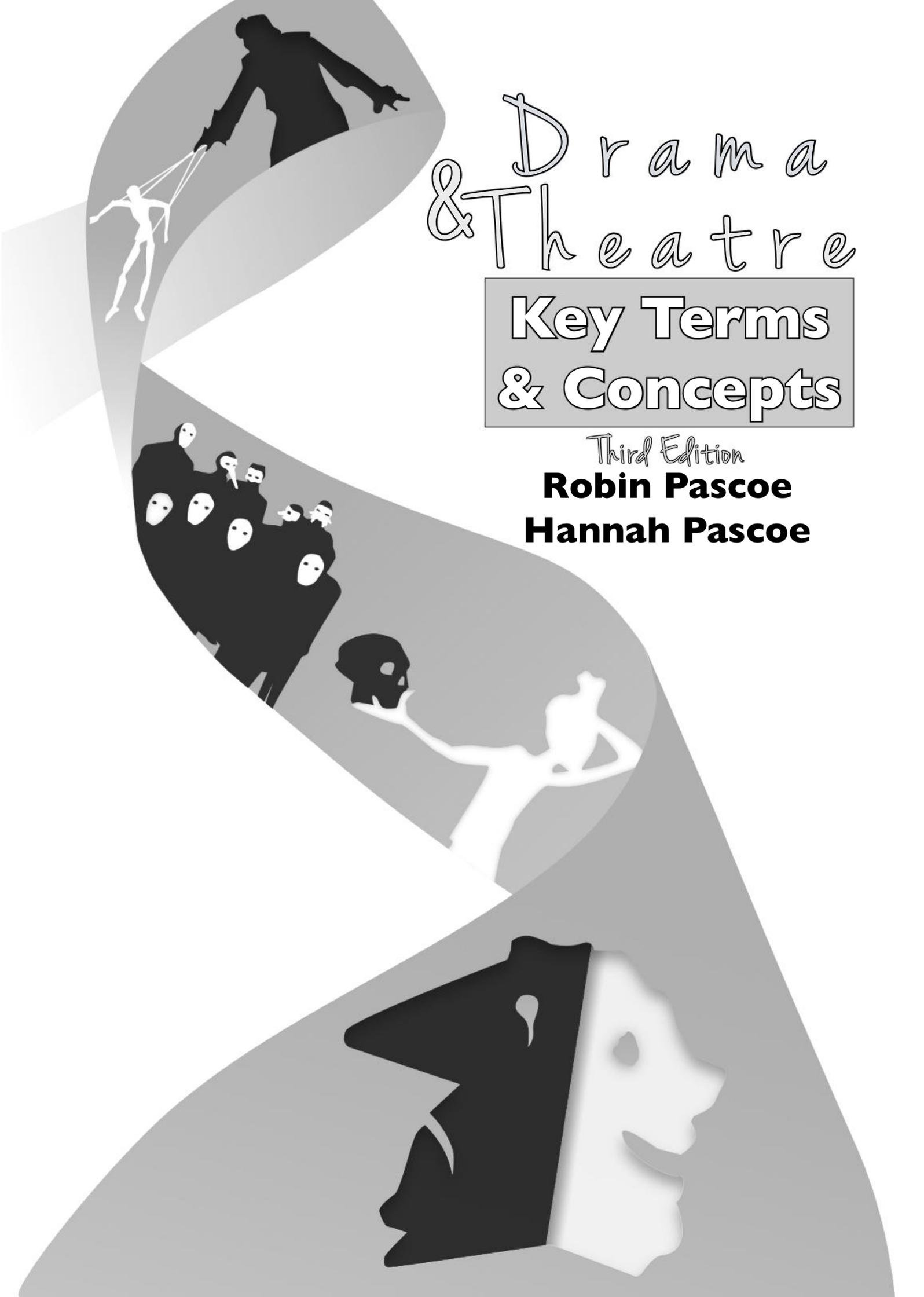


Drama & Theatre

Key Terms & Concepts

Third Edition
Robin Pascoe
Hannah Pascoe



Drama
& Theatre

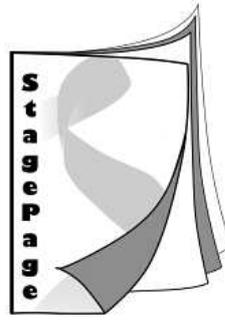
**Key Terms
& Concepts**

Third Edition

**Robin Pascoe
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Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of this book is to explain key terms and concepts of drama, theatre and performance for students of introductory and extended drama courses.

