

NOVEL READINGS

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| EVENT | Writers Unblock |
| PROJECT | <i>Trash</i> |
| AUTHOR | Jesse McKinley |
| EXCERPT(S) | Prologue Chapter 1 |
| NR DIRECTOR | Michael Barakiva |

The session was enormously helpful to me.

It's very easy in the novel form to get boxed in between your ears: the characters, the arcs, the themes. It's very solitary: just you and the page. **However, the theatrical form is collaborative by its nature, opening up that process, something I found emotionally and psychologically edifying.**

The act of having it heard out-loud also mirrors what's happening inside the writer's brain: When the writer is writing a scene, of course, they are channeling their characters' voices. **But by actually hearing the dialogue and the exposition, it becomes crystal clear what works -- and what doesn't, taking the internal into the external world, and by extension, helping mentally streamline the narrative and figure out what is important.**

Finally, simply knowing it's going to be heard publically also inspires you to work: The day after my session, I worked on the book until midnight, after having avoided the manuscript for weeks. And I haven't stopped.