

WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT, BIRNAM WOOD COMES TO DUNSINANE HILL

The Risk Theatre Model of Tragedy presents a profoundly original theory of drama that speaks to modern audiences living in an increasingly volatile world driven by artificial intelligence, gene editing, globalization, and mutual assured destruction ideologies. Tragedy, according to risk theatre, puts us face to face with the unexpected implications of our actions by simulating the profound impact of highly improbable events.

In this book, classicist Edwin Wong shows how tragedy imitates reality: heroes, by taking inordinate risks, trigger devastating low-probability, high-consequence outcomes. Such a theatre forces audiences to ask themselves a most timely question—what happens when the perfect bet goes wrong?

Not only does Wong reinterpret classic tragedies from Aeschylus to O’Neill through the risk theatre lens, he also invites dramatists to create tomorrow’s theatre. As the world becomes increasingly unpredictable, the most compelling dramas will be high-stakes tragedies that dramatize the unintended consequences of today’s risk takers who are taking us past the point of no return.

Edwin Wong founded the Risk Theatre Modern Tragedy Playwright Competition with Langham Court Theatre to align tragedy with the modern fascination with uncertainty and chance. It is the world’s largest competition for the writing of tragedy (visit risktheatre.com for details). He is an award-winning classicist with a master’s degree from Brown University, where he concentrated on ancient theatre. His other research interests include epic poetry, where he has published a solution to the contradiction between Homeric fate and free will by drawing attention to the peculiar mechanics of chess endgames. He lives in Victoria, BC and blogs at melpomeneswork.com.

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MODEL of TRAGEDY

EDWIN WONG



The RISK THEATRE MODEL *of* TRAGEDY

Gambling, Drama, and the Unexpected

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