



## David Mamet: A Life in the Theatre

By Ira Nadel

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Author, essayist, playwright, and screenwriter, David Mamet is often referred to as the quintessential American writer. His works are known for their clever and terse dialogue and have earned him a Pulitzer Prize for *Glengarry Glen Ross* and Oscar nominations for *House of Games* as well as *The Spanish Prisoner*, *Wag the Dog*, and *The Verdict*. This comprehensive biography uses extensive theater and film archives to reveal in detail his ideas on writing--including the genesis for many of his plays--acting, and directing. Beginning with his Chicago origins, the work goes on to cover his relationship to Judaism, his reputation for machismo, as well as discussions of and excerpts from early plays and stories that have never before been referenced in print. Also included are interviews with key actors and directors such as William H. Macy, Mike Nussbaum, Robert Brustein, and Neil Pepe.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Nadel aims high....synching up the full range of Mamet's work with his closely guarded personal affairs. It helps that the raw material on both counts is memorably vivid."--*The New York Times Book Review*

"This is compelling stuff--front row seats to the life of one of America's most influential playwrights. Mamet moves me and makes me jealous like few other writers can; this little jewel of a biography helps me appreciate the man as much as the work. An essential read."—Neil LaBute, Writer/Director

"I worked on more than twenty of David Mamet's plays, and I still learned a lot. Ira Nadel did his #%&\*\$ homework."--Gregory Mosher, Director, Arts Initiative, Columbia University

“Drawing upon David Mamet’s essays, interviews, and literary works, as well as the recollections of actors and directors with whom this seminal has worked, Ira Nadel has written a thoughtful, compelling, and often gritty account of the life and career of one of the 20th century’s most gifted writers. Nadel’s biography skillfully juxtaposes Mamet’s life in Chicago and Vermont with the machismo, marginality, and Jewish identity that inform Mamet’s life and work.”—Leslie Kane, Emeritus Professor of English, Westfield State College and author *Weasels and Wiseman: Ethics and Ethnicity in the Work of David Mamet*

"A fascinating biography of one of America's greatest living playwrights. A must read for anyone interested in the theatre."--Amanda Foreman, author of the Whitbread-award winning *Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire*

"Nadel’s style of writing, like his subject’s, is very down-to-business. There is a wealth of information contained in these nearly three hundred pages."--*Man in Chair*

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"Readers may find themselves swept away." --*American Theatre*

"Nadel ...has written what will surely be the standard account for some years to come."--*Weekly Standard*

"The best and most complete Stoppard biography available, this is a no-brainer acquisition."--*Library Journal*

"Ira Nadel lifts the lid on this most brilliant of living playwrights...Mr. Nadel clearly knows his subject."--*New York Sun*

"His work is always scrupulous and exhaustive, coming alive."--*Book Magazine*

"This new biography is a superb introduction to both the dramatist and his life and a study of how the two often intersect."--*Richmond Times-Dispatch*

#### About the Author

Ira Nadel is a well-known critic and biographer. The author of the acclaimed *Various Positions: A Life of Leonard Cohen* and *Tom Stoppard*. He is currently a professor of English at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver.

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