



Prick Up Your Ears: The Biography of Joe Orton

John Lahr

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This mesmerizing story of playwright and author Joe Orton's brief and remarkable life was named book of the year by Truman Capote and Nobel Prize-winning novelist Patrick White

Told with precision and extensive detail, *Prick Up Your Ears* is the engrossing biography of playwright and novelist Joe Orton. Orton's public career spanned only three years (1964–1967), but his work made a lasting mark on the international stage. From *Entertaining Mr. Sloane* to his career-making *Loot*, Orton's plays often shocked, sometimes outraged, and always captivated audiences with their dark yet farcical cynicism. A rising star and undeniable talent, Orton left much undone when he was bludgeoned to death by his lover, Kenneth Halliwell, who had educated Orton and also dreamed of becoming a famous writer.

Prick Up Your Ears was the basis for the distinguished 1987 film of the same name, directed by Stephen Frears, with a screenplay by Alan Bennett, and starring Gary Oldman and Vanessa Redgrave. A brilliant, page-turning examination of the dueling forces behind Orton's work, *Prick Up Your Ears* secured the playwright's reputation as a great twentieth-century artist.

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