



# **ACTORS ON ACTING : THE THEORIES, TECHNIQUES, AND PRACTICES ...**

*TOBY, & HELEN KRICH CHINOY, EDS. COLE*

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## ACTORS ON ACTING : THE THEORIES, TECHNIQUES, AND PRACTICES ... TOBY, & HELEN KRICH CHINOY, EDS. COLE

A massive invaluable reference book. Every actor should have a copy. It's not the kind of book you read cover to cover, it's more of an encyclopedia, to be dipped into when you need it. The editors have done a superb job. This book has been around for years. I've had it for years. It's totally marked up with my own marginalia. Actors speaking about their own craft. To those who mistakenly believe that the 1940s and 1950s was the birth of REAL acting, and before that everyone was just a ham (and many actors seem to feel this way: it is one of the only professions on earth where many of its practitioners are not only ignorant about the history but also contemptuous of anyone not contemporary - you know, the "I don't like black and white movies" crew) this book would be an eye opener. It goes back to the earliest recorded days of theatre, in ancient Greece and Rome. Plato and Aristotle's words on the uses of theatre, on the structure of plays. And also, amazingly, a couple of eyewitness accounts of great performances from back in those days. It covers the history of acting in all countries, with the big names in France, Italy, Germany, Ireland, Russia ... the different forms of theatre, the different styles of acting - commedia dell arte, Shakespeare, Moliere ... the passion plays. But it's like CRACK if you are interested in process. This book is about process. There is very little editorial bossiness. The actors through the ages are allowed to speak for themselves. The editors don't interject their thoughts into the words. You get brief introductions, some historical context, some biographical information - and then the great actors - like Mrs. Sarah Siddons, whose Lady Macbeth was so influential that actresses a century later were still studying her words on how she did the part - and David Garrick, and Richard Burbage - all of these illustrious names. Performances no one can ever see again leap off the page.

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