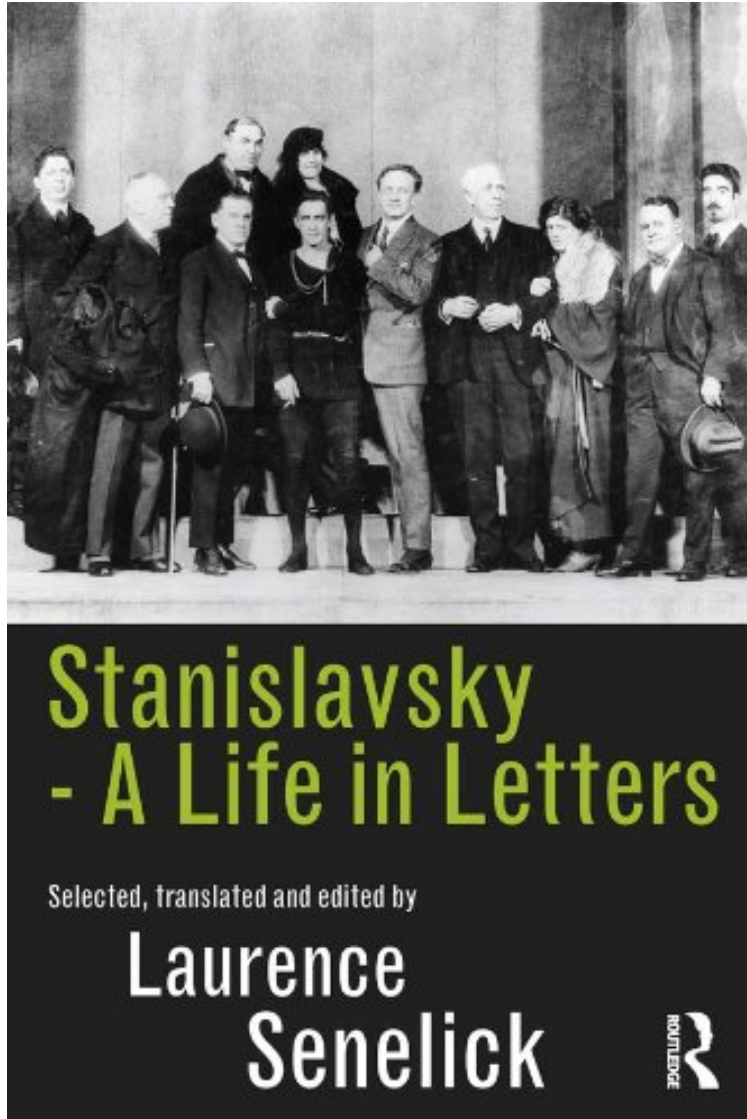


Stanislavsky: A Life in Letters

From Routledge

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From Routledge : Stanislavsky: A Life in Letters before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stanislavsky: A Life in Letters:

Konstantin Stanislavsky transformed theatre in the West and was indisputably one of the twentieth century's greatest innovators. His life and work mark some of the most significant artistic and political milestones of that tumultuous century, from the emancipation of the serfs to the Russian Revolution. Little wonder, then, that his

correspondence contains gripping exchanges with the famous and infamous of his day: men such as Tolstoy, Chekhov, Trotsky and Stalin, among others. Laurence Senelick, one of the world's foremost scholars of Russian literature, mines the Moscow archives and the definitive Russian edition of Stanislavsky's letters, to produce the fullest collection of the letters in any language other than Russian. He sheds new light on this fascinating field. Senelick takes us from the earliest extant letter of an eleven-year-old Konstantin in 1874, through his work as actor, director and actor trainer with the Moscow Art Theatre, to messages written just before his death in 1938 at the age of seventy-five. We discover Stanislavsky as son, brother and father, as lover and husband, as businessman and "internal emigre." He is seen as a wealthy tourist and an impoverished touring actor, a privileged subject of the Tsar and a harried victim of the Bolsheviks. Senelick shares key insights into Stanislavsky's work on such important productions as *The Seagull*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *The Marriage of Figaro*. The letters also reveal the steps that led up to the publication of his writings *My Life in Art* and *An Actor's Work on Himself*. This handsome edition is also comprehensively annotated and fully illustrated.

A celebrated scholar of Russian drama, Senelick (Tufts Univ.) has produced a fascinating collection that serves as an in-depth study of Stanislavsky... Actors, directors, and teachers will particularly appreciate the fact that Senelick translates some of Stanislavsky's popular training concepts in ways that differ slightly from those commonly known in theater circles--thus yielding some useful nuances. *Summing Up: Highly recommended.* J. Toma/in, San Francisco State University in CHOICE An incomparably rich and faceted picture of Stanislavsky as man, actor, and public figure... Expertly translated, annotated and illustrated, this is not only the best and fullest collection of Stanislavsky's letters in any language outside Russian, it is in all respects a model of what such a book can and should be. Donald Fanger, Harvard University Through this remarkable collection, Laurence Senelick profoundly deepens an actor's love affair with Stanislavsky. The combination of Stanislavsky and Senelick provides theatre practitioners and historians with a precious treasure-trove of knowledge. Bella Merlin, University of California, Davis Senelick's brilliant selection, translated by him with rare perspicacity, fully opens Stanislavsky's extraordinarily multi-layered and dramatic life to view. Never before in any English-language collection of his letters, or, indeed, in any account of his pioneering artistic achievements, have the turbulences of Stanislavsky's life in art and history been so sharply brought into focus. Senelick's is a magisterial work, worthy of his colossal subject and his status as a scholar of Russian literature and theatre. Maria Shevtsova, Goldsmiths, University of London Anyone who cares about the theatre will find Laurence Senelick's edition of Stanislavski's letters to be invaluable. Stanislavski's unique intelligence, charisma, and idealism are revealed on every page. His worries - cash, clashing egos, playwrights missing deadlines - will be familiar to anyone who's ever worked on a play. Because much plays out in a time of great turmoil, the collected letters read like an adventure story - sometimes Quixotic, often surprising, always inspiring. Gregory Mosher, Director and Producer This compendious volume... is not simply an appendix to Stanislavsky's and others' books about his life, work, and acting theories. Its combination of such a large, representative sample of letters and the accompanying commentary... means that, as the title signals, this book provides a rich insight into, and illuminates Stanislavsky's life. Moreover, it testifies to how much of his character and life Stanislavsky conveyed in his prolific correspondence. Stuart Young, University of Otago [I] cannot lessen the value of Stanislavsky: A Life in Letters for theatre practitioners and researchers and professionals and students of theatre and Slavic disciplines, as well as for cultural readers throughout the English-speaking world. Senelick's book should be read in conjunction with Andrew Whiter's *The Routledge Companion to Stanislavsky* (2013), both of which were published as part of the 150th anniversary celebration of Stanislavsky's birth. Maria Ignatieva, Ohio State University; Lima, Theatre Journal About the Author Laurence Senelick is Fletcher Professor of Drama at Tufts University and a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. His many books include *Russian Dramatic Theory from Pushkin to the Symbolists*; *Gordon Craig's Moscow Hamlet*; *The Chekhov Theatre: A Century of the Plays in Performance*; and *A Historical Dictionary of Russian Theatre*. He has been awarded the St George medal of the Russian Ministry of Culture for contributions to Russian art and scholarship.