

## Shape Of Things Neil Labute Script

Simple words, rebus pictures, and flash cards make learning to read easy in this tale of a little boy in a haunted house.

Belinda and Cody Phipps appear a typical Midwestern couple: teenage sweethearts, children, luxurious home. Typical except that Cody is black--"rich, black, and different," in the words of Belinda, who finds herself attracted to a former (white) classmate. As the battle for her affections is waged, Belinda and Cody frankly doubt the foundation of their initial attraction, opening the door wide to a swath of bigotry and betrayal. Staged on continually shifting moral ground that challenges our received notions about gender, ethnicity, and even love itself, *This Is How It Goes* unblinkingly explores the myriad ways in which the wild card of race is played by both black and white in America.

"This poetic drama starred Art Carney and Siobhan McKenna in the New York premiere. The story reveals the struggles of an Irish American couple at the turn of the century whose daughter has been born with six fingers on her left hand and who later becomes the victim of what appears to be St. Vitus' Dance. Margaret Hyland is convinced that the child's suffering is punishment from God, penance for James' alcoholism. Believing that the guilt is partially her own, she has become embittered, resentful and distant. Resolved in tragedy, the torments, repressions and denials of human beings caught in a inevitable maelstrom they can neither understand nor resist."--Publisher's website.

Karen and Steve are glamorous movie stars with one thing in common: desperation. It's been years since either one's had a hit, but a hot-shot European director could change that with his latest movie. The night before filming a big scene that will undoubtedly bring them back onto the pop culture radar, Karen and her partner, Bev, meet with Steve and his aspiring actress wife, Missy, in order to make an important decision. How far will they let themselves go to keep from slipping further down the Hollywood food chain? *THE MONEY SHOT* is a hilarious and insightful comedy about ambition, art, status, and sex in an era—and an industry—where very little is sacred and almost nothing is taboo.

Reasons to be Pretty

Things We Said Today

Miss Julie

Possession

Autobahn

Lovely Head and Other Plays

*Cow. Slob. Pig.* How many insults can you hear before you have to stand up and defend the woman you love? Tom faces just that question when he falls for Helen, a bright, funny, sexy young woman who happens to be plus sized-and then some. Forced to explain his new relationship to his shallow (although shockingly funny) friends, finally he comes to terms with his own preconceptions of the importance of conventional good looks. Neil LaBute's sharply drawn play not only critiques our slavish adherence to Hollywood ideals of beauty but boldly questions our own ability to change what we dislike about ourselves.

In the title play, Exhibit 'A', an artist pushes the boundaries of his art to a previously untouched frontier, challenging the very definition of "art." 10K explores the territory where fantasy and desire merge, as a man and woman share secrets while traversing a suburban jogging path. Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush is a tense confrontation between two men in a park. In Happy Hour, a guy and a gal meet cute in a bar. I'm Going To Stop Pretending (That I Didn't Break Your Heart) lays bare a couple at the bitter end of a relationship, where devastation and loss for one is freedom and inevitability for the other. A 16 Pounds is a bleak, near-future look at water scarcity; BFF is the stage adaptation of LaBute's short film about three "friends"; Black Girls takes a white guy and a black girl through a wildly uncomfortable conversation; Some White Chick and The Unimaginable are two chillers written for Southwark Playhouse's TERROR! Festival; and the monologue Totally is a young woman's sex revenge confession like no other.

"A stunning drama about life in the shadow of September 11th and the Iraq war."--Time

How far would you go for love? For art? What would you be willing to change? Which price might you pay? Such are the painful questions explored by Neil Labute in The Shape of Things. A young student drifts into an ever-changing relationship with an art major while his best friends' engagement crumbles, so unleashing a drama that peels back the skin of two modern-day relationships, exposing the raw meat and gristle that lie beneath. The world premiere of The Shape of Things was presented at the Almeida, London, in May 2001.