Audience

This glossary is designed for students and teachers:

- needing to understand key terms as they connect with drama experiences and texts
- looking for succinct definitions of key ideas about drama
- beginning to make critical responses to their own drama and the drama of other times, places and cultures
- making their own drama, applying drama concepts

Scope

Terms are not listed exhaustively but comprehensively highlight selected key concepts and terms based on surveying the requirements of a range of courses across Australia. Essentially, there has been a selection process based on the experiences of the authors, in particular the experiences of Hannah in her secondary drama course and tertiary actor training. In this edition, all definitions have been reviewed and, in many cases, amplified. New terms have been added in response to changing curriculum requirements.

In writing the definitions, the intention has been to provide concise, user-friendly summaries on which students can build understanding. Where appropriate, these definitions are entry points for further investigation and serve as a signpost for more detailed sources.

Responding to changing Drama and Theatre and Curriculum requirements

Each education authority constructs drama courses in its own way – even when there is broad agreement of general principles and approaches.

Many of the terms in these drama courses are included in the glossary. However, any glossary can be only broadly inclusive and may not address every possible term included in all curriculums. The ways terms are used in courses can change and develop over time and some authorities adopt specific ways of explaining some terms. It is necessary to cross check the terms in this glossary with local usage.

Publishing in print and digital formats

As with the first two editions, this glossary is designed for everyday use in the classroom and for home study. The print edition is formatted to fit into student files and is designed to be practical, supportive and useful. This Third Edition is also being simultaneously published in a digital format, recognising that many students have access in class and workshop to laptops and devices. This digital edition adds the talents of Ben to the team.

Sources

A wide range of primary and secondary sources has been consulted and synthesised in a form designed for the audiences and purposes of this glossary. This glossary has been rewritten responsively as drama curriculum changes and as our knowledge and understanding about drama, theatre and performance sharpens and develops.

Organisation

Information is presented in alphabetical order according to key headings or terms. Within these major headings, there may be a number of other related terms.

There is a comprehensive index covering the terms included in the text.

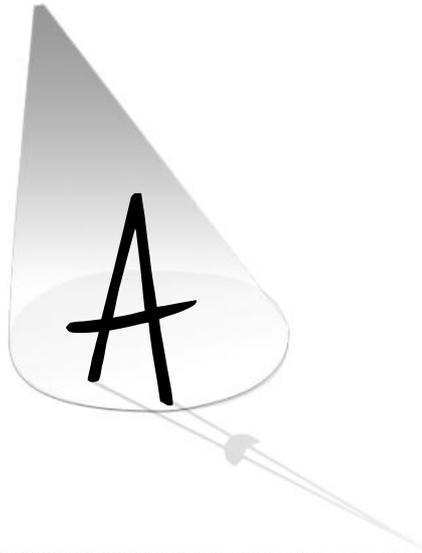
Due to the vast nature of the art form in all of its forms, emerging trends and many approaches to studying drama, this glossary is a snapshot and selective by necessity. Nevertheless, the core essentials are included here for the drama student and as such this glossary is a quick “hit and run” reference for many essential concepts. It is regularly under review reflecting the dynamic development of drama as an art form and area of study.

Advice for students

Learning, understanding and using terms is a dynamic process. It is an essential part of learning drama.

Use terms accurately and consistently. Spell them accurately when you use them.

Knowledge for its own sake is hollow. The purpose of terminology is to apply knowledge and deepen understanding in order to make better drama and respond to it more effectively.



A effect

alienation effect

Translation of *Verfremdungseffekt* term used by Brecht; linked to alienation in drama but also more connected with a sense of distancing audiences from emotional identification with dramatic action for the purpose of making political or social comment through drama.

Brecht and others used A effect through devices such as:

- use of third person past tense narration by characters in the action
- spoken stage directions
- stage design to distance action and to make actors and audiences aware of the artificial nature of drama - the artifice of drama
- songs to interrupt the flow of action and identification
- placards, slides, images
- direct address of audience
- symbolic props
- emblematic costuming

See also *Brechtian Drama, Epic Theatre, Presentational Drama, Alienation Effect*

Aboriginal drama

Australian Indigenous drama

Drama about or by Australian Aboriginal people often drawing on, but not limited to, traditional dance, song and story-telling. Contemporary Aboriginal drama has many forms but shares a capacity for blending realist/representational aspects with spiritual reality presented symbolically. Aboriginal drama provides voice for individual and community perspectives, stories and issues though it is important to note that there are many differing approaches and it is difficult to generalize or make sweeping simplifications about Aboriginal drama.

Aboriginal drama may also refer to drama of other indigenous peoples such as Canadian First Nations peoples.

See also *Australian Drama, Indigenous Drama*

abstract

abstraction

Focusing on an idea, quality or state rather than a concrete object or event. Abstract art does not seek to represent physical events but to achieve effect through focusing on shapes, colours, forms, textures, sounds, movements, etc. Gives primacy to subjective emotional expression, spontaneity

Abstraction is the process of simplifying, extracting or removing elements of a movement or speech to communicate an idea, quality or state rather than their literal meaning.

absurdism

Theatre of the Absurd

Form or style of theatre that focuses on the irrational and illogical aspects of human life and interaction to highlight a sense of helplessness and the inadequacy of a rationalistic approach.

