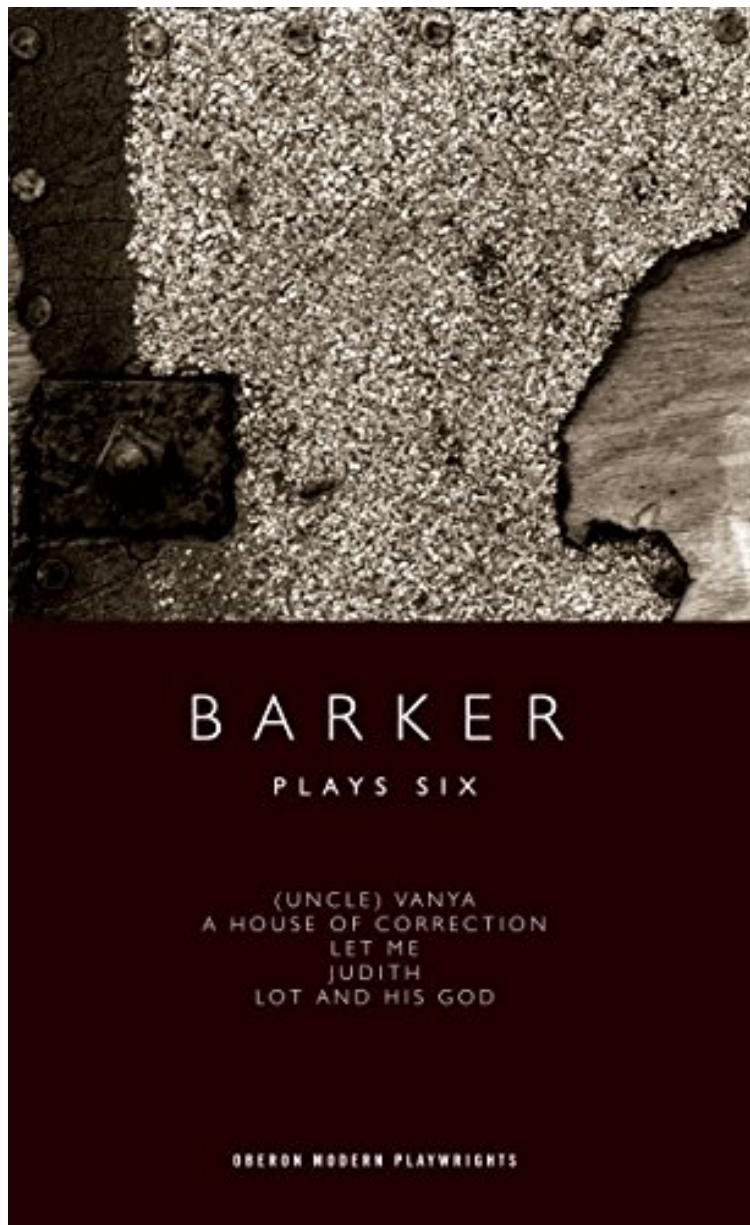


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Howard Barker : Barker: Plays Six (Plays: Howard Barker) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Barker: Plays Six (Plays: Howard Barker):

Includes the plays Judith, (Uncle) Vanya, A House of Correction, Let Me and Lot and His God Barker's radical

rewriting of Chekhov's classic (*Uncle*) *Vanya* brought him more controversy than most of his other works put together. Interrogating not so much Chekhov's text as the use to which society has put it, Barker turns *Vanya*'s defeat into victory and converts a play of sadness into a tragedy of desire. *A House of Correction* is a meditation on cause and effect. Set on the eve of a war which may destroy a society, the seemingly arbitrary arrival of a messenger with a vital communication sets off an agonizing train of events in the lives of three desperate women. Few works of drama can have plumbed the depths of solitude and rage that characterize *Let Me*, a nightmare set on the frontiers of the Roman Empire during the barbarian invasions. Biblical narratives serve as the origin of two shorter works, of which *Judith* is a contemporary classic of cultural conflict, a reinterpretation of the status of the heroine in Israel's war of survival against the Assyrians. In *Lot and His God*, the imminent destruction of Sodom simultaneously licenses the moral decay of an angel and the erotic epiphany of an adored wife.

"If you buy this collection, do it for (*Uncle*) *Vanya*, a dazzlingly intellectual rewrite of Chekhov's 1897 work of the less parenthetical name. At once critical and in awe of the Russian dramatist, Barker interrogates the balance between culture and instinct. Barker's characters are confused by the literary symbolism which surrounds them, hearing the crash of the waves yet unable to place the sea. Tantalisingly erudite, these poetic pieces are certainly worth a read." *Buzz Magazine*