Stories

In a Forest, Dark and Deep

Short Plays and Monologues

Bash

A Casebook

The Shape of Things; Fat Pig; In a Dark Dark House; In a Forest, Dark and Deep

Your Friends & Neighbors is a searing display of the war between the sexes, delivered with the kind of wit used by the great Restoration playwrights to expose the hypocrisies in male/female relationships. Neil Labute's debut feature, in the company of men, was described by Variety as "a dark, probing, truly disturbing exploration of yuppie angst and male anxieties". In Your Friends & Neighbors, male anxiety is again on show, but in a much wider context, revealing the rabid desire of people-regardless of sex- to serve their own interests at any cost.

Your career as a writer is blossoming, your beautiful, young fiancée is waiting to get married and rush off to Cancun by your side—so what is your natural reaction? Well, if you're a man, it's probably to get nervous and start calling up old girlfriends. And so begins a single man's odyssey through four hotel rooms as he flies across the country in search of the perfect woman (that he's already broken up with). *Some Girl(s)* is the latest work from Neil LaBute, American theater's great agent provocateur. In grand LaBute fashion, this by turns outrageously funny and deadly serious portrait of the artist as a young seducer casts a truthful, hilarious light on a typical young American male as he wanders through the heart of darkness that is himself. This edition includes a deleted scene.

Neil LaBute: A Casebook is the first book to examine one of the most successful and controversial contemporary American playwrights and filmmakers. While he is most famous, and in some cases infamous, for his early films *In the Company of Men* and *Your Friends and Neighbors*, LaBute is equally accomplished as a playwright. His work extends from the critique of false religiosity in *Bash* to examinations of opportunism, irresponsible art, failed parenting, and racism in later plays like *Mercy Seat*, *The Shape of Things*, *The Distance From Here*, *Fat Pig*, *Autobahn*, and the very recent *This Is How It Goes* and *Some Girls*. Like David Mamet, an acknowledged influence on him, and Conor McPherson, with whom he shares some stylistic and thematic concerns, LaBute tends to polarize audiences. The angry voices, violent situations, and irresponsible behavior in his works, especially those focusing on male characters, have alienated some viewers. But the writer's religious affiliation and refusal to condone the actions of his characters suggest he is neither exploitive nor pornographic. This casebook explores the primary issues of the writer's style, themes, and dramatic achievements. Contributors describe, for example, the influences (both classical and contemporary) on his work, his distinctive vision in theater and film, the role of religious belief in his work, and his satire. In addition to the critical introduction by Wood and the original essays by leading dramatic and literary scholars, the volume also includes a bibliography and a chronology of the playwright's life and works.

Hailed by *The New York Times Book Review* as "a gifted observer, able to discern the exact details that bring whole worlds into being" and "a storyteller who could keep a sultan on the edge of his throne for a thousand and one nights," A. S. Byatt writes some of the most engaging and skillful novels of our time. *Time* magazine calls her "a novelist of dazzling inventiveness." *Possession*, for which Byatt won England's prestigious Booker Prize, was praised by critics on both sides of the Atlantic when it was first published in 1990. "On academic rivalry and obsession, Byatt is delicious. On the nature of possession—the lover by the beloved, the biographer by his subject—she is profound," said *The Sunday Times* (London). *The New Yorker* dubbed it "more fun to read than *The Name of the Rose* . . . Its prankish verve [and] monstrous richness of detail [make for] a one-woman variety show of literary styles and types." The novel traces a pair of young academics—Roland Michell and Maud Bailey—as they uncover a clandestine love affair between two long-dead Victorian poets. Interwoven in a mesmerizing pastiche are love letters and fairytales, extracts from biographies and scholarly accounts, creating a sensuous and utterly delightful novel of ideas and passions. With an Introduction by the author that describes the novel's origins and its twenty-year gestation, this Modern Library edition is a handsome keepsake for fans of *Possession*—new and old alike.