Theatre of the Absurd has been a powerful mid Twentieth Century influence. While often funny in a serious or unusual way, absurdist drama is not to be confused with other forms of comedy. Nor should the term be used indiscriminately for dramatic material that is confusing, contradictory or obscure.

See also *Representational Drama, Presentational Drama*

accent

Accent in drama is taking on the vocal characteristics of a specific nation, place, race or social class.

Also a distinctive emphasis given to a syllable, sound or word.

accept (improvisation)

In improvising when an actor takes or agrees to respond to an offer from another improviser.

See also *improvisation, blocking*

acrobatics

Hand stands, flips, tumbles, somersaults

A performance art and sport incorporating full body activity such as jumping, flipping, contortion, balancing and dance.

See also *circus, dance*

act (verb)

To take on a role in dramatic action..

act acts (noun)

Divisions of dramatic texts; acts can be further divided into scenes which in strict usage are bound by the entry and exit of characters. The terms *act* and *scene* are used more loosely in current practice but continue to provide specific structuring markers for drama scripts and texts.

Main divisions of plays, ballets operas, television shows and films.

Acts are often used to show a change of tone, place, time.

They can also be used to show a break in the action or plot development.

Act and acts are terms linked to the overall dramatic structure of a play.

The term is also used to describe the individual performances or different sections of variety shows or cabaret.

See also *actor, acting, mimesis, script, scene, dramatic structure*

acting

Drawing on elements of play, drama, theatre and performance to shape role and dramatic action for an audience. Acting has elements in common with play such as inventiveness, imagination and creativity. It also involves technical expertise, physical capacity, mental and emotional commitment and aesthetic understanding. Acting is a blending of technical and personal and inspirational elements through the personality and experience of individuals actors.

Diderot (1713-84) identified a paradox: the actor both “is” and “pretends”. To act is to both “do” and “pretend to do”. The actor is both the person creating the role and the role created. At its heart acting has mimesis, mimicking or pretending to be someone or something else; but it also has a reality of its own. Actors are real people in the sense that they are physically present but pretending to be someone else – a role or character. They draw on their own lives and personalities to shape other lives through acting (as well as existing independently of acting).

Acting is showing and sharing dramatic action, text and character with an audience. Acting is transitory, set in the present tense, dynamic, built on past experience and rehearsal but also being freshly shaped at the point of delivery. Acting is a physicalising or externalising of emotional states and ideas. The actor’s instruments are body and voice linked with his or her whole being as found in mind, experience and personality.

Different times and places have interpreted acting in contrasting ways.

In the 20th century there has been a dominant (though not exclusive) commitment to a style of acting that is representational.

In this style, actors are committed to creating belief and communicating a sense of realistic or naturalistic truth. This is in contrast to more declamatory, stylised approaches which emphasised presentational gestures, use of voice, movement or technical approaches to the work of the actor. These contrasting (though overlapping) approaches are sometimes described as moving from the *inside-out* and from the *outside-in*. In moving from the *inside-out* there is a focus on the psychology of the character and how it interacts with that of the actor. By contrast when an actor develops a characterisation from the external qualities of the role – e.g. how the character moves, talks, etc. – then the focus is on moving from the outside features into the role.

There have been - and will no doubt continue to be - many attempts to describe and define approaches to acting.

In the Indian tradition, the *Natyasastra* outlined elaborate approaches to acting through four elements - body movement (*angika*), voice (*vachika*), spectacle (*aharya*) and sentiment (*sattvika*), with actors’ training being under the guidance of a *natyacharya*, probably the stage manager.

In the 20th Century the ideas of Stanislavski have been highly influential though there have also been other important theorists about acting such as Brecht and Grotowski. Even Shakespeare through the character of Hamlet added his voice to the debate through his Advice to the Actors - Speak the speech I pray thee (Hamlet Act 3 Scene ii).

Acting training has until the 20th Century century been based on being accepted into the relatively small, closed band and serving some kind of apprenticeship or practical learning. With the raising of status of actors (see below) there has come academic acceptance of the discipline and structured training for actors in universities and conservatoires. There has also been a place for the non-professional actor through a popular movement in amateur and community theatre.

In non-western traditions, such as classical Japanese drama, there is a life long commitment to learning the art, apprenticeships starting at a young age, and master artist status accorded to a select few; it is largely impossible for those outside the “closed shop” of the art form to enter it as a performer.

