

**Friedrich Dürrenmatt**  
***The Visit***

Published by Diogenes as *Der Besuch der alten Dame*  
Original title: *Der Besuch der alten Dame*



**Dürrenmatt**  
***Der Besuch  
der alten Dame***

Tragische Komödie

Diogenes

In ›The Visit‹ an old lady who becomes the wealthiest person in the world returns to the village that cast her out as a young woman and offers riches to the town in exchange for the life of the man, now its mayor, who once disgraced her.

## Book factsheet

Contemporary Literature, Compulsory Reading  
160 pages  
11.3 x 18 cm  
February 1980

World rights are handled by Diogenes

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French (L'Arche)  
Hebrew (Or Am)  
Italian (Einaudi)  
Japanese (Choeisha)  
Korean (Minumsa)  
Romanian (Univers)  
Spanish/world (Tusquets)  
Uzbek (Voris)

### 🎬 Movie adaptations

**2015: Im Labyrinth / Friedrich Dürrenmatt.  
Der kritische Geist der Schweiz**

Director: Sabine Gisiger  
Screenplay: Sabine Gisiger

**2010: Schurkenstück**

Director: Torsten C. Fischer  
Screenplay: Eva Zahn  
Cast: Katharina Schüttler und Oliver Korritke

**2008: Der Besuch der alten Dame**

Director: Nikolaus Leytner  
Screenplay: Thomas Eifler  
Cast: Christiane Hörbiger, Michael Mendl,  
Muriel Baumeister, Rolf Hoppe, Rüdiger Vogler

**2001: The Pledge**

Director: Sean Penn  
Cast: Margaret Larsen, Helen Jackson

**1997: Es geschah am helllichten Tag**

Director: Nico Hofmann  
Cast: Joachim Król, Barbara Rudnik, Axel  
Milberg

**1996: Es geschah am helllichten Tag**

Director: Bernd Eichinger  
Cast: Joachim Król, Barbara Rudnik, Axel  
Milberg

**1995: Tod im kalten Morgenlicht**

Director: Rudolf van den Berg  
Cast: Richard E. Grant, Lynsey Baxter, Perdita  
Weeks

**1994: Der Wiedertäufer**

Director: Heinrich Koch



Friedrich Dürrenmatt (1921 – 1990) was born in Konolfingen near Berne as the son of a protestant minister. He studied philosophy, German literature and history of art in Berne and Zurich and worked as a playwright, novelist, essayist and painter in Neuchâtel, where he lived with his family.



**Subject Matter**  
2352 pages  
2021



**The Plays**  
1584 pages  
2015



**The Crime Novels**  
992 pages  
2011



**His Life in Pictures**  
376 pages  
2011

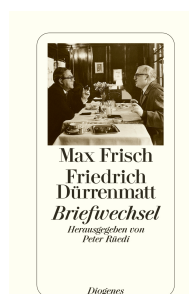


**Labyrinth / Turmbau (Subject Matter I-IX)**  
736 pages  
2002

**My Switzerland**  
256 pages  
1998



**The Minotaur/ The Assignment; or, On the Observing of the Observers/ Midas**  
208 pages  
1998



**Max Frisch, Friedrich Dürrenmatt - Correspondence**  
240 pages  
1998

## 📺 Movie adaptations (cont'd)

### 1994: In the Cold Light of Day

Director: Rudolf van den Berg  
Cast: Richard E. Grant, Perdita Weeks, Simon Cadell

### 1993: Justiz

Director: Hans Werner Geißendörfer  
Cast: Maximilian Schell, Thomas Heinze, Matthias Gnädinger, Anna Thalbach

### 1992: Hyänen / Hyènes, Ramatou

Director: Djibril diop Mamberty  
Screenplay: Djibril diop Mamberty  
Cast: Mansour Diouf, Ami Diakhate

