



Encounters: Conversations on Life and Writing

Hélène Cixous

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"Isn't it ... particularly difficult to 'speak' of your work?" Frédéric-Yves Jeannet asks Hélène Cixous in this fascinating book of interviews. "[I]t's only in writing, on paper, ... that I reach the most unknown, the strangest, the most advanced part of me for me. I feel closer to my own mystery in the aura of writing it," Cixous responds.

These conversations, which took place over three years and cover the creative process behind Cixous's fictional writing, illuminate the genesis and particular genius of one of France's most original writers. Cixous muses on her "coming to writing," from her first publications to her recent acclaim for a series of fictional texts that spring, as, she insists all true writing does, from her life: the loss of her father when she was a child, and her relationship with her mother, now in her tenth decade, as well as with such friends as Jacques Derrida and Jacques Lacan. The conversations delve into Cixous's career as an academic in Paris and abroad, her summer retreats to the Bordeaux region to write uninterrupted for two months, her work with Ariane Mnouchkine's Théâtre du Soleil, her political engagements and her dreams. Readers and writers who have followed Cixous's path-blazing career as a fiction writer who crosses boundaries of genre and gender while posing essential questions about the nature of narrative and life will find this a book that cannot be put down.

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