A Thousand Clowns

The Rope Dancers

A Screenplay

A Play

The Shape of Things, Directed by Neil LaBute

The Shape of Things by Neil LaBute

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It's been years since either one's had a hit, but the latest movie by a hot-shot European director could change that. The night before filming a big scene (that will undoubtedly assure them a spot back on the pop culture radar), Karen, her partner Bev, Steve, and his aspiring actress wife Missy meet in order to make an important decision: how far will they let themselves go to keep from slipping further down the Hollywood food chain? Sexy, daring, darkly hilarious—and Neil LaBute's first officially billed comedy—*The Money Shot* lands as sharp and hot as a paparazzo's camera flash in a starlet's eye.

Stories from the award-winning director and playwright. "Labute's smart, edgy offering delivers pleasures well beyond the time frame his title suggests."—Booklist In *Seconds of Pleasure*, Neil LaBute brings to the page his cutting humor and compelling take on the shadowy terrain of the human heart. Best known for his controversial plays and films, his short fiction has appeared in *The New Yorker* and *Playboy*. Seductive and provocative, each potent and pithy tale in *Seconds of Pleasure* finds men and women exploiting—or at the mercy of—the hidden fault lines that separate them: In "Time Share," a woman leaves her family at their vacation home after discovering her husband in a compromising situation; a middle-aged man obsesses over a scab on the calf of a pretty young girl in "Boo-Boo"; and a vain Hollywood actor gets his comeuppance in "Soft Target." LaBute infuses *Seconds of Pleasure* with his trademark wit and black humor and unleashes his imagination in stories that offer unflinching insight into our very human shortcomings and impure urges with shocking candor. "LaBute's usual sleazy suspects are prepared to risk family, love, career, and freedom for the momentary satisfaction of their sometimes brutal desires. It will end badly, we know, and that's what makes each dark tale as irresistible as good gossip. Fallibility and weakness, LaBute has demonstrated once again, have their own allure."—Black Book "Seconds captures in print both the nuanced rhythms of contemporary speech and the pitfalls of dark I-Me-Mine gratification."—LA Weekly "LaBute is a master at crafting shocking situations and nasty characters."—Publishers Weekly

'LaBute takes us to shadowy places we don't like to talk about, sometimes even to think about.' *Newsday* *Obsession* with surface and secrets runs through this second collection of Neil LaBute's work. *The Shape of Things* peels back the skin of modern-day relationships to ask how far someone might change themselves for love, or for art. In *Fat Pig*, a man confronts his friends' - and his own - fixation with Hollywood ideals of beauty when he falls for a 'plus size' young woman. In *a Dark Dark House* and *In a Forest*, *Dark and Deep* are twin tales of sibling conflict. In the first, estranged brothers must reconcile conflicting memories, after one asks for corroboration of childhood abuse. In the second, a man's offer to help his sister clear out her cottage brings a terrible confession into the light. *The Shape of Things* 'What initially seems a touching study of student romance develops instead into a passionate discussion about the way art feeds on life.' *Daily Telegraph* *Fat Pig* 'As large as Helen is, the tender

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heart of the play is easily twice as big.' Variety In a Dark Dark House 'LaBute toys with expectations and takes pleasure in our discomfort... The play does lead to a pretty dark place - but the ending is not without hope.' Daily Mail In a Forest, Dark and Deep 'It is billed as being about sibling rivalry, but in fact majors on far deeper, dangerous things: the yearning to be understood, female manipulation, and fascinated male disgust at a sister's lurid sexuality.' The Times

THE STORY: Amidst the chaos and horror of the worst office shooting in American history, John Smith sees the face of God. His modern-day revelation creates a maelstrom of disbelief among everyone he knows. A newcomer to faith, John urgently searches

