



True and False: Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor

By David Mamet

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One of our most brilliantly iconoclastic playwrights takes on the art of profession of acting with these words: invent nothing, deny nothing, speak up, stand up, stay out of school. Acting schools, “interpretation,” “sense memory,” “The Method”—David Mamet takes a jackhammer to the idols of contemporary acting, while revealing the true heroism and nobility of the craft. He shows actors how to undertake auditions and rehearsals, deal with agents and directors, engage audiences, and stay faithful to the script, while rejecting the temptations that seduce so many of their colleagues. Bracing in its clarity, exhilarating in its common sense, *True and False* is as shocking as it is practical, as witty as it is instructive, and as irreverent as it is inspiring.

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True and False: Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor By David Mamet Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

To hell with Stanislavsky. To hell with the Method. "The actor is onstage to communicate the play to the audience," says David Mamet. "That is the beginning and the end of his and her job. To do so the actor needs a strong voice, superb diction, a supple, well-proportioned body and a rudimentary understanding of the play." Anything else--"becoming" one's part, "feeling" the character's emotions--devalues the practice of a noble craft and is useless to the play. "The 'work' you do 'on the script' will make no difference," he cautions. "That work has already been done by a person with a different job title than yours. That person is the author."

But *True and False* does not confine itself to the work done on the actual stage. Its brief essays contain sound advice on how an actor might apply himself or herself to the *life* of the actor: the proper consideration due the audition process, the selection of parts that one accepts, and so on. Mamet delivers these kernels of wisdom in the taut, no-nonsense prose for which he is justifiably famous, and, ultimately, his core principles are applicable beyond the theater. "Speak up, speak clearly, open yourself out, relax your body, find a simple objective," he instructs. "Practice in these goals is practice in respect for the audience, and without respect for the audience, there is no respect for the theater; there is only self-absorption." Substitute "others" for "the audience" and "life" for "the theater," and could any Taoist say it better? --Ron Hogan

From Library Journal

Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Mamet (e.g., *Glengarry Glen Ross*), considered a foremost contemporary American dramatist by most critics, here offers a bold new approach to acting. Mamet draws on his decades of observing good (and bad) acting to present a slim but intriguing volume of musings. Disdainful of studios, acting schools, and graduate school, he declares, "The classroom will teach you how to obey, and obedience in the theater will get you nowhere." Mamet exhorts actors to show up early, have their lines down cold, and have a single objective for each scene. He contends that overthinking and too much emotional interpretation is not the actor's role. Essential reading for theater collections. ?J. Sara Paulk, Coastal Plain Regional Lib., Tifton, Ga.

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Review

"Mamet manages to demolish the myths...that pass for theory with regard to acting and directing. . . *True and False* is a revealing book of the highest order and a pleasure to read"—Anthony Hopkins

"Hard-edged, pragmatic and idealistic. . . . Every actor or would-be actor should read this book."—*Chicago Tribune*

"Trenchant...Mamet's pared-down, occasionally cryptic prose can make powerful sense."—*The New York Times*

"This book should be read and considered by everyone who acts."—Steve Martin

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Donna Cook:

Have you spare time for any day? What do you do when you have a lot more or little spare time? Yeah, you can choose the suitable activity to get spend your time. Any person spent their own spare time to take a go walking, shopping, or went to the Mall. How about open or maybe read a book eligible True and False: Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor? Maybe it is being best activity for you. You realize beside you can spend your time using your favorite's book, you can wiser than before. Do you agree with it has the opinion or you have various other opinion?

Harold McDonough:

Nowadays reading books are more than want or need but also get a life style. This reading routine give you lot of advantages. The advantages you got of course the knowledge the rest of the information inside the book in which improve your knowledge and information. The details you get based on what kind of book you read, if you want drive more knowledge just go with schooling books but if you want really feel happy read one using theme for entertaining for example comic or novel. The particular True and False: Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor is kind of reserve which is giving the reader unpredictable experience.

Michelle Jennings:

Reading a guide tends to be new life style in this era globalization. With studying you can get a lot of information that will give you benefit in your life. Along with book everyone in this world can share their idea. Textbooks can also inspire a lot of people. Lots of author can inspire their reader with their story or their experience. Not only the storyplot that share in the ebooks. But also they write about the knowledge about something that you need case in point. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your young ones, there are many kinds of book which exist now. The authors on earth always try to improve their skill in writing, they also doing some research before they write to the book. One of them is this True and False: Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor.

Kathleen Hernandez:

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