



The Theater of War: What Ancient Tragedies Can Teach Us Today

Bryan Doerries

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This is the personal and deeply passionate story of a life devoted to reclaiming the timeless power of an ancient artistic tradition to comfort the afflicted. For years, theater director Bryan Doerries has led an innovative public health project that produces ancient tragedies for current and returned soldiers, addicts, tornado and hurricane survivors, and a wide range of other at-risk people in society.

Drawing on these extraordinary firsthand experiences, Doerries clearly and powerfully illustrates the redemptive and therapeutic potential of this classical, timeless art: how, for example, *Ajax* can help soldiers and their loved ones better understand and grapple with PTSD, or how *Prometheus Bound* provides new insights into the modern penal system. These plays are revivified not just in how Doerries applies them to communal problems of today, but in the way he translates them himself from the ancient Greek, deftly and expertly rendering enduring truths in contemporary and striking English.

The originality and generosity of Doerries's work is startling, and *The Theater of War*—wholly unsentimental, but intensely felt and emotionally engaging—is a humane, knowledgeable, and accessible book that will both inspire and enlighten. Tracing a path that links the personal to the artistic to the social and back again, Doerries shows us how suffering and healing are part of a timeless process in which dialogue and empathy are inextricably linked.

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