### 1992: Hyènes

Director: Djibril diop Mamberty  
Cast: Mansour Diouf, Ami Diakhate

### 1989: Die Welt ist ein Irrenhaus: Achterloo IV

Director: Roman Brodman

### 1988: Abendstunde im Spätherbst

Director: August Everding  
Cast: Mario Adorf, Horst Bollmann

### 1988: Achterloo

Director: Friedrich Dürrenmatt  
Cast: Helmut Lohner, Georg Preusse

### 1982: Der Besuch der alten Dame

Director: Max Peter Ammann  
Cast: Maria Schell, Adolphe Spalinger, Günter Lamprecht

### 1982: Der Besuch der alten Dame

Director: Max Peter Ammann  
Cast: Maria Schell, Günter Lamprecht, Ruedi Walter

### 1975: Der Richter und sein Henker

Director: Maximilian Schell  
Cast: Jon Voight, Jacquerline Bisset, Helmut Qualtinger, Robert Shaw, Friedrich Dürrenmatt

### 1974: Der Mitmacher

Director: Friedrich Dürrenmatt  
Cast: Buddy Elias, Elmar Schulte, Werner Schumacher

### 1973: Der Wiedertäufer

Director: Werner Schlechte  
Cast: E. Marks, F. Schütter, V. Lechtenbrink

### 1973: Der Besuch der alten Dame

Director: Hans/Cella Gaugler/Ettore  
Cast: Hasle Rüegsau

### 1972: La piu bella serata della mia vita

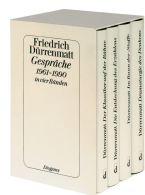
Director: Ettore Scola  
Cast: Alberto Sordi, Michel Simon, Pierre Brasseur

### 1971: Porträt eines Planeten

Director: Friedrich Dürrenmatt  
Cast: W. Reichmann, H. Lohner, Ch. Hörbiger



Switzerland - A Prison  
80 pages  
1997



Conversations 1961-1990  
1296 pages  
1996



The Pledge  
160 pages  
1996

**Movie Adaptation**



The Pensioner  
200 pages  
1995

**Movie adaptations (cont'd)**

**1971: König Johann**  
Director: Vaclav Hudcek  
Cast: H. Qualtinger, H. Seeböck

**1967: Der Meteor**  
Director: Leopold Lindtberg  
Cast: Leonard Steckel, Wolfgang Forster, Gert Westphal, Peter Broghe

**1967: Frank V. Opfer einer Privatbank**  
Director: Friedrich Dürrenmatt  
Cast: Therese Giehse, Hubert von Meyernick

**1966: Grieche sucht Griechin**  
Director: Rolf Thiele  
Cast: Heinz Rühmann, Irina Demick, Charles Regnier

**1965: Romulus der Große**  
Director: Helmut Käutner  
Cast: Romuald Pekny

**1964: Die Physiker**  
Director: Fritz Umgelter  
Cast: Therese Giehse, Gustav Knuth, Kurt Ehrhardt, Wolfgang Kieling, Siegfried Lowitz

**1964: Ein Engel kommt nach Babylon**  
Director: William Dieterle

**1963: The Visit**  
Director: Bernhard Wicki  
Cast: Ingrid Bergmann, Anthony Quinn, Hans-Christian Blech

**1961: Die Ehe des Herrn Mississippi**  
Director: Kurt Hoffmann  
Cast: O.E. Hasse, Johanna von Koczan, Martin Held, Charles Regnier, Max Haufler

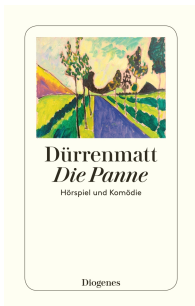
**1960: Abendstunde im Spätherbst**  
Director: Rudolf Noelte  
Cast: Ernst Schröder, Friedrich Maurer, Günter Meissner

**1959: Der Besuch der alten Dame**  
Director: Ludwig Cremer  
Cast: R. Wanka, E. Flickenschildt, A. Schradiek

**1958: Es geschah am helllichten Tag**  
Director: Ladislao Vajda  
Screenplay: Friedrich Dürrenmatt  
Cast: Heinz Rühmann, Michel Simon, Gert Fröbe