Some influences on twentieth century approaches to acting

From the 19th Century, interest in psychology (e.g. Freud, William James, and later Jung), the rise of realism and naturalism, the plays of Ibsen, Chekhov and George Bernard Shaw, along with changing theatre practices influenced by the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen were some of the driving forces that underpinned changing approaches to acting in the Twentieth century.

Boleslavsky (1889-1937) influenced by and worked with Stanislavski and Nemirovich-Danchenko at the Moscow Arts Theatre before working in Germany and USA; focused on the ethical development of the actor as artist through concentration, memory of emotion, understanding the nature of dramatic action, characterisation, observation and understanding and controlling rhythm. In particular, Boleslavsky, in his book *Acting: The First Six Lessons*, emphasised the health of the actor when drawing from the inner world of the self.

Michael Chekhov (1891-1955) was an influential twentieth century actor, director and theorist on acting developed from his work with Stanislavski but emphasising the connections with universal imagery and energy rather than historical, psychological and emotional insights of actors.

Chekhov saw the essence of acting in physicalising psychological thought and emotion through spontaneity, plastic movement and a dialogue between inner and outer rhythms (sometimes called a *psychophysical* approach). Influenced by Rudolph Steiner.

Stanislavski See separate entry

The Method (Method Acting): major North American interpretation of the ideas of Stanislavski and their codification into a style based on intensely felt personal experience, identification with character and extremity. Significant advocates include Lee Strasberg, Elia Kazan, Stella Adler (amongst many others); the Method has a controversial reputation and is a hotly debated approach to acting with particular concern about its impact on the psychological wellbeing of the actor.

Others springing from this Stanislavskian tradition include Sanford Meisner, Uta Hagen, David Mamet (see Practical Aesthetics).

Grotowski: (1933-1999) Polish theatre director and philosopher, with approaches grounded in physical exploration of character and situation; connections to Suzuki who places emphasis on physical theatre and grounding action.

Viola Spolin: (1906-1994) advocate of improvisational approaches to acting and actor training.

Keith Johnstone: (1933 -) inventor of many improvisation games and ‘forms’, Theatresports™; focused on improvisational theatre having had a major influence on the art of improvisation and improvisation as theatre and rehearsal practice.

Suzuki: (1939-) presents a philosophical approach to the stage, the nature of acting and the place of purpose of performance in contemporary society. Suzuki’s ideas are profoundly influenced by Eastern spiritual thought, linking the spiritual and ritualistic nature of traditional Japanese performance, Noh and Kabuki theatre, with Western dramatic traditions. For example, the Suzuki trained actor uses a particular ‘physical grammar’ based on the feet which aims to connect him/her with the ground.

The status of actors has been low for most of recorded history. Despite the religious significance of drama in ancient Greece, there is evidence that the “craftsmen of Dionysus” were viewed with ambivalence. In Roman times acting was considered work for slaves and aliens. In Europe, actors were for many centuries considered beyond the margins of the law. Molière, for example, was refused burial in consecrated ground. Only since the beginnings of the 20th century have actors been

accorded status as well as popularity through recognition of the profession, awards to prominent actors and a pay scale to match. This has accompanied a move from a worldview of drama as a medium for playwrights to one where the actor and director take prominence.

However, this recognition of actors remains tenuous with many poorly paid actors and it remains to be seen if the notoriety of tabloid journalism that accompanies many actors is an extension of a society that still sees actors as rogues and vagabonds.

See also *Asian Drama, drama, fourth wall, Indian drama (Natyasastra), Method acting, mimesis, performance, Stanislavski, script/text interpretation, theatrical performance*

acting styles

It is difficult to classify or limit styles of acting. As the history of drama shows there are a shifting collection of approaches to acting style. There are also violent swings of the pendulum of style.

At its heart, acting is presentational or representational in style or a combination of both.

The following summarizes aspects of some acting styles but this listing is not exhaustive.

Classical (often associated with tragedy): dignified and restrained in approach; large gestures; amplified and declamatory voice; relying on impressions of majestic, rhythmic and noble movement; conscious vocal variety and intensity.

Romantic: extravagant yet graceful; excellent diction and connection with imagery of text; emotional intensity; often also requiring skills in fencing, dancing, singing and instrument playing.

Realistic (sometimes also Naturalistic): representational acting where credibility of character and dramatic action focuses on creating belief in the moment; vocal quality and movement require a commitment to being true to life.

High comedy: sophisticated, intellectual, witty and worldly wise in approach; surface brilliance; communicating poetic imagery; nuance; flexible use of voice to point lines and ideas; timing is of key importance; bodies, posture, facial expression and gestures are used in formal and mannered ways.

