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## Writing Performance: Poeticizing the Researcher's Body

*Professor Ronald J. Pelias*

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**Professor Ronald J. Pelias : Writing Performance: Poeticizing the Researcher's Body** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Writing Performance: Poeticizing the Researcher's Body:

Ronald J. Pelias is concerned with writing about performance, from the everyday performative routines to the texts on stage. He seeks to write performatively, to offer poetic or aesthetic renderings of performance events in order to capture some sense of their nature. In his quest for the spirit of theatrical performances, Pelias asks more of the written

word than the word can deliver. Yet the attempt is both desirable and necessary. To discuss performance without some accounting for its essence as art, he asserts, is at best misleading, at worst, fraud. Pelias divides his efforts to present performance events into three general categories: "Performing Every Day," "On Writing and Performing," and "Being a Witness." "Performing Every Day" focuses on performances ranging from the daily business of enacting roles to the telling of tales that make life meaningful. It incorporates essays about the ongoing process of presenting oneself in everyday life; the gender script that insists that men enact manly performances; the classroom performances of teachers and students; stories of gender, class, and race that mark identity; and a performance installation entitled "A Days Talk." "On Writing and Performing" examines the written script and performance practices. It includes a description of a struggle between a writer and a performer as they protect their own interests; an intimate look at an apprehensive performer; a short play entitled "The Audition"; and a chronicle of performance process from the perspective of an actor. "Being a Witness" examines performance from the perspective of the audience and the director: being an audience member; viewing theatre in the context of New York City; directing and being directed by actors bodies; and watching The DEF Comedy Jam.

"Pelias is attempting to further the whole area of performance studies through this imaginative and learned project. It is a risk-taking and at times breathtaking performance, wherein the comingling of autobiography, ethnographic observation, and critical insight coalesce into a fascinating read." H. L. Goodall Jr., author of *Living in the Rock n Roll Mystery: Reading Context, Self, and Others as Clues*