Seconds of Pleasure

The Break of Noon

Neil LaBute's The Shape of Things

Theatre Program , 2007, Odeon Theatre, Independent Theatre Company

Fat Pig

Study Notes for Black Comedy HSC Drama 2010-2012

**Neil LaBute is one of America's most provocative and lauded playwrights, and his darkly exhilarating talent is on glorious view in this new collection. "Things We Said Today" features the scripts for Neil LaBute's groundbreaking Directv project "10x10"--a series of short films written and directed by LaBute based on ten compelling original monologues, five each for men and women. Also included are five short plays displaying the power and scope of Neil LaBute's creative vision. In "Pick One," three white guys come up with a way to solve America's problems; in "The Possible," one young woman seduces another's boyfriend for an unexpected reason. "Call Back" features an actress and actor who spar about a past encounter that she, unnervingly, remembers much better than he does. "Good Luck" ("In Farsi"), "a pleasingly astringent study in competitiveness and vanity" (The New York Times) has two actresses pulling out all the stops in a preaudition psych out; and in "Squeeze Play" a father and his son's baseball coach strike a mutually beneficial deal. Rounding out the collection are two monologues commissioned as part of Centerstage's "My America" project. Examines the endlessly inventive patterns of natural things such as crystals, honeycombs, sea shells, eggs, seeds, snowflakes, ram's horns, water drops and the inevitability and efficiency of nature's shapes. Uses photomicroscopy, computer animation and time-lapse photography to explain that shapes are not accidental but grow in response to their separate environments.**

**One woman attempts to articulate her experience of physical pain. Pain with no apparent cause. Also, she's met someone, and they want to make this work. Words, light and an original sound score collide in a new piece from this Scotsman Fringe First award-winning team - exploring life in extremity, and the joy that can be found there.**

**Neil LaBute burst onto the American theater scene with the premiere of BASH at NYC's Douglas Fairbanks Theater in 1999 in a wildly praised production that featured Calista Flockhart, Paul Rudd, and Ron Eldard. It went on to play at the Almeida Theatre in London and since then has seen hundreds of productions across the U.S. and around the world. These three provocative one-act plays examine the complexities of evil in everyday life and thrillingly exhibit LaBute's signature raw lyrical intensity. Ablaze with the muscular dialogue and searing**

**artistry that immediately established him as a major playwright, BASH is enduringly brilliant—classic and essential Neil LaBute. In Medea Redux, a young woman relates her complex and ultimately tragic relationship with her high school English teacher; in Iphigenia in Orem, a businessman confides to a stranger in a Las Vegas hotel room about a chilling crime; and in A Gaggle of Saints, a young couple separately recounts the violent events of an anniversary weekend in New York City.**

**Wrecks**

**Exhibit 'A'**

**The Shape of Things, by Neil LaBute**

**This Is How It Goes**

**The Distance from Here**

**Let's Go to the Movies**

THE STORY: A love story about the impossibility of love, REASONS TO BE PRETTY introduces us to Greg, who really, truly adores his girlfriend, Steph. Unfortunately, he also thinks she has a few physical imperfections, and when he casually mentions t Set on September 12, 2001, The Mercy Seat continues Neil LaBute's unflinching fascination with the often-brutal realities of the war between the sexes. In a time of national tragedy, the world changes overnight. A man and a woman explore the choices now available to them in an existence different from the one they had lived just the day before. Can one be opportunistic a time of universal selflessness?

