



Writing About Theatre

Christopher Thaiss, Rick Davis

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In *Hamlet*, when the melancholy prince kills Polonius, the dramatic tension is enhanced by the audience's knowledge that Polonius lurks behind the curtain, and that Hamlet will mistake him for his detested stepfather. Though this tension is understood and appreciated by readers of the play, its dynamics of raw intensity are perhaps best understood by the interplay between performers and audience members. By addressing both enthusiasts of theater and enthusiasts of dramatic literature, Thaiss and Davis demonstrate how one's understanding of drama is enriched by critical attention to both performance and text. It specifically addresses the writing needs of a novice playwright, not in conjunction with "writing about literature," but about the play as subject in its own right. This book provides critical analysis of play texts, as well as performance reviews, theater history research, and other examples that enliven understanding and promote versatility. In its sequence of chapters, it addresses projects of increasing sophistication, from performance reviews and play analyses to theater history research and dramatic theory papers. As a general guide to good writing, this book also promotes learning and critical/creative thought. Introductory chapters cover the principles of good writing and offer strategies to help readers overcome writer's block, organize effectively and avoid common usage and style pitfalls. Anyone interested in drama and/or literature.

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