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Mime Spoken Here : The Performer's Portable Workshop



Synopsis

For more than 40 years, Tony Montaro has been a celebrated mime, at the top of his field. And for the past 20 years, he has shared his insights and skills as a mentor to hundreds of performers. At last, here's Tony's book, a book for all performing artists - actors, musicians, dancers, poets... To Tony Montanaro, mime is 'eloquent gesture,' with or without words, with or without props. His approach is more than an invaluable lesson in theatre; it's a lesson in communication. Knowing what you want to project, sensing what the audience sees, and developing the skill necessary to bring the two together with eloquence and personal style are the goals of 'Mime Spoken Here.'

CONTENTS: 1) Definition & History of Mime * 2) Warming Up * 3) Premise Work * 4) Isolation Exercises and Illusions * 5) Character Work * 6) Preparatory Exercises * 7) Improvisation * 8) Creating Sketches * 9) The Subtleties of Performing

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Customer Reviews

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Tony and Karen detail a method that relies on creativity, inspiration, and image while still regarding the body as the theatrical medium. Everybody talks about blending external and internal approaches to craft. This method shows how they are one in the same, completely connected.

...that probes deeper than the average "How To..." guide. Tony and his wife Karen have crafted a book that is chock full of practical methods for the performing artist, but it also (and more crucially) explores the art of communication, with sharp insights and anecdotes that are not only applicable but nourishing for the soul. Tony Montanaro (a brilliant and renowned mime) also pays respectful homage to the masters who have preceded him, including his teachers Marcel Marceau and Etienne Decroux, as well as the more obscure and virtually forgotten teachings of Francois Delsarte. This book is a must-read for the performing artist who wishes to sharpen their "physical eloquence", as well as anyone with a serious interest in communication and artistic expression of any sort.

Mime Spoken Here is an absolutely wonderful book! It gave me a whole new appreciation and understanding of what mime is and can be—showing a wondrous performing art that is masked by the clichéd stereotypes one is constantly inundated with. I am actually a magician and about a year ago I had an idea for a magic pantomime using a mime illusion. A magician/mime recommended Kipnis' "The Mime Book." This is a really good book, and even though it really didn't directly address what I was looking for, I threw myself into the isolation exercises. However, even though it had lots of good work on the mechanics of the illusions, they never really interested me to work on them; except those that I could see applications to magic routines—basically the elevator and the cradle-to-grave. I did however notice almost immediately an increased body awareness and sense of balance that I'd never had before. Even though I kind of drifted away as I got involved in doing shows, etc, I realized I'd learned more and made more progress in a couple of weeks than I had in several semesters of body movement classes in drama school. This new physical awareness and control generated a hunger for something... I don't know exactly what I was looking for, but I got other mime books... and "The Physical Comedy Handbook"... and Lecoq's "The Moving Body"... and Aubert's "The Art of Pantomime"... All these are good books, but still I was looking... and then I found "Mime Spoken Here," and now I realize what I was looking for all along --physical

eloquence. "Physical eloquence" is Tony's conception of mime-greatly expanding it beyond the common no-talk, no-props view most people have of it. It is the perfect complement to "The Mime Book" because while Kipnis is much more exhaustive in the techniques of mime, Mime Spoken Here teaches you how to breathe life and meaning into them, and any other performing art. (Karen gives a very telling, and touching, post-script as to how Tony's mime approach basically saved her ballet career.) In a sense I was familiar with much of what he talked about with premise, character work, and improvisations from acting classes and working on my theatrical form of magic, but in another sense Tony opened up new doors of perception about them, particularly regarding mime. But more than anything, THE BOOK, TONY, AND KAREN ARE JUST DOWN RIGHT INSPIRING!! In the few days since I got the book-I practically devoured it-I have come up with three new sketches: Though one was a magical pantomime I'd created for a female friend years ago (She rejected it, and I never thought I could use it, but under Tony's spell I suddenly re-visualized it in a way that would work for me), the other two were brand new mime pieces with no magic (gasp!). One started out just as an esoteric dance routine I came up with while playing around with a juggler's top hat, but I let it "get to me" (a Tonyism) and has now become basically a sketch of "Jeckyl & Hyde" meets "The Red Shoes." The third was one that came out of the cradle-to-grave exercise I'd worked on from Kipnis's book, which had a variation of a weight lifter being bent backwards from the weight on his chest. Well in playing with that, from time to time I'd end up on my back with the weight pinning me down to the floor, and I couldn't get up. Well then I'd always just get up and stop there, because there was no where to go with it since I obviously could not lift the weight up from that position. Then mid-way through reading the book, I was playing around and it happened again, but this time I "bought it" (another Tonyism,) and just lay there until I could figure a way out of my predicament. And I did and then the rest of the sketch just fell together, as if by magic. :O) I'm also sure I'll get more and more out of the book with subsequent study, and in turn will get more out of the other books now with Tony's thinking running in the background, especially "The Mime Book." Because while the illusions in it didn't inspire me to work on them, the day I read about "the eagle" illusion in "Mime Spoken Here" I was outside that night working on it--showing the power of premise applied to technique. Furthermore, "Mime Spoken Here" also serves as an inspiring autobiography of a truly special performer, teacher, and man. (A friend of mine once said that Einstein's autobiography would be a physics book.)

A brilliant book, by a brilliant artist. If you don't have it in your library, you are missing a momentous gift to the world of theatre.

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