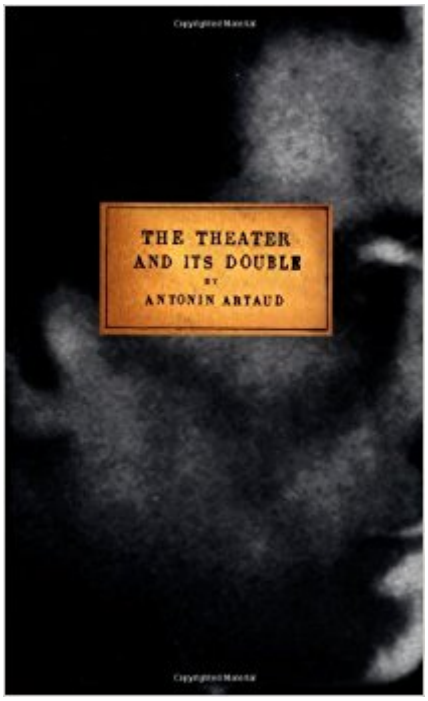
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The Theater And Its Double



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Synopsis

A collection of manifestos originally published in 1938, The Theater and Its Double is the fullest statement of the ideas of Antonin Artaud. “We cannot go on prostituting the idea of the theater, the only value of which is in its excruciating, magical relation to reality and danger,Ã¢â ¬Â• he wrote. He fought vigorously against an encroaching conventionalism he found anathema to the very concept of theater. He sought to use theater to transcend writing, “to break through the language in order to touch life.Ã¢â ¬Â•

Book Information

Paperback: 159 pages

Publisher: Grove Press (January 7, 1994)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0802150306

ISBN-13: 978-0802150301

Product Dimensions: 0.2 x 5.5 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 14 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #56,511 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #38 inÃ Â Books > Arts & Photography > Performing Arts > Theater > History & Criticism #528 inÃ Â Books > Literature & Fiction > Dramas & Plays #4423 inÃ Â Books > Humor & Entertainment

Customer Reviews

Since its first publication in 1938, The Theater and Its Double by the French artist and philosopher Antonin Artaud has continued to provoke, inspire, enrage, enliven, challenge, and goad any number of theatrical debates in its call for a "Theater of Cruelty." A trio of theatrical manifestos, the book is an aggressive attack on many of the most treasured beliefs of both theater and Western culture. According to Artaud, the theater’s "double" is similar to its Jungian "shadow," the unacknowledged, unconscious element that completes it but is in many ways its opposite. As "culture" inexorably draws the artistic impulse into safe channels, the repressed irrational urges of theater, based on dreams, religion, and emotion, are increasingly necessary to "purge" the sickness of society. Artaud identifies language itself as one of the major cultural culprits, and his attacks on it occasionally makes his text rough going. But his challenge to restore relevance to the heart of the theatrical experience remains fundamental to the vitality of theater, and his insistence on the sensory experience of drama as opposed to the literary (and such innovative ideas as the use of

unconventional "found spaces") continues to be the clarion call of the theatrical avant-garde. --John Longenbaugh

'The Theater and Its Double' is far and away the most important thing that has been written about the theater in the twentieth century. It should be read again and again. Artaud oozed magical desires. He was the metaphysician of the theater.---Jean-Loius Barrault

Great read. Artaud's ideas about theatre can be utilized in any art form. Written in 1938, his ideas are pertinent today.

One of the most important texts for understanding the truth of the Theatre. The Theatre and its Double together with Towards a Poor Theatre by Jerzy Grotowski and Creating a Role by Stanislavski are -no doubt- among the most powerful texts ever written about Theatre (and you can apply their teachings to the audiovisual world as well).

I'm biased when it comes to acting books. I don't find a bad book, I find within that book, a bad actor. The thing is, all literature is interpreted in the eye of the interpreter, and it's up to you to understand how the book is meant to be delivered. Sure, the author may have meant one thing a certain way, but that's not what real acting, good acting is all about. Acting is about doing...about reaction...If the book has an effect on you in a certain way, react to it. Maybe you loved the book...your call! Maybe you didn't...your call! Whatever it is, it's up to you to decide how pretentious you find the author or how inspired you are by his words!Nonetheless, my personal take on the book was splendid. Not splendid enough that I would read it again, but worth the $20 I threw down on it. Who knows, I just may read it again, but there are better ones out there.

A classic and important text. Came in such a cheaply produced version, running print, chaffing on cover, etc. Add to that perhaps not the best packaging. So pretty disappointing. A little like the morning paper after it's bounced a few times prior to landing at your door.

As a theatre student this book is an incredibly intellectual insight into theatre theory and practice.Although it can be hard to comprehend in parts, it is well worth a read, it's sheds a darkly intriguing light on the art of theatre and on the world that has shaped it.I would recommend it to anyone interested in the darker side of life as well as (and especially) theatre students/enthusiasts.

Excellent

This is definitely required reading for theatre students. It will help you better understand the shift in modern and experimental theatre that has transpired over the course of the last century. It will also help you better understand the basis for a lot of horrible theatre concepts staged by overzealous students and professors, the world over.... Be wary of people throwing around the Theatre of Cruetly catchphrase as if they know what it means....

I'll admit that this is the first time I've read Artaud. And I'll admit that when I began reading the first section, The Theater and the Plague, I thought on numerous occasions, "Where is this guy going with this?" Upon concluding this section, and after picking myself up off the floor, I returned to the beginning for a another read through, and again, afterward, found myself floored. Artaud presents a take on theatre like none other. A take that many may disagree with, but few can deny the illuminating profundity of his analogies, correlations, and general theatrical philosophizing. But don't think Artaud is without a sense of humor. With a blurt like, "I saw some sort of human snakes, otherwise known as playwrights, explain how to worm a play into the good graces of a director...", whose not going to let out a chuckle? (Especially if you're guilty). In addition, this book boasts some of the best writing that I've ever read. His writing is crisp, unmasked, and intellectually and visually stimulating. And as an added bonus, nine "I'm an ugly man smoking a cigarette" black and white photos precede the text. At $10, "The Theater And Its Double" won't disappoint.

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