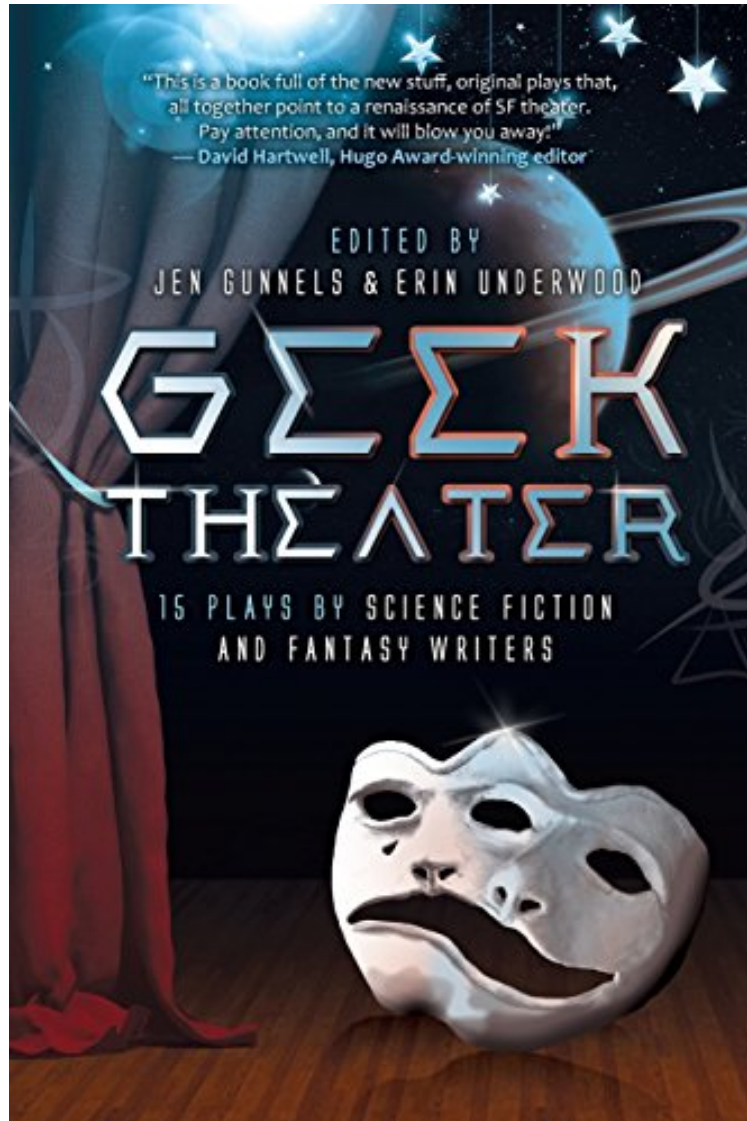


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## Geek Theater

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**From Underwords : Geek Theater** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Geek Theater:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A terrific and much needed collection!By B. MitchellExcerpted from my full review at SurrealTimePress.comIf there ever was a moment for a collection of plays like Geek Theater: Fifteen Plays by Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers, this is it. The recently published volume has been carefully curated by editors Jen Gunnels and Erin Underwood to celebrate the current proliferation of geek related content in

theater. As a New York theater critic, I have had the great privilege of witnessing this invasion of geek genres and ideas first hand over the last ten years; in fact, I have previously reviewed productions of two of the plays published here. In this collection as on the stages of innumerable downtown theaters science fictions concepts like zombies, space travel, and cloning are stacked next to modern reimaginations of classical literature and theatrical explorations of geek culture itself. In their introduction to *Geek Theater*, the editors make a point to note that this is the first collection of its kind featuring only Short, Medium, and Full Length plays that were written with the intention of being performed live on stage. (Previous collections of sci-fi plays were inevitably made up of radio plays or teleplays.) Each play has a laser like and impressive specificity. Every one of these stories frames itself within a very particular environment or universe and does so with such relish. The difference in vernacular between, say, a story about a steampunk type robot and a steampunk type robot in Castros Cuba is staggering; the localized flavor adds a true authenticity to the fantastical elements of the story. Similarly, there have been many retellings of the Faust story, but I don't know that there has ever been a version where Faust has been recast as Groucho Marx. I love that all these play enjoy wallowing in their weird specificities to such a degree. It has been fun to imagine (in the cases where I have not seen a production) what live versions of these plays might look like. In theater the aesthetic is always at the mercy of the budget especially in indie theater where the budgets are usually pretty small. A show at the Barrow Street Theater cannot afford to include two giant Transformers robots fighting each other and a play at the Secret Theater in Long Island City cannot logistically depict a race of giant praying mantis aliens destroying civilization and then enslaving the human race. These are things that movies do well, but live theater cannot. What live theater can do well is intimacy. Thinking On similar lines, Hitchcock once said that the greatest special effect in a movie is a close up that's a good point, but even a close up pales in comparison to the close quarters capable with live theater. An audience is literally there in the room with the story. There are no jump cuts, no montages; audiences must feel their way through a situation in real time. The tremendous plays in this collection fully understand this opportunity and use it to marvelous effect while spinning their epic science fiction yarns. Whether they are astronauts in an orbiter or super-intelligent scientists trying to cure a plague, the characters in these plays are characters first and are never one-dimensional genre props. In the tradition of Rod Serling's *The Twilight Zone*, the plays collected in *Geek Theater* keep the big ticket special effects mostly off-stage and instead find their stories in the human moments and mind-blowing ideas in the spaces between. I'm fascinated and invigorated by the idea that while mindless effects-laden movies are becoming common in Hollywood, the pure science fiction of the mind lives on and thrives in live theater. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Azygos LaRue Fantastic collection. A must-read if you love SF; extra "must" if you love theater.

*Geek Theater* showcases 15 science fiction and fantasy stage plays by some of today's top authors and award-winning playwrights and is the first anthology that truly delves into the world of speculative fiction theater. Until recently, modern science fiction and fantasy stage plays have largely gone unnoticed despite the proliferation of plays and performances by theater companies around the world. These plays are an important part of the science fiction and fantasy cannon as they represent a unique intersection of authors and playwrights producing work at a time when these genres are flourishing.