



And Then, You Act: Making Art in an Unpredictable World

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From well-known auteur of the American theatre scene, Anne Bogart, *And Then, You Act* is a fascinating and accessible book about directing theatre, acting and the collaborative creative process.

Writing clearly and passionately, Bogart speaks to a wide audience, from undergraduates to practitioners, and makes an invaluable contribution to the field tackling themes such as:

intentionality inspiration why theatre matters.

Following on from her successful book *A Director Prepares*, which has become a key text for teaching directing classes, *And Then, You Act* is an essential practitioner and student resource.

And Then, You Act: Making Art in an Unpredictable World Details

Date : Published April 20th 2007 by Routledge (first published January 28th 2007)

ISBN : 9780415411424

Author : Anne Bogart

Format : Paperback 140 pages

Genre : Plays, Theatre, Nonfiction, Art



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Alyssa Cokinis says

From September 2016:

"The more substantial and complex the subject matter, the more will be asked from you in the journey, and the more you will sweat in the process. The cost is real and it is personal." -and then, you act by Anne Bogart This book. Has changed. My life. Not in the jolting, lightbulb way, but in the small illumination of a candle flame. Regardless if you are an actor or not, involved in theatre or not, as an artist of whatever trade you should read this book. It is about life.

Stuart Nager says

Absolutely blew me away at the right time. This passage, on PAGE TWO, just summed up where I was going when I read it:

"You cannot expect other people to create meaning for you. You cannot wait for someone else to define your life. You make meaning by forging it with your hands. It requires sweat and commitment. Working toward the creation of meaning is the point. It is action that forges the meaning and significance of a life."

A great book.

John says

An inspiring read with much to ponder over.

Marya Sea says

One of my artistic heroes, Anne Bogart delivers an inspiring call-to-action in this meditation on theater practice in post-9/11 America. Her insatiable hunger for meaning and action are presented in a conversational, almost step-by-step guide to creating relevant art in our culture. This is a book I will keep close as I venture into my next theater project, and beyond. An absolute must-read for anyone who strives to create excellent, relevant performance.

Cynthia says

Both this and "A Director Prepares" are as much about living, or producing any sort of art, as they are about acting and directing in the theatre. I find myself thinking of this book in every conversation I have with someone who is making something, whether that making be directing a show, making visual art, or writing a dissertation. Bogart is not Stanislavski, she does not explain to you how to dissect a scene or what to think about the moment before you go onstage. She does, however, provide a framework for thinking about the art

that you create and what you must do in order to make it happen: can you articulate your goals, your character, your ideas? Do you have an intention? Are you paying careful attention to the world around you and your project? Is the content of what you're making important to your audience- and do you know enough about it? Bogart lists seven elements of theatre: entertainment, empathy, ritual, participation, spectacle, education, and alchemy. If all artists integrated all these elements in their work, then there would be much more good art in the world.

This book does have a strong post 9/11 angle to it which makes it a bit dated now. Not that the issues brought up by 9/11 are any less important now, but because they have matured and changed. Additionally, in my eyes, the effect of the Great Recession on American culture and the production of art has been just as significant- and this book was published in 2007, before the economy toppled. Another flaw is that Bogart often likes to use Greek and Latin etymology to explain concepts, but she sometimes oversimplifies, or even cites a false etymology- she perhaps might have double-checked more carefully. Finally, and this is a minor detail, I wish she had included a bibliography of all the works that she quotes or mentions. Of course, one can go to google to find them, but it would be more professional and more convenient for the reader if she gave more detail than simply the author/speaker of the quote.

Emily says

Wow. This book was inspiring. The ideas and philosophies are more specific and complex than they were in *A Director Prepares*. I suspect that I will turn to it again and again when I need a dose of artistic wisdom.

Jess Hutchinson says

This book charges artists to make work that speaks to the context of a present, sometimes violent, always unpredictable world. I'm using it as a core text in my Directing I class in hopes that my students will simultaneously discover the "why" of their work along with the "what" and the "how."

