



The motto of *DRAMATICA or Rational Poetics*: “We tell only stories *about* people—because we tell them *to* people.”

Our main business in life is to study fellow human beings: this is the only way we can find our special place in this universe. Who is he/she? What does he/she think, feel, want? Why does he/she act in this particular way? Why does someone/no one love me? *DRAMATICA or Rational Poetics* answers these questions in a direct, uncomplicated, and witty manner. Although the title of the book indicates that it is a collection of a playwright’s professional tools, the author, Lauris Gundars, has found a way of speaking that is accessible to anyone interested in *people*. It is exactly for this reason that the first edition of the book, written in a relaxed and captivating style, has already won popularity among both professionals and readers interested in life exploration. Based on many years of experience in creative work and teaching, Gundars proposes a distinctive, simple, and efficient method of creating characters—particularly useful to practicing playwrights.

REVIEWS

You may find it surprising that a psychology magazine is recommending a book about writing plays. The truth is, the book does not deal just with the rules that form the basis of good playwriting; it also contains lots of interesting things relating to human characters, the motivation and inner logic of people’s actions. After all, to a certain extent, we all create our own life like we would write a play. It should also be mentioned that, despite the serious content, the book makes for a lively read and is even attractively designed.

—*The Annas’ Pshychology Monthly*, December 2016

Lauris's warmth, curiosity, and deep understanding of dramatic form have been invaluable in each circumstance. And all of these skills are on display in DRAMATICA. The text is accessible and easy to read. It gets right to the point, and the perspective is pragmatic, equipping readers with ideas that they can easily apply to their writing practice. Underneath it all resonates Lauris's deep knowledge of dramatic history and theory and his wide-ranging experience in the field. The book is a gift to everyone working in the field of dramatic writing.

—Anne G. Morgan
Literary Manager & Dramaturg
Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, USA

DRAMATICA was quick to awaken the enthusiasm that has always been living in me! I did not expect that, once opened, the book will keep me captivated until the small hours. Jam-packed with secret additives, it creates whirlpools of intellectual adventures and emotional discoveries. They do not calm down that quickly, making you notice, live out, and understand the real and made-up dramas around you—now on a completely new level!

—Anda Rožukalne
Associate Professor Riga Stradiņš University
Chair of the Department of Communication Studies

This is not just a workshop—this is a whole solid world that lights up the soul of anyone who wants to make sense of the human being and, while they are at it, write a drama. An excellent springboard for a jump.

—Alexander Chervinsky
Russian/American playwright and scriptwriter

DRAMATICA is an excellent way of studying drama and life, and not give up even at times when you feel that you are not getting anywhere. A sort of a good reminder. Besides, it helps understand what it really is that we consume as theater and film spectators—in a very direct manner, without any superfluous bells and whistles. Let us be intelligent!

—Rasa Bugavičute-Pēce
Latvian playwright

A provocative description of the creation of dramatic text—or literary text in general, it surprises both with the prosaic nature of the depicted “creative

anguish” and the frequently comical psychological down-to-earth nature of the analyzed dramatic situations.

—Diena Annual Award in Culture

There are professions in which talent is the most important thing. It is different with playwriting: skills of the craft are of equal significance here. [...] Gundars discusses dramaturgy in a professional, thorough, interesting and also witty manner. And most importantly, he does that based on a contemporary approach to the subject. [...] Besides, the book is a compelling read!

—Olğerts Kroders
Theatre director