Told with urgency, intimacy, and piercing emotion, this New York Times bestselling novel is the riveting confession of a woman awakened, transformed, and abandoned by a desire for a world beyond her own. Nora Eldridge is a reliable, but unremarkable, friend and neighbor, always on the fringe of other people's achievements. But the arrival of the Shahid family—dashing Skandar, a Lebanese scholar, glamorous Sirena, an Italian artist, and their son, Reza—draws her into a complex and exciting new world. Nora's happiness pushes her beyond her boundaries, until Sirena's careless ambition leads to a shattering betrayal. A New York Times Book Review Notable Book • A Washington Post Top Ten Book of the Year • A Chicago Tribune Noteworthy Book • A Huffington Post Best Book • A Boston Globe Best Book of the Year • A Kirkus Best Fiction Book • A Goodreads Best Book

"Sitting in an automobile was where I first remember understanding how drama works...Hidden in the back seat of a sedan, I quickly realized how deep the chasm or intense the claustrophobia could be inside your average family car." --Neil LaBute Be it the medium for clandestine couplings, arguments, shelter, or ultimately transportation, the automobile is perhaps the most authentically American of spaces. In Autobahn, Neil LaBute's provocative new collection of one-act plays set within the confines of the front seat, the playwright employs his signature plaintive insight to great effect, investigating the inchoate apprehension that surrounds the steering wheel. Each of these seven brief vignettes explore the ethos of perception and relationship--from a make-out session gone awry to a kidnapping thinly disguised as a road trip, a reconnaissance mission involving the rescue of a Nintendo 64 to a daughter's long ride home after her release from rehab. The result is an unsettling montage that gradually reveals the scabrous force of words left unsaid while illuminating the delicate interplay between intention and morality, capturing the essence of middle America and the myriad paths which cross its surface.

The Mercy Seat

A Short-Play Cycle

How to Fight Loneliness

Beaumaris Theatre Inc. Presents The Shape of Things by Neil Labute, Directed by Shane Ryan

A Play in Three Acts

The Shape of Things

*Directed by Rob Croser, cast includes: Angus Henderson, Kate Ward, Kate Hancock and Oliver De Rohan.*

*Brad and Jodie need Tate to do them a favour. A really big favour. Brad is married to Jodie. Jodie went to school with Tate. Tate doesn't trust Brad. Brad and Jodie are at a life-changing crossroads and struggling to make a monumental decision about their life and love, and Tate--just maybe--has been there before. In this timely, dark, and dazzling new play, Neil LaBute takes a penetrating, point-blank look at a couple confronting the hardest decision of their lives and the aftermath of that decision. How To Fight Loneliness is Neil LaBute's most shocking, and also most tender, play yet.*

*The Shape of Things* A Play Faber & Faber

*Can someone honestly love a person whom they have deceived for thirty years? This is the central question behind Wrecks, Neil LaBute's latest foray into the dark side of human nature. Meet Edward Carr: loving father, successful businessman, grieving widower. In this concise powerhouse of a play, LaBute limns the boundaries of love, exploring the limits of what society will accept versus what the heart will desire. This collection also features rarely staged short plays, including "Liars' Club," "Coax," and the never-before-seen "Falling in Like."*

*In a Dark, Dark House*

*Reasons to Be Happy*

*A Director's Concept*

*The Shape of the Pain*

*Some Girl(s)*

Herb Gardner Comedy Characters: 4 male, 1 female, 12 year-old boy 2 Interior scenes This benchmark of Broadway comedy produced one of the theatre's most beloved roles: unconventional Murray, uncle to precocious nephew, Nick. Tired of writing cheap comedy gags for "Chipper the Chipmunk," a children's television star, Murray finds himself unemployed with plenty of free time with which to pursue his...pursuits. L lectured by his conventional brother Arnold and hounded by "the system," Murray is paid a visit by bickering, uptight social workers, Sandra and Albert, and finds himself solving their problems as well as most of his own. "Would be a standout comedy in any season. Filled with laughter and warmth and sweetness and inspired daffiness. One of the quintessential New York comedies."-New York Daily News "An extraordinarily funny play with some brilliantly offbeat lines."-The New York Post Your career as a writer is blossoming, your beautiful, young fiancée is waiting to get married and rush off to Cancun by your side - so what is your natural reaction? Well, if you're a man, it's probably to get nervous and start calling up old girlfriends. And so begins a single man's odyssey through four hotel rooms, as he flies across the country in search of the perfect woman (whom he's already broken up with). In grand LaBute fashion, this by turns outrageously funny and deadly serious portrait of the artist as a young seducer casts a truthful, hilarious light on a typical young American male as he wanders through the heart of darkness that is himself. "[LaBute's] view of modern men and women is unsparing ... [He] is holding up a pitiless mirror to ourselves. We may not like what we see, but we can't deny that - if only in some dark corner of our souls - it is there." -Jacques le Sourd, The Journal News "LaBute ... continues to

