

Theatre of the Absurd-Characteristics

1. No clear-cut line of action. There is only situation. No plot but only situation, tend to eliminate much of the cause-and-effect relationship among incidents, no-one remembers each other.
2. No recognizable and definable solid décor or costumes or stage articles.
3. Time and place non-specific (void, vacuum, tree), they are not sure if it is the same tree.

They are out of social and historical time & space.

4. Unrecognizable representational characters. Characters are reduced to archetypes (can't identify with them) like Charlie Chaplin (Charlot), pathetic clowns representative of mankind (like Everyman).

Estragon=nihilist, physical **Vladimir**=intellectual

Pozzo=oppressive, Power **Lucky**: powerlessness of the intellectuals who is

obedient

5. Language cannot express itself and accomplish communication. This is the situation of modern man. They cannot understand each other, communicate with each other although they live together, communication power minimized. Language does not represent a certain social, no cultural connotations, group but general language. Dialogues are unclear and understandable, reduced to a game. Do not follow a logical line. Are repetitive, not informative, but give the sense that characters are sharing. Dialogues Pinpoint the lack of communication.

Also use of pauses and repetition.

The characters play games with words which they intend only to pass the time but which take on a meaning they had not thought of.

6. Deals with universal/global problems (not national) and issues such as WWI/WWII, atom/nuclear bombs, man's place and the function in the world.

Waiting for Godot is a critique of the 20th Century western civilization. For Beckett, each of us is a tramp who is thrown into this world without any good reason at all, is helpless. 'Perhaps' is a key word in Beckett, we can't be sure of anything. They are not sure of anything and don't remember. Estragon doesn't believe that he did something sinful, while Vladimir thinks that he might have. When you are born with a sin. To be born into this world is enough to be a sin. This world won't bring any good. So, by being born, you are committing a sin.

7. Abstraction: move away from what is concrete towards abstraction
8. The Message of the play has to be deduced from clues. Godot never comes, they won't be saved.
9. The idea of chaos in the post-war period presenting the chaos on the stage. More theatrical (artificial), stage event is more artificial. You do not forget your position in the real world. We can't be sure about what happens. We are waiting for someone (Wilson is Dumb Waiter?). We don't know what we are waiting for. The characters are anti-heroes, victims, and do not have control over their lives.