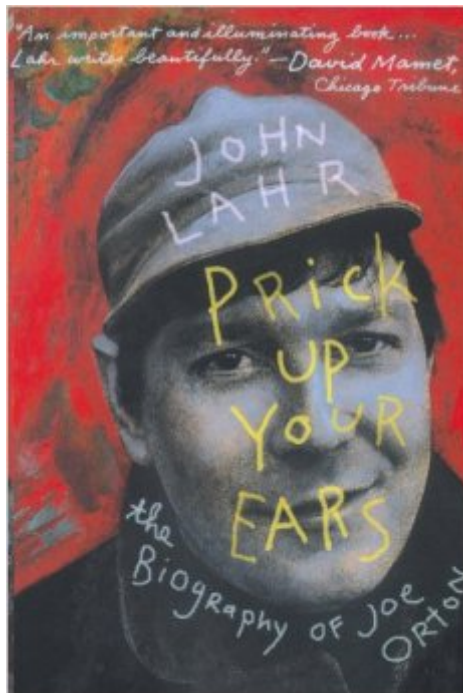


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Prick Up Your Ears: The Biography Of Joe Orton



Synopsis

John Lahr's New Yorker critic, novelist, and biographer of his father Bert Lahr (Notes on a Cowardly Lion) reconstructs both the life and death of Joe Orton in another extraordinary biography that was chosen Book of the Year by Truman Capote and Nobel Prize-winning novelist Patrick White when it first appeared in 1978. "I have high hopes of dying in my prime," Joe Orton confided to his diary in July, 1967. Less than one month later, Britain's most promising comic playwright was murdered by his lover in the London flat they had shared for fifteen years. Lahr chronicles Orton's working-class childhood and stagestruck adolescence, the scandals and disasters of his early professional years, and the brief, glittering success of his blistering comedies, Entertaining Mr. Sloane, Loot, and What the Butler Saw. Prick Up Your Ears is a watershed biography; it paved the way for Orton's revival and ensured his rightful place in the English repertoire.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (13 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I have an unwritten rule which compels me to finish every book I open. LiveJournal readers know of two of my book reviews, pertaining to an alive Elvis and lesbian masochists, which were chores to get through. However, regardless of a book's length, how boring it is or how far it is from my first impression of what it might be like, I trudge through it, dreading every minute. I always give these books the chance that they might have some redeeming quality which makes the first couple hundred pages worthwhile to stick it out. In John Lahr's Prick Up Your Ears: The Biography of Joe

Orton, there was no such redemption. After rubbing the shell of this nut for 361 pages I thought I would be treated to a hidden pecan, but the shell was empty. I started this book on 17 August; that's over three weeks ago--and this book is only 361 pages. This book was the most boring read of nonfiction I have encountered in twenty years. Barring three exceptions, I fell asleep every time I sat down to read it. If I didn't believe in my own immortality, I would be worried about wasting my limited life time reading this junk. I am a big Beatles fan, and I came across the name Joe Orton when I learned that he was approached to write the screenplay for the Beatles' third movie (after "A Hard Day's Night" and "Help!"). This never came to pass. When his script for "Up Against It" was returned, Orton wrote: "No explanation why. No criticism of the script. And apparently, Brian Epstein has no comment to make either. F*** them." Lahr had unrestricted access to Orton's diaries and quotes from them at length. In the Beatles passages, being allowed into the Fab Four's "inner circle" is quite a hoot to read.

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