probe the fascinating dark side of individualism ... [His] great gift is to live in and to chronicle that murky area of not-knowing, which mankind spends much of its waking life denying." -John Lahr, The New Yorker"

She's a college professor with a prim demeanor, and he's a carpenter with a foul mouth and violent streak. Betty has a history of promiscuity that Bobby won't let her forget, and from their first taunting exchanges there are intimations also of the history between them. Yet on the night when Betty urgently needs help to empty her cabin in the woods--the cabin she's been renting to a male student--she calls on Bobby. In this exhilarating play of secrets and sibling rivalry, which had its premiere in London's West End in 2011, Neil LaBute unflinchingly explores the dark territory beyond, as Bobby sneeringly says, "the lies you tell yourself to get by."

His films *In the Company of Men* and *Your Friends and Neighbors* both gained critical renown for their biting satire and caustic wit. Now, with *The Distance from Here*, he has written his most riveting play yet, an intense look at the dark side of American suburbia. With little to occupy their time other than finding a decent place to hang out—the zoo, the mall, the school parking lot—Darrell and Tim are two American teenagers who lack any direction or purpose in their lives. When Darrell's suspicion about the faithlessness of his girlfriend is confirmed and Tim comes to her defense, there is nothing to brake their momentum as all three speed toward disaster.

The Money Shot

Dying City

A New Comedy

The Way We Get By

And Other Plays

Neil LaBute: Plays 2

***Meet Beth and Doug, two people who have no problems getting dates with their partners of choice. After a drunken party and a hot night, they wake up to a blurry morning where the rules of attraction, sex, and society are waiting for them before their first cup of coffee. It's very awkward—and it also leads the pair to ponder how much they really know about each other, and how much they really care about what other people think.***

***THE WAY WE GET BY is a play about love and lust and the whole damn thing.***

***The mortal conflict of the sexes, traced here by Strindberg in the clash between an aristocratic young woman and her valet. Ms. Stockenstrom's new translation retains the rhythm and emotional feel of the original while making the prose more playable for today's audiences.***

***Three years after a difficult breakup, Steph and Greg are wondering if they can start over again. The trouble is, she's married someone else and he's started a relationship with her best friend Carly. Meanwhile, Carly's ex-husband Kent wants her back, and even more so when he hears about her new romance with his best friend Greg. As emotions run high, all four find themselves entangled in a web of hidden agendas and half-truths in their pursuit of a happy life. A companion piece to the acclaimed *Reasons to Be Pretty*, Neil LaBute's *Reasons to Be Happy* received its UK premiere at Hampstead Theatre, London, in March 2016.***

***The title play, which had its American premiere at La MaMa in 2012, rivetingly explores the relationship between a nervous older man and a glib young prostitute, as their evening together drives toward a startling conclusion. Also included is the one-act play *The Great War*, which looks at a divorcing couple and the ground they need to cross to reach their own end of hostilities; *In the Beginning*, which was written as a***

*response to the Occupy movement and produced around the world in 2012-13 as part of Theatre Uncut; The Wager, the stage version of the film Double or Nothing starring Adam Brody; the two-handers A Guy Walks Into a Bar, Over the River and Through the Woods, and Strange Fruit; and two powerful new monologues, Bad Girl and The Pony of Love.*

*Neil LaBute*

*Three Plays*

*Your Friends and Neighbors*

*The Woman Upstairs*