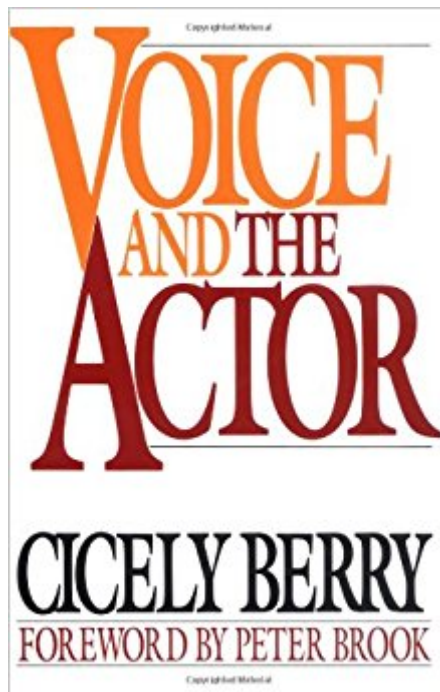


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# Voice And The Actor



## Synopsis

"Speaking is part of a whole: an expression of inner life." Cicely Berry has based her work on the conviction that while all is present in nature our natural instincts have been crippled from birth by many processes--by the conditioning, in fact, of a warped society. So an actor needs precise exercise and clear understanding to liberate his hidden possibilities and to learn the hard task of being true to the 'instinct of the moment'. As her book points out with remarkable persuasiveness 'technique' as such is a myth, for there is no such thing as a correct voice. There is no right way--there are only a million wrong ways, which are wrong because they deny what would otherwise be affirmed. Wrong uses of the voice are those that constipate feeling, constrict activity, blunt expression, level out idiosyncrasy, generalize experience, coarsen intimacy. These blockages are multiple and are the results of acquired habits that have become part of the automatic vocal equipment; unnoticed and unknown, they stand between the actor's voice as it is and as it could be and they will not vanish by themselves. So the work is not how to do but how to permit: how, in fact, to set the voice free. And since life in the voice springs from emotion, drab and uninspiring technical exercises can never be sufficient. Cicely Berry never departs from the fundamental recognition that speaking is part of a whole: an expression of inner life.. After a voice session with her I have known actors speak not of the voice but of a growth in human relationships. This is a high tribute to work that is the opposite of specialization. Cicely Berry sees the voice teacher as involved in all of a theatre's work. She would never try to separate the sound of words from their living context. For her the two are inseparable. --from Peter Brook's foreword to *Voice and the Actor*

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## Customer Reviews

"Speaking is part of a whole: an expression of inner life." Cicely Berry has based her work on the conviction that while all is present in nature our natural instincts have been crippled from birth by many processes—by the conditioning, in fact, of a warped society. So an actor needs precise exercise and clear understanding to liberate his hidden possibilities and to learn the hard task of being true to the —instinct of the moment—. As her book points out with remarkable persuasiveness —technique— as such is a myth, for there is no such thing as a correct voice. There is no right way—there are only a million wrong ways, which are wrong because they deny what would otherwise be affirmed. Wrong uses of the voice are those that constipate feeling, constrict activity, blunt expression, level out idiosyncrasy, generalize experience, coarsen intimacy. These blockages are multiple and are the results of acquired habits that have become part of the automatic vocal equipment; unnoticed and unknown, they stand between the actor's voice as it is and as it could be and they will not vanish by themselves. So the work is not how to do but how to permit: how, in fact, to set the voice free. And since life in the voice springs from emotion, drab and uninspiring technical exercises can never be sufficient. Cicely Berry never departs from the fundamental recognition that speaking is part of a whole: an expression of inner life— After a voice session with her I have known actors speak not of the voice but of a growth in human relationships. This is a high tribute to work that is the opposite of specialization. Cicely Berry sees the voice teacher as involved in all of a theatre's work. She would never try to separate the sound of words from their living context. For her the two are inseparable. —from Peter Brook's foreword to *Voice and the Actor*

This book is remarkable for its discussion of technique, its selection of sample texts ranging from Herrick to Shakespeare to Sitwell, and its canny sense of what makes an authentic performance. There is also a sense of how an actors can develop limiting habits and how these habits can be overcome. In sum, every bit of vocal advice is tied to expressing a thought or emotion, and few read texts with more insight than Cicely Berry. I am a theater goer rather than an professional, yet this book helped me understand the theater better and overcome some personal voice issues. If there is a slight caution with this book, it would be to say that the vowels are approached from a British standpoint.

Only needed it for a class but I did learn a lot. Good exercises.

Great book for anyone wanting to speak with story and power. Must have theatre students.

fantastic tool for actors!

Great thanks

The book arrived quickly and was the right book for my class. Thank you.

Wonderful book not just for actors, but anyone who's job or life involves public speaking. Lots and lots of drills and information for improving speech patterns and enunciation.

Great book for an aspiring actor! Good price, too. I use this for my Voice for the Actor class and it's really helpful.

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