Low comedy: physical approach to performing comedy through the use of vocal variety, flexibility and pace accompanied by physical comedy; slapstick, horseplay, pratfalls and physical theatre skills are needed; capacity to *ad lib* in response to comic situation and dialogue (and, sometimes, audiences); exaggeration and use of techniques such as *double take, slow burn*, etc.

Epic: presentational acting style through deliberate distancing and sense of detachment; a capacity to move across a range of styles in response to the needs of the text.

See also *characterisation (Acting), ensemble acting, impersonation, mime, Presentational Drama, Representational Drama, role playing, Stanislavski, The Method, understudy, classical acting, epic acting, high comedy acting, low comedy acting, Presentational acting, realistic acting, Representational acting, romantic acting*

acting edition

Drama scripts

Published play script usually containing comprehensive stage directions, props lists, suggestions on settings, layouts and lighting LX and sound effects SFX; may also be used to describe a completed prompt book of a dramatic text in production. Acting editions often differ from published versions of plays as the stage manager notates stage directions from the original production or slight changes are made by the playwright in rehearsal.

See also *script*

acting space

Stages (Theatre)

Spaces of Performance

The area in which the dramatic action physically occurs for an audience to see, hear and experience.

The design and shape of a stage creates a specific relationship between the actors and the audience in that space. This can be used by the performers to engage, alienate or interact with the audience.

Throughout the history of drama many acting spaces have developed, each with its own feel and purpose. As such, some acting spaces work for some plays and not for others.

Beyond the physical space which is used for acting, the term spaces of performance includes the imagined space between actors and audience as well as the emotional spaces created by actors between the characters/roles that interact on stage.

See also *amphitheatre, apron, Arena Staging, black box theatre, booth theatre, boulevard theatre, courtyard theatre, proscenium arch theatre/staging, promenade theatre/staging, theatre architecture, theatre in the round/staging, traverse theatre/staging, thrust stage*

action

See *dramatic action*

actions

psychophysical actions

Actions – verbs used to describe what the character wants in the scene. Mack (1993) defines action as “mental, physical, or emotional activity, motivated by a textual or subtextual source, that moves the character along the rhythmic build towards the objective of the scene”.

See *Stanislavski*

actioning

To put action behind the thought for each phrase of dialogue in a script.

An approach to acting that places playing actions – what a character wants or is trying to get/achieve or make happen – ahead of (or along side) playing emotions. The job of the actor in this approach is to identify the character’s objectives – and therefore the overall or super-objective of that character. The theory argues that if an actor is relaxed and receptive, then playing the action will release the emotion which is a by-product of the action. Acting then incorporates thinking, concentrating and imagining ahead of speaking expressively or eliciting emotional responses in the actor. This approach focuses on actors finding and using the psychophysical gesture, movement and voice that embodies and communicates to an audience the emotional state of a character.

Actions are specific, based on direct verbs (e.g. to praise) and derived from the text: a character’s action may focus on coaxing, praising, cajoling, deceiving, etc. another character and this is realised through the specific use of gestures, facial expression, movement, tone of voice, etc.

See also *Stanislavski*

actor

cast, performer

Person who creates or recreates a role or character in drama; one who works as a performer in drama; in contemporary usage, the term actor is used for both males and females

Thespis (6th Century BC) is considered the founder of acting and identified as the first performer to separate himself from the dithyramb of the chorus, introducing the concept of dialogue and monologue.

See also audition, acting, casting, cue (Theatre), monologue, playbuilding, prompt and prompting, role (Drama)

actor-audience relationship

Actors and audiences share a dynamic connection. Audiences are not passive recipients but engage in processes of identification that match the processes of mimesis used by actors.

actor training

The education and training of actors to develop their skills and abilities. Modern actor training is based on many different and varied methods including: physical theatre (such as mime), Alexander Technique, approaches derived from Stanislavski, etc.

Actor training typically happens in drama schools based on the conservatory model established in France in the 19th Century. Notable actor training academies include RADA (Royal Academy of Dramatic Art) London, NIDA (National Institute of Dramatic Art) Sydney, WAAPA (Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts) Perth.

See also acting

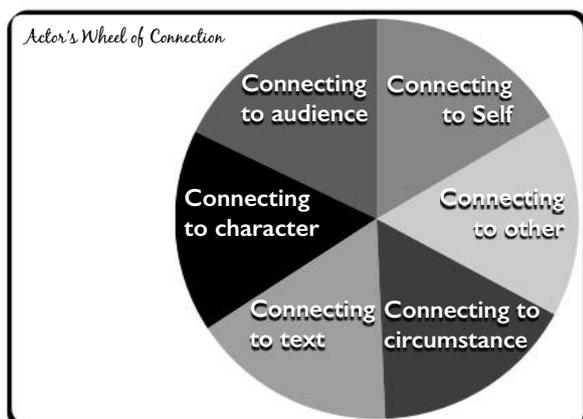
Actors' Equity

The union that represents actors. In Australia, Equity is part of the Media Entertainment & Arts Alliance.

actor's wheel of connection

Brestoff (2005) drew together many of the theories of teaching acting in the Twentieth Century with the image of actor's skills and performance as six spokes on a wheel that operate in an integrated way. Actors:

- 1) connect to self, the physical, emotional and cognitive self;
- 2) connect to others through empathy and identification;
- 3) connect to the given and implied circumstances;
- 4) connect to text, subtext and context;
- 5) connect to characters through objectives as the basis of psychophysical thought and movement; and,
- 6) connect to audiences.

