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Gabriel Josipovici

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In this brilliant new book, a preeminent literary thinker muses over the central question of how we can feel at home in the world, given that the world is independent of and indifferent to our wishes. Drawing on books and films, cultural history and his own experiences, Gabriel Josipovici argues that it is possible to feel comfortable in the world and in our relationships with others only if we value touch over sight, if we respect distance but also work to overcome it.

Josipovici moves from a Charlie Chaplin movie to passages from Proust, from the world of sport to the world of addiction, from medieval pilgrimages to the cult of relics, from a wedding photograph of his grandparents to some of Chardin's most enigmatic paintings. Through these seemingly disparate topics he provides engaging and wise commentary on connection and communication in life. Contrasting the senses of sight and touch, Josipovici notes that although sight seems to give us the totality of what we behold, it is only when we walk or feel our way across the distances that things become more than images and begin to constitute the world in which we as touchers and not mere observers are included. If we depend on sight—which seems to offer a frictionless domination over reality—we may avoid the pains and uncertainties of living, but we also lose our involvement with life.

Lucid, imaginative, and daring, Josipovici's book will inspire and, yes, deeply touch us all.

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