**1957: Die Panne**  
Director: Fritz Umgelter  
Cast: Peter Ahrweiler, Carl Wery, Harry Hardt

**1957: Der Richter und sein Henker**  
Director: Franz Peter Wirth  
Cast: Herbert Tiede, Maria Körber, K.G. Saebisch

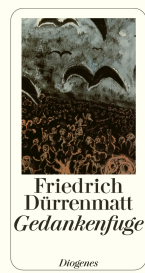


Traps  
144 pages  
1995

**Movie Adaptation**



The Enormity of the Possible  
144 pages  
1993

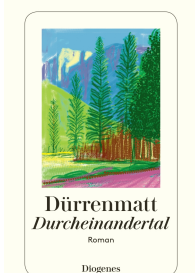


Gedankenfuge  
208 pages  
1992

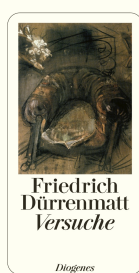


Greek Man Seeks Greek Wife  
160 pages  
1992

**Movie Adaptation**



The Vale of Confusion  
176 pages  
1989



Trials  
184 pages  
1988



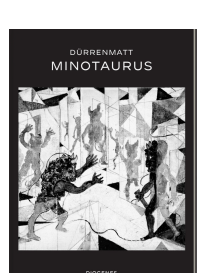
The Judge and His Hangman  
128 pages  
1986



The Assignment  
136 pages  
1986



Suspicion  
128 pages  
1986



The Minotaur  
56 pages  
1985



Justice  
376 pages  
1985

**Movie Adaptation**



The Winter War in Tibet  
192 pages  
1984

**Praise**

*The Visit*



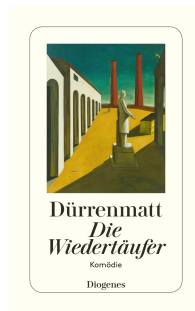
**Achterloo**  
128 pages  
1983



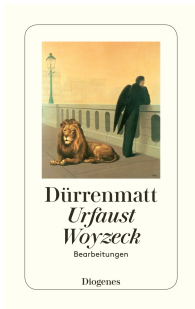
**The Winter War in Tibet/  
Lunar Eclipse/ The Rebel**  
360 pages  
1981  
**Movie Adaptation**



**Nexus**  
240 pages  
1980



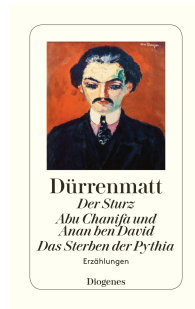
**The Anabaptists**  
144 pages  
1980  
**Movie Adaptation**



**Urfaust/ Woyzeck.**  
Adaptations  
208 pages  
1980



**Theatre**  
272 pages  
1980



**The Coup/ Abu Chanifa  
and Anan ben David/  
Smithy/ The Dying of the  
Pythia**  
160 pages  
1980



**Romulus the Great**  
176 pages  
1980  
**Movie Adaptation**



**The Complete Prose  
Oeuvre**  
3024 pages  
1980



**Politics**  
192 pages  
1980



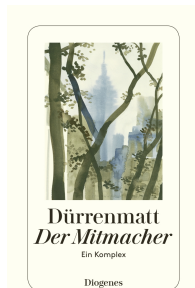
**Play Strinberg/ Portrait  
of a Planet**  
208 pages  
1980  
**Movie Adaptation**



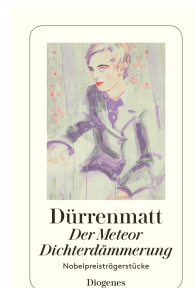
**The Physicists**  
96 pages  
1980  
**Movie Adaptation**



**Philosophical Essays**  
208 pages  
1980



**The Conformist**  
336 pages  
1980



**The Meteor/ Twilight of  
the Poets**  
208 pages  
1980  
**Movie Adaptation**



**Literature and Painting**  
240 pages  
1980

## Praise (cont'd)

» ... one of the most stimulating and engrossing of all the plays written since World War II.« – Clive Barnes / The New York Times