**ad-libbing**

Improvising a line of dialogue or stage business, generally unscripted, added to the action to cover an omission or mistake such as a dropped line, a missed entrance or technical cue/FX; occasionally added for comic effect or as a prank.

See also improvisation, busking

adapted space

A theatrical space that was not originally intended for theatre or performance but modified to allow it to happen; e.g. a library used for a performance about the life of a poet.

See also found space

Adler (Stella Adler)

Stella Adler (1901-1992) was an American actress and acting teacher, who studied with Konstantin Stanislavski in Russia before developing her own methodology based on his work. Leaning towards using the imagination to generate emotion rather than using memory and personal experience to emote. Adler training focuses strongly on research, as well as a strong emphasis on physical and vocal control and thorough analysis of text.

Aesthetic (Aesthetics)

Sometimes spelt Esthetics

Aesthetics is a term from philosophy for the study of the arts and the principles of beauty such as structure, harmony, focus, balance, shape, proportion and colour. Aesthetics raise questions of taste, value, social and cultural identity and civilisation.

Drama is a significant form of aesthetic experience.

In current thinking *aesthetic experience* is focused on the ways we value and respond to arts experiences along with the ways we make them. These responses are integral to an individual's own experience of making the arts as well as to the formal and informal ways we respond to the arts of others.

Aesthetic learning provides valuable insights not only into the nature of the arts, but also into the importance of broader aesthetic considerations relating to our physical, cultural and spiritual worlds.

Aesthetic Understanding lies along side *Arts Practice* and *Arts Responding* at the heart of arts learning. Aesthetic understanding occurs at the dynamic intersections of three dimensions with an arts event or experience:

- past experiences, associations and memories
- current emotions and dispositions
- knowledge and understandings of conventions, forms, styles, techniques, practices and processes of the art form, artist and world of associated with the artist(s) and art form

Aesthetic Understanding is inter-connected and inter-related with *Arts Practice* and *Arts Responding*. Simultaneously explored and developed they are forms of *Applied Aesthetic Understanding*.

The aesthetic experience of drama/theatre involves making and responding when people physically inhabit an imagined role in a situation or situations that connect emotions to the imagination and feelings to the intellect. By being in role as an actor and responding to role as an audience member, we explore human experience and behaviour in a symbolic form of dramatic storytelling and dramatic action.

See also Arts Appreciation

aesthetic distance

Deliberate standing back from an aesthetic experience for purpose of reflection, analysis, interpretation and informed judgment; separation, emotionally or cognitively, between the artificial world of a drama text and the 'reality' the drama represents. Physical and emotional space between actor and audience.

affective memory

See emotional memory

African drama

As nations on the African continent emerged from colonial status there was

- an increasing search for identity
- a challenging of colonial ties and dominant forms
- a conscious choice of indigenous forms that shaped - and continues to shape - drama.

The African continent encompasses a wide variety of nations and forms of drama but does not represent any one dominant pattern.

See also Angolan drama, Kenyan drama, Nigerian drama, South African drama, Zairean drama, Zambian drama

after piece

In 18th Century drama a brief play, usually a farce, included as light relief after a tragedy.

agit-prop drama/theatre

political theatre

Political drama form - abbreviated from Agitation and Propaganda; partisan and often controversial. Originated in the work of German director Erwin Piscator and often typified in the work of Brecht, there is an obvious didactic and propaganda purpose in the drama and the use of alienation (*Verfremdungseffekt*) through the use of multi stage, multi media effects, placards, slides, songs, and music hall techniques.

See also A effect, Alienation Effect, Brechtian Drama, Political Drama

Alexander Technique

A movement technique developed by Australian actor, F. M. Alexander in the late 19th century.

Alexander Technique is a method designed to educate, or re-educate, people on physical 'habits' which limit movement, and help correct these in order to help the body move with ease, freedom and balance.

An important element of the Alexander Technique is the way thoughts influence movement and how ideas can be expressed in movement, e.g. by thinking about loosening a muscle it will loosen.

