

**Trinh T. Minh-ha,
The Twofold Commitment
(Primary Information)**

Trinh T. Minh-ha's work routs conventional categories—it's a matrix, as defined by its silences and omissions as by its inclusions. This is as true of her films as of her philosophy, her feminist work and her postcolonial critique. She is informed by her childhood in Vietnam and adulthood in the United States, her years in West Africa and Japan, and her study of ethnomusicology as well as French literature. So it's no surprise that *The Twofold Commitment* is a work of duality in both content and form: half is the lyrical screenplay for her film *Forgetting Vietnam*, and the rest a selection of wide-ranging conversations. Building from one of the founding myths of Vietnam—that two dragons entwined and fell to a watery resting place, becoming one in the country they created—the book is a work of splitting and rejoining. Published on the fiftieth anniversary of America's withdrawal from the Vietnam War, it responds to a moment of historical division with a metaphorical cleaving: between text and image, screenplay and interview, fiction and philosophy, showing that in separation there is also sameness. As Trinh explains in one of the included conversations, "the question of change or sameness is a little bit . . . like stillness and movement. If we think of them as opposites, then we think, for example, of stillness as something that is rather stale . . . and we think of movement as something that brings about change. . . . For me, they are like two facets of the same coin." Like so much of her previous work, this book presents a nuanced, third path that threads oppositions. Serving as both a good introduction to Trinh's thinking and a deep dive into her creative process, *The Twofold Commitment* presents the complexities of one of the greatest living filmmakers and theorists. —*India Ennenga*