



Acting with Grotowski: Theatre as a Field for Experiencing Life

Zbigniew Cynkutis

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'Zbigniew Cynkutis' writings constitute invaluable testimony of his work with Jerzy Grotowski during the 'theatre of productions' phase and beyond. Cynkutis' insights elucidate aspects of the Laboratory Theatre's praxis and provide a unique perspective on the questions most often asked about Grotowski. Authored by one of the Laboratory Theatre's most accomplished actors, this book draws on long-term theatre research and deep knowledge of the craft of acting to offer practical advice indispensable to the professional and aspiring actor alike. The volume offers the English-speaking reader an unprecedented richness of primary source material, which sheds new light on the practical work of one of the most influential theatre directors of the 20th century. Cynkutis' voice is sincere and direct, and will continue to inspire new generations of theatre practitioners.' – Dominika Laster, Yale University

Acting with Grotowski: Theatre as a Field for Experiencing Life explores the actor-director dynamic through the experience of Zbigniew Cynkutis, one of Polish director Jerzy Grotowski's foremost collaborators. Cynkutis's work as an actor, combined with his later work as a director and theatre manager, gave him a visionary overview based on precise embodied understanding.

Cynkutis's writings yield numerous insights into the commitment needed to make innovative, challenging theatre. A central component of *Acting with Grotowski* is his distinctive approach to training: 'Conversations with the Body' includes a range of techniques and approaches to warming up, rehearsing and creating work from a physical starting point, beautifully illustrated by Bill Ireland.

The book comprises reflections and practical suggestions on a range of subjects – theatre and culture, improvisation, ethics, group dynamics, and Cynkutis's vision for the Wrocław Second Studio. It contains visual and textual materials from Cynkutis's own private archive, such as diary entries and letters. *Acting with Grotowski* demonstrates the thin line that separates life and art when an artist works with extreme commitment in testing political and social conditions.

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