



## Beyond Rehearsal: Reflections on Interpretation and Practice, Continued

By James Thomas



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Anatoly Efros (1925-1987), one of the most admired and original directors of post-war Russia, directed at the Central Children's Theatre, Malaya Bronnaya Theatre, Lenkom Theatre, Moscow Art Theatre, Taganka Theatre, the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis and the Toen Theatre in Tokyo. He taught directing at the Russian Academy of Theatre Arts and wrote several influential books about dramatic interpretation and practice. His productions received numerous international awards for excellence.

*Beyond Rehearsal* is a compilation of selections from his third and fourth books. It includes refreshingly new treatments of *Summer and Smoke*, *Three Sisters*, *Hamlet*, *Tartuffe*, and *The Misanthrope*, among others. Efros also writes with perception and feeling about Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko, as well as a broad range of theatre issues in need of reform or re-thinking in the West as well as in Russia. *Beyond Rehearsal* centers on «the absurd things in our work that have not disappeared yet», «complex questions of art», and the «celebratory» aspects of working in the theatre.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

«Anatoly Efros was one of the greatest Russian directors of the second half of the twentieth century. His contribution to Russian theater is spoken of by his peers, pupils and fans with the kind of reverence that Stanislavsky and Meyerhold inspired in theirs. Efros's books about conceiving, rehearsing, performing, and thinking about theater are read and re-read to a pulp by Russian actors, directors, and critics, just as those by Stanislavsky and Mikhail Chekhov are. This volume, presented in lucid form by translator and editor James Thomas, makes Efros and his genius accessible to makers of theater in the English-speaking world.» (John Freedman, Theatre critic of 'The Moscow Times' and co-author of 'Provoking Theater: Kama Ginkas Directs')

«I remember well what special events the publication of Anatoly Efros's books were – 'Rehearsal is My Love', 1974, (in English, 'The Joy of Rehearsal') and 'Profession: Director', 1979, (in English, 'The Craft of Rehearsal'). Also his last two books, 'Theatrical Story Continued', 1985, and (posthumously) 'The Fourth Book', 1993, which translator James Thomas brings together here in 'Beyond Rehearsal'. Other than Michael Chekhov, I think that no one in Russia wrote so freely, unrestrainedly, and intelligently about the essence of theatre. This was theatre seen from within, from the viewpoint of a director, who, during his lifetime as well as now, is esteemed the most outstanding master of the post-war Russian stage. Efros created books in which the shrewd observations of an experienced director are allied with the fleeting day-by-day insights of an artist, and he addressed it to everyone in the world of theatre. Efros's books (all four of them) stand on my shelf next to those of Stanislavsky, Tairov, Meyerhold, and Brook. They are classics of the twentieth century, which is the century of the director in the theatre. It is wonderful that James Thomas has translated Anatoly Efros skillfully and sequentially, book after book, giving English-language readers the opportunity to share a special pleasure that we in Russia have already had for several decades. (Anatoly Smeliansky, Rector, Moscow Art Theatre School; Associate Artistic Director, Moscow Art Theatre)

«Anatoly Efros is my theatrical father. I studied directing and acting under him for four years at the Russian State Theatre Academy (GITIS) in Moscow in the 'sixties. I also had the great privilege of receiving his constant feedback and continuous care later in my career as a director and teacher in Eastern Europe, the Moscow Art Theatre, and America, and to be spiritually close to him to the end of his days. The original Russian editions of his books are on my shelf signed by him with kind words. He always has been and will be my purest example and my highest inspiration in theatre making. My deepest gratitude goes to James Thomas for his amazing dedication to Efros's art and legacy. With this translation he is giving to English-speaking theatre professionals, students, and enthusiasts a rare opportunity to communicate with the creative power, «Emotional Mathematics» (Efros), and analytical techniques of one of the contemporary theatre's authentic geniuses, someone who helped to shape and define internationally the art of text-based, visually and metaphorically stunning, twentieth-century stage directing. With heartfelt thanks due to James Thomas, you are holding in your hands one of the most inspirational books on theatre ever written.» (Mladen Kiselov, Director (S.S.D.C.), Professor Emeritus, Former Head of Directing, Carnegie Mellon School of Drama)

#### About the Author

The Translator: James Thomas is Professor and Head of the Ph.D. Program in Theatre at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. He is the translator of *The Joy of Rehearsal* and *The Craft of Rehearsal* by Anatoly Efros (Peter Lang 2006, 2007) and author of *Script Analysis for Actors, Directors, and Designers*.

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