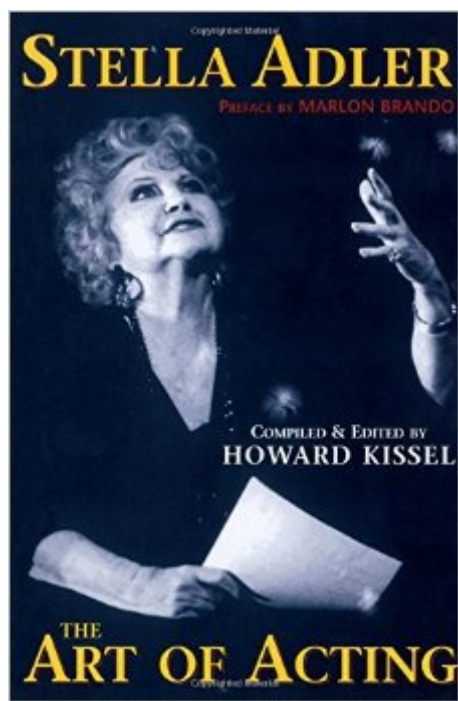


The book was found

The Art Of Acting



Synopsis

Stella Adler was one of the 20th Century's greatest figures. She is arguably the most important teacher of acting in American history. Over her long career, both in New York and Hollywood, she offered her vast acting knowledge to generations of actors, including Marlon Brando, Warren Beatty, and Robert De Niro. The great voice finally ended in the early Nineties, but her decades of experience and teaching have been brilliantly caught and encapsulated by Howard Kissel in the twenty-two lessons in this book. Hardcover.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This great book has a quick and enthusiastic Introduction by former student Marlon Brando, and then consists solely of transcripts of cogent and thought-provoking lectures of the legendary and revered acting teacher Stella Adler (1901-1992). Howard Kissel has compiled, or possibly combined, tapes in order to come up with these "classes," or chapters. Adler was an eloquent and reverential philosopher of acting, a teacher and acting coach extraordinaire of Brando, de Niro, Warren Beatty, Harvey Keitel, Candice Bergen, and many more. As a young, serious actress she had traveled to Paris, in order to study with Konstantin Stanislavsky, founder of "Method" acting. She was his only American student. She brought his philosophy back to the US, but added her own considerable beliefs to it. She cautions students: "Don't read his book, because it makes absolutely no sense. He came from a culture entirely alien to yours, and you won't understand it." The twenty-two classes are seemingly presented verbatim. Each 'class' forms a chapter, and has a named subject as its organizing principle. ("Acting is Doing," "Developing the Imagination," Building a Vocabulary of Actions," "Understanding the Text," Dressing the Part," "Instant and Inner

Justifications," etc.) Each class is clear, thoughtful and thought-provoking, and wonderfully stimulating. Adler focuses on meaning and the soul of the thing - at all times. In addition, she is delightfully concrete, so you are never lost in well-meaning platitudes. Right off the bat, you are educated as to why acting is not a cousin to, for example, fashion modeling. Adler is blunt, and supports her assertions. Acting has nothing to do with being "discovered," it is not about fame or celebrity. She bemoans the loss of the theater companies of mid-century, and the opportunities they provided to actors, who are now left to 'go it alone.' To Adler acting is a labor of intelligence and will and love, a "profession that is over 2000 years old" and one that requires boundless energy and a sort of selfish (but not narcissistic) ambition first, and then "critical seeing, self-awareness, discipline, and self-control" - for starters. She talks about the importance to an actor of the use of one's imagination, the disciplined willingness to actually do the research - in order to care deeply and conscientiously about the play. She asserts, "A great disservice was done to American actors when they were persuaded that they had to experience *themselves* on the stage instead of experiencing the play. Your experience is not the same as Hamlet's - unless you too are a royal prince of Denmark. The truth of the character isn't found in you but in the circumstances of the royal position... [to play the role] your past indecision on who to take to the prom won't suffice." This book is stimulating, uplifting, thought-provoking, and deep. You do not have to be interested in 'doing' acting in order to enjoy her wisdom. Worth reading, and rereading.

This is going to the top of the "books my kids must read" when they are going off to college or leaving home. This book is a supposedly a series of Stella Adler's lectures about acting, but it is also very inspirational as a series of lectures about how to live. Adler says that "The whole thing about acting is to give. The actor must above everything be generous. He doesn't hoard his riches... But before you can be giving and magnanimous, you must have something to give. Ideas don't come from your legs. They don't come from your voice. They come from your mind. The theatre is built on developing your mind. It's an education for your mind." She works on critical seeing, self-awareness, discipline, self-control - skills that are important to everyone, not just actors. She discusses the importance of developing your imagination, "Eventually your imaginative reach will extend to other things, until you can say, I know how it feels to be in mourning, how it feels to be isolated, what it means to be abandoned, what it's like to be engaged or to be married." She means this in the context of acting on stage, but for the non-actor, it translates into becoming truly empathetic, to being able to truly understand and communicate with others. Every page is full of memorable comments: "You must be aware that even a subject of profound importance can be

trivialized and degraded if you haven't the energy and interest to match it." "Sometimes, when a husband and a wife go on a trip together, he might say, "My God! Do you know what that is? Why that's Notre Dame!" and she replies, "Yes I know. I can see it." They are seeing in Notre Dame something entirely different. As actors you must make everything you see come alive." "You will fail. That's great. Here's a secret for you - that's the only way you can learn. Learning has to cost you something." And on and on and on! She must have been such a strong, amazing woman, so completely different from anyone in my own solidly suburban middle class life. It is profoundly uplifting to hear her voice through the pages of this book. I highly, highly recommend this book.

This book changed my life! I never write reviews but felt inspired to write one for this book. It was recommended to me by Bob Proctor and another one of his coaches. I kept asking for a way to change my self-image so that I could lose the extra 10 pounds I wanted to get rid of and they highly recommended this book. After reading the first 5 chapters I was so amazed. The most important thing I learned was that I could use my imagination to act as my ideal self and therefore create it. I imagine all the time being a fabulous, stylish, slender Queen as well as everything around me. I imagine wearing the stylish clothes, eating slowly and with delicate, fancy silverware on gold lined royal plates with high-quality, artfully designed foods. I sit like a Queen, I walk like a Queen, I even drive my car like a Queen. Just totally elegant, confident, beautiful and like I am so important and lucky. And it's so fun! As silly as it sounds "Act As If" it totally works! I barely have food cravings or overeat. I feel so much more confident in myself. I feel like I honor and respect myself more. And definitely a whole lot happier :) Highly recommend this book not just for acting but if you want to change the way you think about yourself. And to change negative habits, thoughts, and self-sabotaging behavior.

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