Friedrich Dürrenmatt

»Even after the death of its author, his huge and unique work is still a dark continent, largely unilluminated and untested, a continent in motion, always good for intellectual surprises and dramatic adventures.« – Gert Ueding

»One of Europe's most important postwar dramatists.« – The Daily Telegraph, London

»Dürrenmatt was addressing the real crowd assembled in real theaters with all their swiftly changing feelings, their ignorance, bad habits and vaulting possibilities. At the same time he was a philosopher-poet with one eye on the picture of the real, on artifice, and on the long preoccupations of philosophy and art through the ages.« – Arthur Miller

»Dürrenmatt has always been too impulsive for his times but the chaotic world has quickly caught up with him. That's why his work will last. The purifying force of his irony becomes the more important and useful – particularly because it is driven by the profound humanity that Dürrenmatt's friends always knew in him.« – Peter Brook

»Now, like an avalanche in far-off mountains, comes Friedrich Dürrenmatt, a detective-story writer with a genius for the theater, to give us a new theme, or rather to remind us of an ancient one: justice. His vision is a cold one but pure, and very nearly unique in our day, for in his devotion to the idea of justice he has succeeded in casting across an age committed to false Love the dark shadow of the scales.« – Gore Vidal

»It was once observed by Oscar Wilde that a writer should be able to write anything. Mr. Dürrenmatt meets Wilde's requirement. He adopts a manner well liked by some of our better writers, that of a Roman of the later Empire, a golden weariness. Mr. Dürrenmatt chooses compression of style and strictness of form, but the late Imperial feeling is still there.« – Saul Bellow

»One of the greatest writers of our century.« – Corriere della Sera, Milan

»Next to Kafka and Camus, he is one of the great questioners of this world.« – Martin Ebel / Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich

»Friedrich Dürrenmatt belonged to the most cheerful apocalyptic writers of the 20th century.« – Thomas Hürlimann / Neue Zürcher Zeitung, Zurich

»Universal, uncomfortable and visionary: Friedrich Dürrenmatt is the worthy reigning literary monarch of the year.« – Wener Krause / Kleine Zeitung, Graz

»He is evil, he doesn't think anything good of humanity, and he describes this – but he does it with wit.« – Elke Heidenreich / SRF2, Zurich

**Praise (cont'd)**

»Friedrich Dürrenmatt is a centennial author, because he saw the century that was to follow him too.« – Daniele Muscionico / Aargauer Zeitung, Aarau



**Reviews**  
176 pages  
1980



**King John/ Titus Andronicus**  
240 pages  
1980

**Movie Adaptation**



**The Dog/ The Tunnel/ Traps**  
112 pages  
1980



**Hercules and the Augean Stables/ The Trial about the Donkey's Shadow**  
240 pages  
1980



**Greek Man Seeks Greek Wife/ Mr. X Goes on Holiday/ News about the State of Press during the Stone Age**  
208 pages  
1980



**Nocturnal Conversation with a Scorned Man/ Stranitzky and the National Hero/ The Vega Enterprise**  
160 pages  
1980



**The Deadline**  
160 pages  
1980



**Frank V**  
176 pages  
1980

**Movie Adaptation**



**It Is Written/ The Blind Man**  
336 pages  
1980



**An Angel Comes to Babylon**  
144 pages  
1980

**Movie Adaptation**



**The Marriage of Mr. Mississippi**  
224 pages  
1980

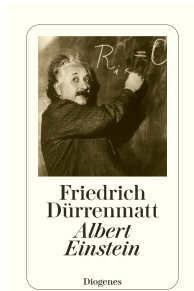
**Movie Adaptation**



**The Complete Dramatic Oeuvre**  
3408 pages  
1980



**Early Prose: Christmas/ The Torturer/ The Sausage/ The Son/ The Old Man/ Portrait of Sisyphos/ The Theatre Director/ The Trap/ Pilatos/ The Town/ From the Papers of a Guardsman**  
208 pages  
1980



**Albert Einstein**  
80 pages  
1979