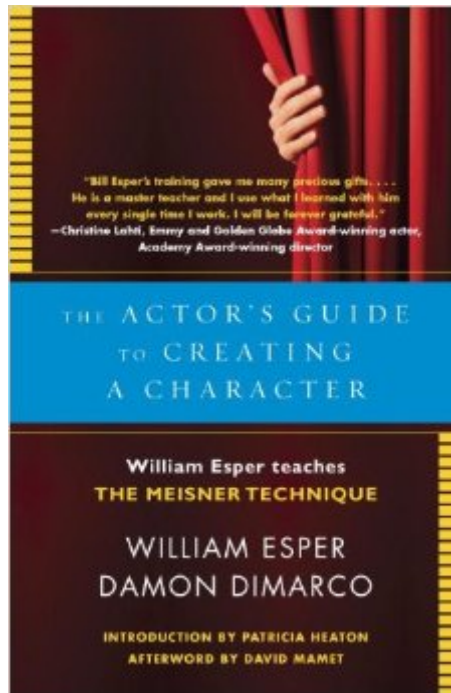


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# The Actor's Guide To Creating A Character: William Esper Teaches The Meisner Technique



## Synopsis

William Esper, one of the most celebrated acting teachers of our time, takes us through his step-by-step approach to the central challenge of advanced acting work: creating and playing a character. Esper's first book, *The Actor's Art and Craft*, earned praise for describing the basics taught in his famous first-year acting class. *The Actor's Guide to Creating a Character* continues the journey. In these pages, co-author Damon DiMarco vividly re-creates Esper's second-year course, again through the experiences of a fictional class. Esper's training builds on Sanford Meisner's legendary exercises, a world-renowned technique that Esper further developed through his long association with Meisner and the decades he has spent training a host of distinguished actors. His approach is flexible enough to apply to any role, helping actors to create characters with truthful and compelling inner lives.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

William Esper and Damon DiMarco have done it again! After reading the collaboration's first book (*The Actor's Art and Craft*) on the first year of Esper's acting training program (primarily developed out of Esper's training with the renowned teacher Sanford Meisner as well as his own experiences) I was eager to read the sequel. I was very excited to read this book about the second year of Esper's training which addresses a Meisner approach to character acting. The book touches on period and style, acting for the camera, physical impediments, pain, and more! If you enjoyed *The Actor's Art and Craft* this book is a necessary follow-up. If you haven't read *The Actor's Art and Craft* stop reading this review, navigate over to that page, order yourself a copy, and get to reading it asap!

This book has really expanded and clarified my understanding of the Meisner technique and challenged me in my thinking about acting as a whole. As an actor, these two books are two of the best acting books I've ever read! To actors interested in creating truthful behavior, living in the moment, making real contact with the other actors in the scene, and succeeding in roles with challenging characteristics: READ THIS BOOK! To anyone interested in acting or acting training: READ THIS BOOK! To anyone who's read this review to the end: READ THIS BOOK!

I've read many books and articles on Meisner's technique but found this one to be not only comprehensive but much easier to understand and incorporate into my work. I would highly recommend it to anyone who feels they can benefit from self-study without attending an actual class.

If you want to know what real acting is all about, this book is vital. As in their first book, they have combined depth of theory with deeply human sketches of that theory as it is practiced. I felt sad to come to the last page.

By writing a book about the second year, Esper is sharing the real magic of the Meisner technique. (Do make sure to read the first book that covers year one.) While it naturally cannot stand in for training, it would certainly help prepare someone for an acting workshop. I love the format of the book as different class sessions that build off each other and provoke a real look at emotion and the reality of doing. I've been shopping around for the right acting philosophy around Method Acting and have learned so much along the way! From the Moscow Art Theatre and Stanislavsky in the 1900s, NYC theater groups of Boleslavsky (Acting: The First Six Lessons), to Lee Strasberg and Sanford Meisner... we get to Master Teacher William Esper, thought to be Meisner's "most authentic protege". Meisner believed that acting was "living truthfully under imaginary circumstances" or being as natural as possible. To bring this philosophy into practice, a lot of his exercises emphasize listening to the present and reacting with current rather than past emotions. The Buddhist in me really connects with this!

Great book for actors who want to explore and understand the 2nd Year Meisner Work. We use it at our actor training studio.

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