



Acting Scenes and Monologs for Young Women

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Though it might be hard to sell tickets to any staged performance of *Acting Scenes and Monologs for Young Women*, in her many small play scenes, Maya Levy has given a valuable prop: the script. Bearing down on each of the shockingly lucid teenagers is hard (“What is happening between the characters?” she, a director, asks in the foreword)—since the plot contrivances turn on a phrase and the characters tend inevitably to sound like each other.

Except for the minimum of personal histories, the scenes are something to clutch while learning how to shade and fill a stage with voices. Somewhere between Mickey Rooney’s “Hey gang, let’s put on a Show” and ABC’s sorely missed “My So-Called Life” there is a place for such a prompt book. While television might have convinced us that casting looks are half the talent, learning how to economically express a character is certainly the other half. And television has taught us another lesson: you can even believe lame dialogue when the speaker acts with real emotion.

With some forty duets, twenty monologs and two each of trios and quartets, *Acting Scenes* is a useful teaching guide.

LEETA TAYLOR (March / April 1999)

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