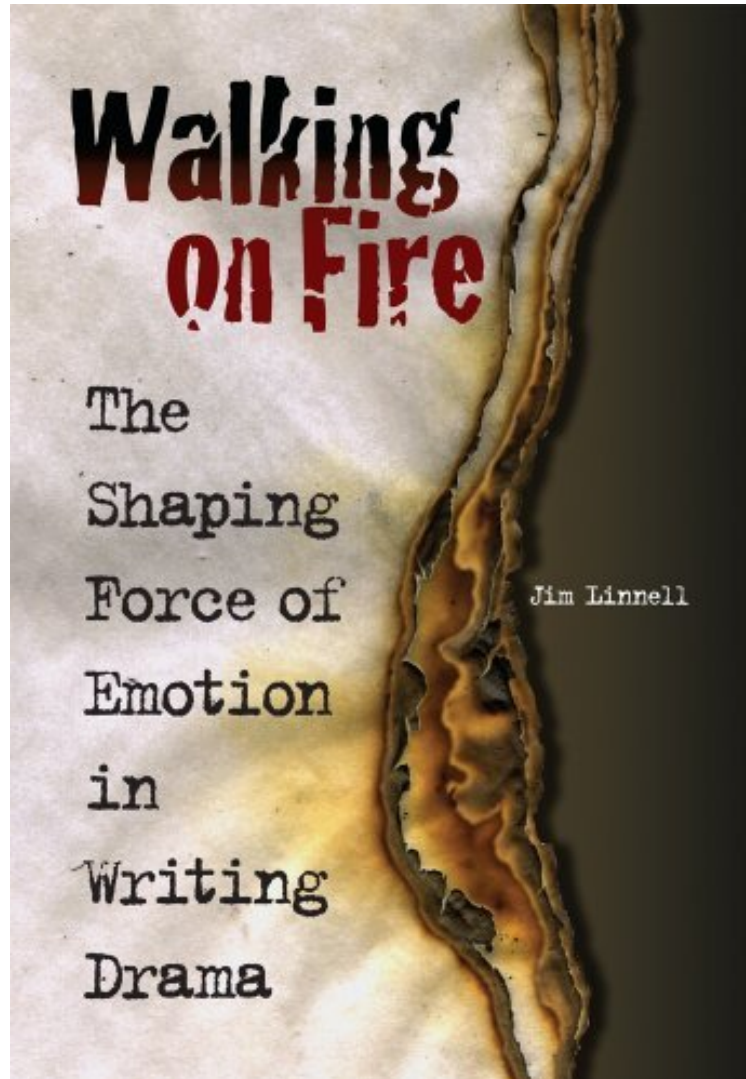


(Library ebook) Walking on Fire: The Shaping Force of Emotion in Writing Drama

Walking on Fire: The Shaping Force of Emotion in Writing Drama

Jim Linnell

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Jim Linnell : Walking on Fire: The Shaping Force of Emotion in Writing Drama before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Walking on Fire: The Shaping Force of Emotion in Writing Drama:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great Reference and Tool for Playwrights By Patricia C "Walking on Fire, The Shaping Force of Emotion in Writing Drama" by Jim Linnell is a great great book for playwrights, dramatic writers and teachers everywhere. In it, Jim Linnell explains and develops his analysis of emotion as the determining and shaping force at the heart of all good dramatic writing. Linnell forcefully and deftly makes his case for emotional form by drawing from classical and modern thinkers, writers and psychologists and drawing from and referencing a large and diverse group of playwrights such as Edward Albee, Bertolt Brecht, Athol Fugard, Henrik Ibsen, Sarah

