



The Art & Craft of Playwriting

Jeffrey Hatcher

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Jeffrey Hatcher knows the nuts and bolts of writing for the theater. Here, he shares his views on it all--from building tension and plotting a scene, right down to moving a character from one side of the stage to the other. From crafting an intriguing beginning to delivering a satisfying ending.

In Hatcher's one-on-one discussions with acclaimed American playwrights Lee Blessing, Marsha Norman and Jose Rivera, you'll find a wealth of practical advice, tricks of the trade and insight that will help you in your own creative efforts.

The Art & Craft of Playwriting Details

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From Reader Review The Art & Craft of Playwriting for online ebook

Eli says

The suggestions and observations in this book are spot on. I reread the book every few years, taking something different away depending on where I am in my development as a writer. Very useful.

But, oh my stars, the Love Letter to Manness this is! It's not so much that Hatcher dislikes women so much as that he rarely seems to think of us at all. The few occasions when he uses female pronouns instead of male to talk about "what playwrights do" feel forced upon him by an editor, rather than organic to his thought process, and his paean to the masculine glories of *Glengarry Glen Ross* gave me a second-hand testosterone buzz.

This isn't entirely Hatcher's fault; playwriting is predominantly a man's game. But the question of the chicken and the egg is here particularly troubling for women playwrights: does Hatcher (and others like him) write as he does because women are so underrepresented in American theater, or are women underrepresented in American theater because books like Hatcher's reinforce the perception that this isn't our world?

Karen says

Is there a special place in hell reserved for people who rip pages from a library book? I hope so, because some hell-bound idiot left this book a few pages lighter - those pages being the exercises on coming up with drama worth ideas! I might have to follow the excellent advice in this book to stage a play in which a diligent young reader (the "young" part is the fictional part) turns vigilante, policing her fair city against the scumbags who would deface public property, especially library books. ("I laughed, I cried, it was better than Cats.")

Julian Munds says

Jeffrey Hatcher does dispense some knowledge here on what make Aristotelian style plays work. And yes, should you be interested on being picked up and performed fast you could learn a basic insight into how a play is conceived. HOWEVER, this book does not dispense information that could not be gained from reading a large amount of plays and seeing work. Not to mention some of the info is not accurate... when he brings up *The Changeling* by Middleton and Rowley, he says that Tomazo and Beatrice are in love. Alsemero and Beatrice are in love. She is betrothed to Alonzo Di Piracquo by her father. She hires Deflores to kill Alonzo. Tomazo does not enter the story till the 4th act and then he is looking for his brother. In many ways because these accidents made it through editing I question how many other unresearched ideas are here. I have read most of the plays Hatcher refers too and he is often way off in understanding the basic character names and plots. Read plays. Ignore this book.

Anna Rose says

Wow, this book is amazing. If you are any type of writer (playwright or journalist), you can learn something from Hatcher in this book.

Whitestorm says

Has useful tips that I might actually utilize at some point when I'm writing.

Alyx says

This book is an interesting read (not dry and boring like many similar books) and an asset not only to aspiring playwrights but to story writers in general.

Jerry Wells says

A book I've turned to for a while now when dealing with any narrative issues, not just playwriting. This was the book that made structure begin to work for me.

Tara Calaby says

This is a very good overview of playwriting with examples drawn from a select (but wide-ranging in style and focus) group of well-known and respected plays, including a script analysis of Hedda Gabler. Directed at an audience who are not beginners, it has an academic feel that never talks down to the reader. The examples from the author's own playwriting experiences were interesting and illustrated rather than embarrassing, like I've found them in other writing texts.

Brendan says

I was only halfway through this book before I needed to return it to the library. I've made several notes and decided that I should probably own this. It has given me a fair deal of insight into the writing process that I hope I will be able to make use of.

Update: I now own this book and finished it. Totally worth it. I'm already planning my re-read. I disagreed with some of the things said in the interviews (but everyone is entitled to their opinion), but not much.

I'm totally pumped to write that break-out hit now!