See also acting, actor training, movement

alienation effect

A Effect, Verfremdungseffekt

Feature of mid 20th Century drama; deliberate use of stagecraft to create for audiences a sense of distance from the characters and situations as a reflection of mood of displacement, lack of identification or trust

See also A effect, Agit-Prop drama/theatre, Brechtian Drama, Epic Theatre, Historification, Political Theatre

alignment

The optimal positioning of body parts to utilise the skeletal system, allowing for muscles to work more efficiently. Good use of posture and alignment allows the actor to be free vocally and physically. The changing or distorting of alignment can be used to create role and character.

See also posture

allegory

Presentation of an abstract idea or spiritual meaning through a concrete form e.g. in *Everyman* the protagonist Everyman (standing for all people) undertakes a journey (through life) representing the different possible lives of the audience.

allusion

Reference, indirectly or explicitly, to another person, thing or work of drama or literature; allusions add to or enhance the current dramatic situation or comment on it using irony. Through allusion, drama sets up key resonances and points of reference.

amateur drama/theatre

Community theatre

Drama or theatre performed by non-professional actors; while sometimes the term is used negatively, amateur and community theatre can have high standards of performance and show innovation without the constraints of having to show a profit.

See also community theatre

American drama

American theatre

Native Indian American drama reflects the patterns of many other indigenous, non-European drama traditions: a connection with shamanism, ritual, connections to dance, movement, music, use of animal and natural imagery and a drawing together of roles of participants - performers and audience.

Early American colonial society reflected a Puritan rejection of drama and as a result there was sporadic development of drama under the guidance of enthusiasts, amateurs and the occasional visiting professional; early colonial drama was mostly European in inspiration and flavour.

After the American Wars of Independence, there was a slow move towards an American theatre that featured native-born stars, plays and characters.

The years after the American Civil War saw the establishment of a strong mainstream theatre that celebrated individualism (and the rise of the star system), social comedies, populist drama, commercial values, touring companies and theatre as "big business".

Contrasting with this continuing influence is a search for a national voice through an American National Theatre, plays that are realistically set and a commitment to an American approach to acting through the work of the Actors Studio, Method acting (a development of the Stanislavski "method"). The touring traditions of 19th century drama are further developed in the Twentieth century through the growth in regional theatres and companies.

The Federal Theatre Project established under the Works Progress Administration, a significant project during the 1930's Depression, stimulated interesting, though sometimes controversial theatre before its closure. It was the first major public support for drama in the USA.

Music theatre has been an inextricable thread in the development of modern American drama.

American drama influenced but was also, in many eyes, shaped and eclipsed by radio, film and television drama.

Broadway: theatres in the area surrounding Times Square in New York; characterised as commercial theatre.

Off Broadway: literally theatres or productions located outside the Broadway area surrounding Time Square in New York;

also used until about 1960 to describe non-commercial, experimental plays or productions using unknown actors and playwrights; now concentrates on commercial revivals and classics.

Off-Off Broadway: describes non-commercial and experimental theatre as distinguished from commercial Broadway and Off-Broadway productions; diverse in content, purpose, performance space and success.

Regional theatre: the growth of subsidised and non-subsidised theatre in centres other than New York; potent and vibrant development in American drama in latter part of twentieth century

See also *Method Acting, film acting, music theatre/musical T=theatre*

amphitheatres

Semi circular or circular performing space often open air; Greek and Roman in origin.

See also *acting space, spaces of performance*

analysis

A key process in critical approaches to the arts where the parts of a whole drama are described e.g. describing the ideas, roles, structures, beginnings, completions, climaxes and resolutions of a dramatic text.

Angolan drama

Angola - and other Portuguese speaking countries such as Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique - had, until independence, a drama dominated by the influence of Portuguese and Catholic cultures. As part of the political process towards independence and since, drama has served political as well as entertainment ends with only the occasional incorporation of traditional elements.

See also *African drama*

annotations

Analytical, critical or explanatory note presented or written next to the text of a script or sketches, diagrams or illustrations to explain meaning or analytical approach, notate blocking or comments about character and direction.

antagonist

The character who is a foil or opposite to the protagonist, providing the obstacle or opposing force against which the protagonist must work.

See also *protagonist*

anti-climax

A let down, a scene in a play that leads us to expect a climax but doesn't deliver.; often used in drama for comedy or to undercut a lofty or serious moment.

anti masque

A contrast to the harmony of the *masque*; a dark-visions enactment of discord, cacophony and harshness.

See also *masque*

Apollonian drama

Typified as rational, controlled and classical in form, style and content.

Apollonian drama is sometimes contrasted with Dionysian drama or romanticism in drama where characters are larger than life and driven by grand passions and excesses (as exemplified by elements of German philosopher, Nietzsche).

