

RECOMMENDED BOOKS ON PLAYWRITING

THE FOLLOWING BOOKS ARE RECOMMENDED FOR READING IN PLAYWRITING & THE HISTORY OF THE THEATRE:

1. ARISTOTLE: POETICS (ANY EDITION) - A FEW DEBATABLE POINTS BUT STILL THE MOST PRACTICALLY USEFUL APPROACH TO THE PRINCIPLES OF PLAYWRITING; ARISTOTLE'S DEFINITION OF TRAGEDY IS CORNERSTONE OF WESTERN THEATRE.
2. STANISLAVSKY: MY LIFE IN ART (WORLD) - AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF STANISLAVSKY SHOWS HOW HE LAID FOUNDATION OF THE METHOD FOR ACTORS, CONTAINS MOST OF THE IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES SET FORTH IN THE 3 OTHER ACTING BOOKS (BUILDING A CHARACTER; AN ACTOR PREPARES; CREATING A ROLE). (THEATRE ARTS)
3. WILLIAM PACKARD: THE ART OF THE PLAYWRIGHT (PARAGON HOUSE) - CHAPTERS ON DRAMATICS VERSUS NARRATIVE; THE STAGE IS A VISUAL AREA; DRAMA IS ACTION; OBSTACLES TO ACTION; HOW MUCH IS AT STAKE; CHARACTER IS ACTION; DIALOGUE AND MOTIFS; EXPOSITION AND TITLES; PLOTS AND CONFLICTS; THE PLAY TEXT ITSELF; HISTORY OF PLAYS AND PLAYWRITING. SPECIAL CHAPTER ON CONTEMPORARY AND AVANT-GARDE PLAYWRIGHTS, AND THE PROCESS OF PLAYWRITING. APPENDIX ON PLAY PRODUCTION, COPYRIGHT, AGENCY, MARKETING, PLUS GLOSSARY OF STAGE TERMS AND CHRONOLOGY OF PLAYS. FOREWORDS BY GENE FRANKEL AND JOSE FERRER.
4. WILLIAM PACKARD: THE ART OF SCREENWRITING (PARAGON HOUSE) - CHAPTERS ON HISTORY OF SCREENWRITING; FILM WRITING VERSUS STAGE WRITING; ADAPTING WORK FROM ANOTHER GENRE; WRITING ORIGINAL SCREENPLAYS; DEVELOPING A FILM HEAD; THE PROCESS OF WRITING; SCREEN TREATMENTS; SCREENPLAY FORMAT; GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS; MARKETING AND AGENCY; CONTRACTS, UNIONS, COPYRIGHT; COLLABORATION. FOREWORD BY BEATRICE STRAIGHT.
5. UTA HAGEN: RESPECT FOR ACTING (MACMILLAN) - CLASSIC BOOK ON ACTING, EQUALLY ILLUMINATING FROM PLAYWRITING AND DIRECTORIAL POINT OF VIEW. DISCUSSIONS OF ACTING SHAKESPEARE, CHEKHOV, TENNESSEE WILLIAMS, &C.
6. FRANCIS FERGUSSON: THE IDEA OF A THEATRE (PRINCETON) - SURVEY OF DRAMATIC ACTION AS IT OCCURS IN OEDIPUS REX, HAMLET, GHOSTS, THE CHERRY ORCHARD, MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL.
7. MICHEL ST-DENIS: THEATRE - THE REDISCOVERY OF STYLE (THEATRE ARTS) - BASED ON LECTURES ST-DENIS GAVE ON FOUNDING OF AMERICAN SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL, AN IMPORTANT DISCUSSION OF STYLE IN ACTING. INTRODUCTION BY SIR LAURENCE OLIVIER.
8. RICHARD BOLESLOVSKY: ACTING - THE FIRST SIX LESSONS (THEATRE ARTS) - DIALOGUE BETWEEN A MASTER DIRECTOR AND A YOUNG ACTRESS, ON THE ART OF ACTING. THOROUGHLY STIMULATING AND INFORMATIVE.
9. TOBY COLE: PLAYWRIGHTS ON PLAYWRITING (DRAMABOOK) - EXCERPTS FROM WRITINGS OF IBSEN, ZOLA, STRINDBERG, CHEKHOV, SHAW, LORCA, O'NEILL, BRECHT, WILDER, MILLER, TENNESSEE WILLIAMS. A RICH SOURCE BOOK.
10. THE THEATRE OF JEAN-LOUIS BARRAULT (THEATRE ARTS) - WONDERFUL FUN, AND A GLIMPSE INTO MODERN INTERPRETER OF RACINE, SHAKESPEARE, AND CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN STYLES SUCH AS IONESCO.
11. TENNESSEE WILLIAMS: MEMOIRS (DOUBLEDAY) - DECEPTIVE IN ITS BRIGHT CHATTERY STYLE, MAKES A PROFOUND SUBTEXT OF ANGUISH AND DEVOTION TO THE ART OF THE THEATRE.
12. DICTIONARY OF THE THEATRE (FACTS ON FILE) - EDITED BY WILLIAM PACKARD, DAVID PICKERING AND CHARLOTTE SAVIDGE. COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THEATRE, 5000 ENTRIES ON ACTORS, ACTRESSES, PLAYWRIGHTS, DIRECTORS, PRODUCERS, PLAYS, &C. USEFUL AS SOURCE BOOK OR JUST FOR GENERAL READING.

