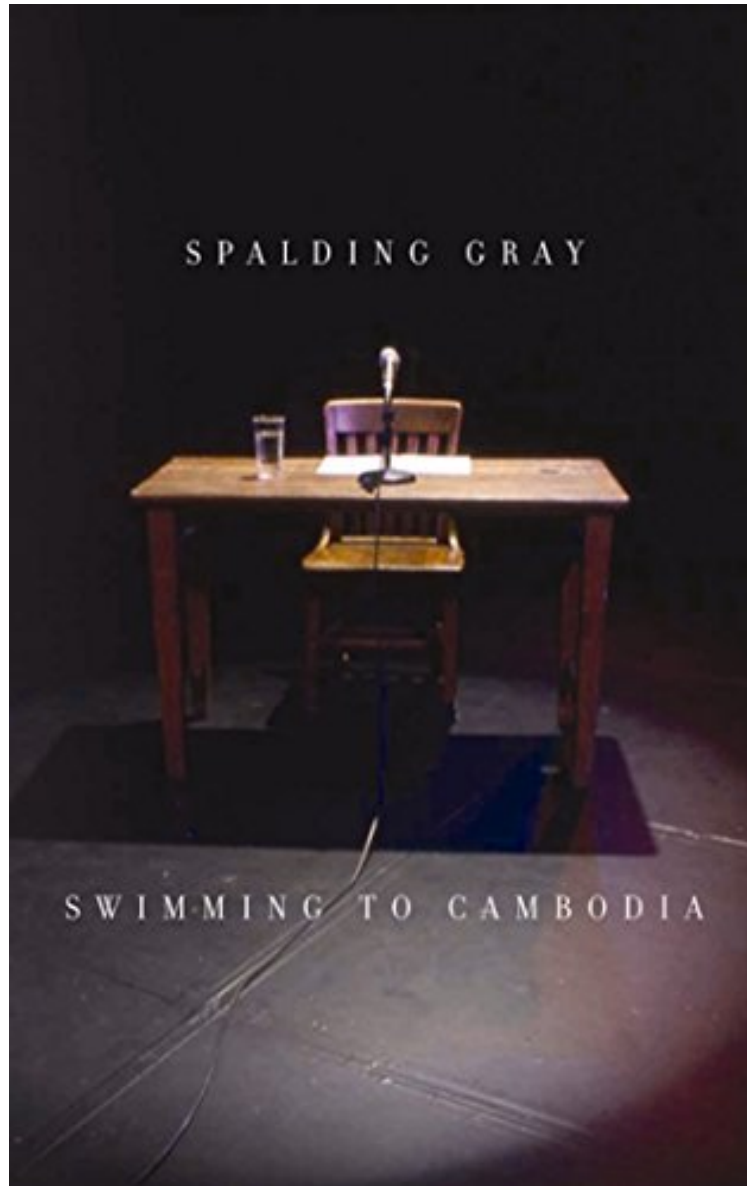


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## Swimming to Cambodia

*Spalding Gray*

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**Spalding Gray : Swimming to Cambodia** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Swimming to Cambodia:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. The Sweet Legacy of a Modern BardBy Teja McDanielFor those not familiar with Spalding Gray, he was a theatric artist and story teller of the highest calibre. While he may be gone and saddly so, this is a rare opportunity to visit back to the off Broadway delights, often found in days past amongst the

New York Village beat. It is a story of adventure and self awareness, with an ambitious live performance captured for the DVD viewer. While it would never compare to the being in the theater seats, it is a work of art of perfection, by a complicated man. It is his true account, told by his own interpretation. It is inspiring and tragic, as his story can transcend one's perspective of our path in the world and what we can do with it, yet told by a bard no longer with us. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Hilarious and tragic, pathetic and profound...By DolphinThe most spellbinding 87-minute monologue ever. Still sound uninteresting? Read on. Yes, Spaulding Gray is seated at a desk in a theater with only a microphone, a notebook and a glass of water, and yes, he stays put and talks for the entire length of the film. But my friends, he weaves a tale that will haunt you, a tale at once both hilarious and tragic, pathetic and profound. Recounting his experiences as an actor playing a small role in Roland Joffe's war drama *The Killing Fields*, Spaulding Gray invites you so deeply into both South East Asia and his psyche that you feel you too have tried the hash and magic mushrooms and become the "wandering bachelor mendicant poet," witnessing each story he spins before you. Originally performed as an Obie-winning one man show Off-Broadway, the film was nominated for several Independent Spirit awards, including Best Director, Best Screenplay and Best Male Lead. Spaulding seems to dance between topics as diverse and far ranging as dealing with neighbors in Boston and New York City, sexual tourism in Thailand, hanging out in the Amtrak lounge car ("one big rolling confessional"), overcoming a swimming phobia in the Indian Ocean and "the worst auto-homeo genocide in modern history." Balancing neurotic self-indulgence with razor-sharp self-awareness and a keen sense of both the absurdity and profundity of all he encounters, seems a mathematical impossibility, but it is just that high-wire act that makes the film extraordinary. It is heartbreaking that *Swimming to Cambodia* is currently out of print. If you haven't yet seen it, or if you have but don't own it yet, you'd better get your copy quickly. I've got mine. 7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. One word: Captivating. By StephI was glued to the TV the entire time this was on--I couldn't even tear myself away to get a drink or go to the bathroom. Spaulding is quite the story teller, and even the rather mundane underlying story (basically, "I had this small role in a movie"), really comes to life with all his voices and expressions and history lessons and tangents... I've never heard anyone before or since tell stories in such a way. After all, this is just a guy sitting in front of an audience talking. Who would think it would be so memorable?

It took courage to do what Spaulding did--courage to make theatre so naked and unadorned, to expose himself in this way and fight the demons in public. In doing so, he entered our hearts--my heart because he made his struggle my struggle. His life became my life. Eric Bogosian Virtuoso. A master writer, reporter, comic and playwright. Spaulding Gray is a sit-down monologist with the soul of a stand-up comedian. A contemporary Gulliver, he travels the globe in search of experience and finds the ridiculous. *The New York Times* In 2004, we mourned the loss of one of America's true theatrical innovators. Spaulding Gray took his own life by jumping from the Staten Island ferry into the waters of New York Harbor, finally succumbing to the impossible notion that he could in fact swim to Cambodia. At a memorial gathering for family, friends and fans at Lincoln Center in New York, his widow expressed the need to honor Gray's legacy as an artist and writer for his children, as well as for future generations of fans and readers. Originally published in 1985, *Swimming to Cambodia* is reissued here 20 years later in a new edition as a tribute to Gray's singular artistry. Writer, actor and performer, Spaulding Gray is the author of *Sex and Death to the Age 14*; *Monster in a Box*; *It's a Slippery Slope*; *Gray's Anatomy* and *Morning, Noon and Night*, among other works. His appearance in *The Killing Fields* was the inspiration for his *Swimming to Cambodia*, which was also filmed by Jonathan Demme.

About the Author Spaulding Gray was the author of numerous solo pieces including *Monster in a Box*; *It's a Slippery Slope*; *Morning, Noon and Night*, and *Sex and Death to the Age of 14* and other pieces. He leaves behind a wife, two children of his own and a stepdaughter. He will be sorely missed.