Kane, Tony Kushner, Donald Margulies, Suzan-Lori Parks and William Shakespeare. In so doing, Linnell illustrates how conflict and human emotion intertwine and drive all drama. But "Walking on Fire" is more than a great scholarly work. Linnell, himself a writer and poet as well as a scholar, writes from the trenches. He poses provocative and insightful questions to the writer and includes writing practice exercises such as "Finding Trouble", "Ask the Character", "Atom Smashing" and "Testing the Imagination - What if." These exercises not only help the writer deconstruct and understand the emotional current underlying his or her own work, but also help the writer "escape the gooey middle" and find his or her way to the all-important and meaningful END. Linnell's writing is thoughtful, lively, absorbing and personal. At the same time, the ease and skill with which he moves among writers, genres, plays and characters reveals his tremendous depth and background. As a playwright and director, I will use *Walking on Fire* as a trusted guide and reference for a long time to come. I highly recommend.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Much Needed Guide for Writers
By Samuel Roll, Ph.D., ABPP
Walking on Fire is practical and inspirational at the same time. I give it to all students aspiring to the writing professions.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A great addition to any writer's library
By Georgina Hernandez
A definite MUST HAVE for the writer's tool-kit. This book is not only a reminder, but it is a page to page discovery. Even putting the book down for a while and returning to it proves rewarding as it is written to activate and also to soothe and inspire. Anyone who wants to think on teaching dramatic writing and also all us writers who need to be reminded of the power of mentorship need to pick up this book. It is what it is: walking on fire.

In this bold new way of looking at dramatic structure, Jim Linnell establishes the central role of emotional experience in the conception, execution, and reception of plays. *Walking on Fire: The Shaping Force of Emotion in Writing Drama* examines dramatic texts through the lens of human behavior to identify the joining of event and emotion in a narrative, defined by Linnell as emotional form. Effectively building on philosophy, psychology, and critical theory in ways useful to both scholars and practitioners, Linnell unfolds the concept of emotional form as the key to understanding the central shaping force of drama. He highlights the Dionysian force of human emotion in the writer as the genesis for creative work and articulates its power to determine narrative outcomes and audience reaction. *Walking on Fire* contains writing exercises to open up playwrights to the emotional realities and challenges of their work. Additionally, each chapter offers case studies of traditional and nonlinear plays in the known canon that allow readers to evaluate the construction of these works and the authors' practices and intentions through an examination of the emotional form embedded in the central characters' language, thoughts, and behaviors. The plays discussed include Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Athol Fugard's *MASTER HAROLD... and the boys*, Donald Margulies's *The Loman Family Picnic*, Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party*, and Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*. *Walking on Fire* opens up new conversations about content and emotion for writers and offers exciting answers to the questions of why we make drama and why we connect to it. Linnell's userfriendly theory and passionate approach create a framework for understanding the links between the writer's work in creating the text, the text itself, and the audience's engagement.

Normal0falsefalsefalseEN-USX-NONE" Linnell shows that the history of dramatic forms is a history of the emotions that shape our lives and societies, and this makes his study a vital contribution to the field of theatre studies, especially to models of dramaturgy that question the separation of form from emotion." — Theatre History Studies

Jim Linnell has discovered and shaped concepts and images that illuminate the mysteries of creative work for the stage in a new way. His book will enrich the practice of anyone trying to write for the theater, or engage with any art that flows from the emotional depths of human beings. His book is flush with examples, ideas, and (extremely valuable for me) his own personal experience as a writer and teacher. Terrific stuff — intense, with a great seriousness to it, and a hard-earned wisdom.

— Len Jenkin, Playwright and Professor of Dramatic Writing, New York University

This is a deeply important book for playwrights grappling with craft, dramaturgs hoping to unlock the secrets of dramatic structure, and audience members emotionally engaged in the experience of live performance.

— Suzan Zeder, head of playwriting and directing, University of Texas at Austin

Jim Linnell's passionate, provocative book restores the primacy of emotion — not theory — to discussions of the writer's craft. This is a text both aspiring and veteran dramatists in all media can turn to again and again for guidance and reinforcement.

— Kirk Ellis, Writer/Co-Executive Producer, *John Adams*

This is a very personal and powerful story of one man's quest to figure out how theater works in our time. His readings of specific texts are thoughtful and detailed, and clearly have been seriously considered. His originality lies in the depth of his commitment to his notion of emotional form. Linnell has lived an interesting life and done a lot of things. Consequently his ideas on the theater have gone through an extensive metamorphosis. The wisdom is real, has been earned. His is a unique voice in our time.

— Mac Wellman, playwright