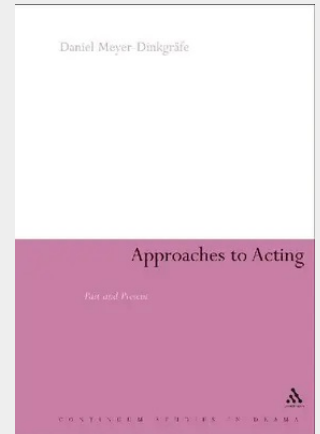


Approaches to Acting

Past and Present

For centuries the theatre has been one of the major forms of art. How did acting, and its institutionalization in the theatre, begin in the first place? In some cultures complex stories relate the origin of acting and the theatre. And over time, approaches to acting have changed considerably. In the West, until the end of the 19th century, those changes occurred within the realm of acting itself, focusing on the question of whether acting should be 'natural' or 'formal.' Approaches to acting were closely related to the trends in culture at large. Acting became more and more professional and sophisticated as philosophical theories developed and knowledge in the human sciences increased. In the 20th century, the director was established as the most important force in the theater--able to lead actors to pinnacles of their art which they could not have achieved on their own. Approaches to acting in non-Western cultures follow quite different patterns. This book provides a clear overview of different approaches to acting, both historical and contemporary, Western and non-Western, and concludes with a challenge to the future of the art.

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