Ashley Ho says

One of the most inspiring books I've read, and surprisingly so. Beyond the clarity of its organisation and simplicity of its language, what gives the book its power is the intertextuality it employs and offers – Bogart brims with knowledge from a wide range of contexts, and shares them with palpable ardor and awe.

It is evident that when she affirms her position on the shoulders of giants, she means it wholeheartedly. "If you recognise that your voice contains all the voices that came before you, then you will realise that when you speak you do not speak alone. All the people who made your presence possible on earth speak with you. When you begin to recognise and understand where your voice comes from and begin to explore this, you will realise how immense that voice really is."

The experience of reading Bogart inspires me to take time, chew on time, stretch myself across time, remain in time; to contemplate my decisions (or non-decisions) in thinking, practice, performance, and creation; "For us, there is only the trying. The rest is not our business" (T.S. Eliot).

Sarah says

A guide with useful platitudes to spur you on as an artist, and them, you act is an inspiring work that doesn't have much more to offer than those platitudes. The vague nature of Anne Bogart's journey outlines may be helpful in fits and starts, and inspire pride in the artist who sees their function as a life-changing force in stark black and white. But when it comes down to it, there is little here to hone in on process, so if you're looking for more of a guidebook on how to actually/practically keep artistic hope in a cruel, post-911 world, this read might be for you.

Though I will say Bogart's strongest work in this volume have to do with communication and cooperation. Being kind and creative with your collaborators is a must in the theatre world for practical reasons, but she sheds a bright light on how being good to others actually serves a global purpose and increases the richness of a production, thus affecting the world more directly. Like I said, inspiring stuff. As an artist, you feel, at the very least, primed to make an impact by the time you put down this book.

Elizabeth says

Ostensibly, the book is about creating art in difficult times - specifically in the aftermath of 9/11. It's about an artist's role and responsibility in their community and the world. It breaks the act of creating/presenting work down into the themes of context, articulation, intention, attention, magnetism, attitude, content, and time. I found the book more inspiring on a personal level than a political one - which is okay. I wasn't expecting a political manifesto.

For me, the admonition to make haste slowly - *festina lente* - reflects my situation as a artist trying to write and raise 3 children.

Kyle says

An insightful account of all the considerations directors must make before sending out actors to make art for them, Anne goes on a nearly metaphysical trip by categorizing these considerations based on Buddhist beliefs, quantum physics, Ancient Greek etymology and thankfully virtual reality. She never stays on any of these topics too long, always making room in her brief chapters to describe the actual journeys she took across the globe and the meetings with theatre-makers who inspire her. Her seven fundamental forces of theatrical magnetism works for part of my own research as I try to capture some of the alchemical elements mentioned throughout this book.

Nick O'leary says

Very much a companion to *A Director Prepares: Seven Essays on Art and Theatre*, but slightly more concrete in its advice. I'd say read *A Director Prepares* first. I've read it at least three times.

Both books are very personal. They are about Anne Bogart's work and her relationship to art, which you may or may not find inspirational, but I certainly did. Where *A Director Prepares* tends to be more philosophical, this one is much more about process, her approach to her work etc. It's far from a how to book, but it sparks ideas about how you could approach theater making. It's packed with theory, philosophy, quotations, and anecdotes.

(If you like Bogart's style, but want something more technical, consider *The Viewpoints Book: A Practical Guide to Viewpoints and Composition*, but I personally find the other two books more useful. I'll also add that I'm not very familiar with Bogart's work in performance. I saw SITI company do *Radio Macbeth* when I was 18, but didn't get much out of it at the time.)

Hannah says

I found this book energizing and engaging...was obviously very directly applicable to theater creation, and i felt it could be extrapolated further out to artmaking more broadly and also being an engaged, attentive presence in this world. i'd be interested to hear how it strikes any of the rest of yall--i have a copy if anyone wants to borrow.

Emma says

i felt like i got the gist in "a director prepares," this one didn't hold my interest.

Robin Reese says

If you're in theatre you should read this book. I find it inspiring. While reading Bogart I usually get about 1000+ ideas for plays, essays, performance pieces, films, etc. that I would like to create. And then I get sad that I don't have the time/wherewithall to do them all. So, I'm done the book and I continue with one of my current artistic projects.
