

Theater occurs when a person (or person) isolated space and/or time, present themselves to another or others

Collaborative

Essential properties of theatre

Mimetic- imitation of actions, events

Synthetic- many elements, work of many disciplines, many sensory, emotional, and intellectual responses are synthesized into singular experiences

Ephemeral- fleeting, momentary, transient

Immediate- direct effect, instantaneous, no time to reflect

Convention of theatre

"Willing suspension of disbelief" Samuel Taylor Coolidge

Aside- other characters don't hear what another character on stage says

Speaking to self, speaking to audience (direct address)

Soliloquy- character, alone on stage, "thinks out loud"

Temporal and Spatial conventions: Time and Space are fluid on stage, time and space can change

Dialogue- tell story through dialogue, the audience is in sense eaves dropping

Dimming the Lights- dim the audience so its just the stage lit up, don't feel like you are on stage when acting

Theater started around 4th century BC Athens

Plato- wrote The Republic

-"Theater waters the growth of passions which should be allowed to wither and sets them u in control, although the goodness and happiness of our lives depend on their being held in subjection."

-Theater is bad for human

Aristotle wrote The Poetics

-Arouses but then purges emotions and impulses from the audience that would be harmful if allowed free rein in society

-Theatre allows people to "vent" by empathizing with the character

-Theater is good for human

Catharsis- to purge or cleanse completely

-Aristotle was the first critic because he analyzed the tradition of playwriting of his time

Aristotle's Six Elements of Theatre

Plot- order of the action; shape of the play

Character- human agents who carry out the plot

Thought- intellectual aspect of the play; the theme or idea or thought of the play

Diction- kind of language used by the characters

Music- all that can be heard (aural elements)

Spectacle- all that can be seen (visual elements)

This analysis is used to analyze the written or preformed script

Acting- process of communicating to an audience a character's active struggle to overcome obstacles and achieve a goal

4 Questions every actor must answer about his character

1. Who am I?

- Physical characteristics
- Place in the society of the play
- Psychosocial make-up

2. What do I want?

- Determine the character's main goal (super objective)
- Must be of life and death importance to the character

3. What stands in my way?

- Determine the character's obstacles
- External-door, situation, time, other characters
- Internal-fear, anger, guilt, ignorance

4. What am I willing to do to overcome the obstacle and achieve the goal?

- determine the character's **tactics**- active things a character does physically and vocally to overcome an obstacle and achieve the goal

Where to find the answers? The Script

Actor's 3 Tools- Body, Voice, and Imagination

Conflict- result of intersection of 2 or more forces

Without conflict there is no drama

Reason for conflict- worth the effort within the world of the play

Conflict leads to **Action**- "is" something a character does that can be perceived by the audience, "does" moves the plot forward

Building block of drama

Playwright chooses to show us the events (actions) in a carefully designed order

SHAPE OF THE PLAY IS THE PLOT

Components of a Plot

Exposition- background information, way the world is before the action

Inciting incident- first conflict, propels the characters into action

Rising Action-results when major characters encounter complications (meet opposing forces) create conflict or requires more action, increases suspense, emotional tension

Types of complication0 discovery, reversal of fortune, foreshadowing

Climax- most intense point of conflict or highest tension

Falling Action-undoing all remaining complications or denouement

Resolution- tying up loose ends, explain leftovers

Two Common Plot Types

Climatic e.g. half hour comedies or 1 hour dramas

Begins late in story (near climax)

Limited number of character and locations

We see on stage only the characters and events need to tell the story (no subplots)

Events are linked by obvious cause-and-effect

Episodic e.g. Forrest Gump

Tells a story that covers a long period of time and begins early in the story

Often many characters and locations

Often several stories being told, plots are interwoven

Constructed with a series of short scenes (episodes)

Deus ex machine- (Latin) A contrived device to resolve a situation

New character comes in last minute

Hero is hanging of a cliff and a helicopter magically saves him

Good guys are about to lose everything and unknown dead uncle gives them money