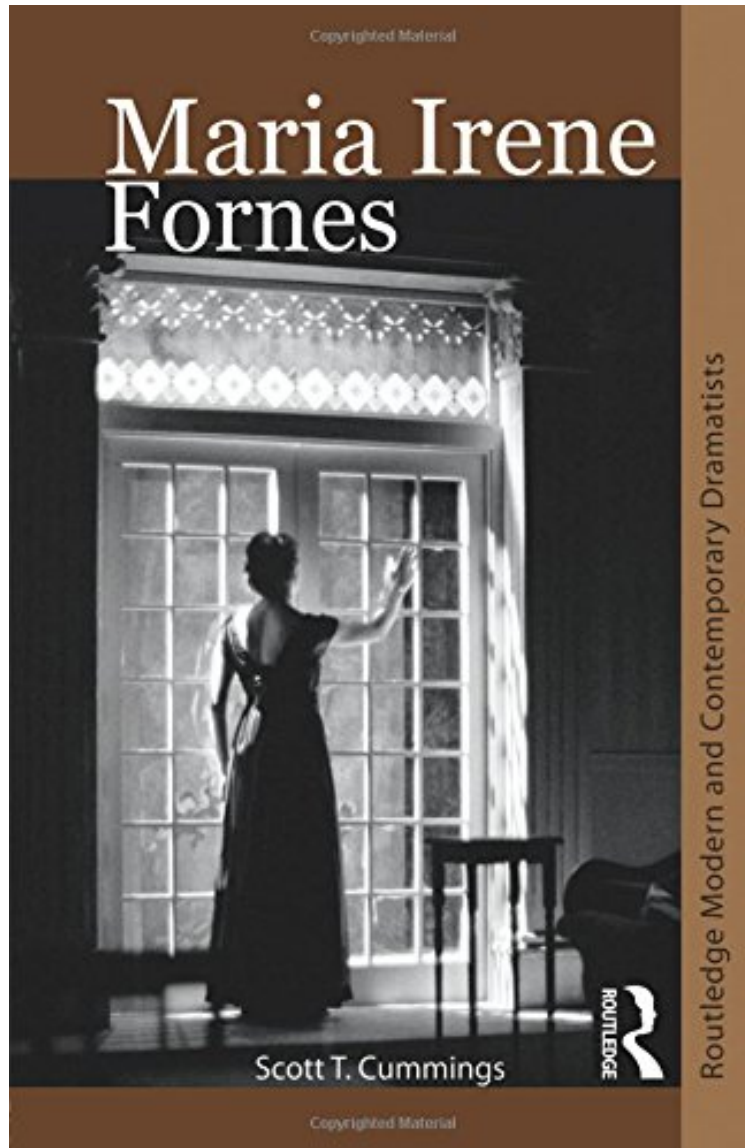


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## Maria Irene Fornes (Routledge Modern and Contemporary Dramatists)

*Scott T. Cummings*

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**Scott T. Cummings : Maria Irene Fornes (Routledge Modern and Contemporary Dramatists)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Maria Irene Fornes (Routledge Modern and Contemporary Dramatists):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Maria Irene Fornes, is, inspiration. By Jesus A. Reyes This woman

and her work, is why I committed to theatre. Her work as a playwright and a teacher to some of our current, prolific, Latino playwrights is why I continue to support theatre and the development of new work. Anything by her or about her should be read, re-read, studied and taught.

Maria Irene Fornes is the most influential female American dramatist of the 20th century. That is the argument of this important new study, the first to assess Fornes's complete body of work. Scott T. Cummings considers comic sketches, opera libretti and unpublished pieces, as well as her best-known plays, in order to trace the evolution of her dramaturgy from the whimsical Off-Off Broadway plays of the 1960s to the sober, meditative work of the 1990s. The book also reflects on her practice as an inspirational teacher of playwriting and the primary director of her own plays. Drawing on the latest scholarship and his own personal research and interviews with Fornes over two decades, Cummings examines Fornes's unique significance and outlines strategies for understanding her fragmentary, enigmatic, highly demanding theater.

'In this excellent study, Cummings successfully argues Fornes's stature as "the most important unknown playwright in the United States" during the second half of the 20th century. He provides a comprehensive analysis of her career over four decades, demonstrating how her conjoined practices as playwright, director, and teacher form an organic whole and characterize her distinctive style of theater. Cummings analyzes and interprets all of Fornes's plays in a clear, accessible manner, affording a more detailed examination of what he terms the "key" plays--Promenade, Fefu and Her Friends, and Abingdon Square. Cummings situates Fornes's work and influence decade by decade, providing a portrait of the rapidly changing American theater from 1950 to 2000. He highlights Fornes's particular contributions to the Open Theatre, INTAR, and the Padua Hills Playwrights Festival, among others. As a leading figure of the American avant-garde, Fornes was perhaps most influential as a playwright's playwright who was instrumental in shaping the careers of her more famous proteges, including Henry David Hwang, Eduardo Machado, and Sarah Ruhl. Appendixes detail Fornes's published plays and production history; the bibliography is solid. This is a fine volume. Summing Up: Highly recommended.' M.S. LoMonaco, CHOICE About the Author Scott T. Cummings is Chair of the Theatre Department of Boston College, where he directs plays and teaches courses in playwriting and dramatic literature. He is the author of *Remaking American Theater: Charles Mee, Anne Bogart and the SITI Company*, as well as numerous performance reviews, journal articles, and essays on contemporary American theater and drama.