See also *Classicism and Neo Classicism*

apostrophe

Rhetorical device

Where a character interrupts the discourse of dialogue and addresses directly a person or personified thing, either present or absent. Its most common purpose in literature is to declare or display a character's intense emotion, which can no longer be held back.

See also *rhetorical devices*

applause

The clapping of hands as an expression of approval.

Conventionally there is a round of applause at the end of a play so as to acknowledge and thank the actors and production team for their work.

apron

Forestage, in front of the curtain line on proscenium arch stages.

See also *acting space*

archetypes

Ancient or universal motifs and relationships that are played out in different times and cultures. The concept of archetypes is influenced by the writings of psychologist Carl Jung.

See also *characters*

arena staging/arena theatre

Theatre in the Round

Where the audience surround the action on the performance space.

Believed to be derived from ritual circles and spaces of story telling and performance, arena staging is often used in rock concerts or concert versions of music theatre. In the exploration of the relationships between audiences and performers, sophisticated use of theatre in the round has been widely used in the second part of the Twentieth Century.

See also *acting space, Theatre in the Round*

Aristotelian drama

Classical Greek drama

In his famous treatise *The Poetics*, Aristotle identified six elements of tragedy: plot, character, thought, diction, music and spectacle; also included is discussion of what future generations came to define as the unities of time, place and action which demanded that in tragedy the action is to take place within twenty four hours (unity of time), cover only one plot (unity of

action) and be located in one place (unity of place).

While each of these elements is necessary for Aristotelian drama, the focus is on dramatic action through plot and character.

Using the device of conflict - internal (psychological) or external (physical) - character interacts with story and is patterned (plotted) into a series of related rising events that build one on another.

Plot contained three key elements

complication - a series of rising actions building suspense or dramatic tension in the audience and leading towards a climax

recognition - climax marking the turning point in the protagonist's journey and including the unexpected reversal of fortune - *peripeteia*

unravelling - denouement - follows the protagonist in his (occasionally in Greek tragedy her) descent from the moment of reversal to the inevitable cathartic recognition of frailty and humanity

Character focuses on known *protagonists*, where the unfolding of the unexpected is not the primary action, but rather on the exploration of the character in terms of a fatal flaw - *harmartia* – and an act of *hubris* or pride that leads the protagonist to the inevitability of a reversal.

A key element of Aristotelian drama is the journey the audience makes with the protagonist and the dramatic action and from which emerges a purging or *catharsis*.

The influence of Aristotelian drama principles on subsequent western drama has been marked and rarely challenged until relatively recent times through Brechtian (Epic) drama.

See also *Brechtian drama, Chekhovian drama, Classical Greek drama, dramatic tension, plot, structure, tragedies, unities of time, place and action*

Artaud

Antonin Artaud (1896-1948) was a French director, actor and playwright who developed the Theatre of Cruelty.

See also *Theatre of Cruelty*

articulation

In voice work the formation of clear, distinct and accurate sounds for dramatic purpose; in movement work isolating and moving specific parts of the body for dramatic purpose.

artistic compromise

A reflection of the collaborative nature of drama and a recognition that when groups of actors and technicians work with a director and production management team, there may be need for give and take in the team; particular points of view or interpretations of action and characterisation may be adapted, melded or rejected according to the desire to find artistic coherence.

artistic director

In a theatre company the artistic director is the person who leads the company artistically, deciding what plays are going to be produced and what sort of work the company will be known for. The artistic director is often the head of a theatre company, though there can also be multiple artistic directors who perform the same job, though through the structure of a board.

Arts (The Arts)

The Arts is a collective term to describe the many forms of human imaginative and creative expression developed to

be appreciated and to convey the human experience to an audience.

Drama, dance, media arts, music and visual art are all examples of the arts.

Arts in schools involves the inter-connected and inter-related dimensions of Making (*Arts Practice*) and Responding (*Arts Responding* and *Aesthetic Understanding*) which, together, are forms of *Applied Aesthetic Understanding*. Arts knowledge is developed through the transformative processes of creative expression in an art form and the informative processes of making critical and reflexive responses to the arts.

See also *arts appreciation, arts curriculum, arts funding, arts languages, criticism, performing arts*

arts appreciation

Aesthetic Understanding

Processes of understanding and responding to arts experiences and arts works.

See also *Aesthetics/Aesthetic Understanding, arts criticism*

arts criticism

Criticism

Processes of responding to drama (and other arts experiences) using aesthetic frameworks and our social and cultural knowledge. There are a range of different approaches to arts criticism, however one useful framework is to use the interconnected processes of description, analysis, interpretation and informed judgment (evaluation).

Criticism should be distinguished from reviewing in which drama is either praised or deprecated according to the personal tastes or preferences of the review writer; criticism is an analytical, reflective and thoughtful process within a framework of aesthetic distance.

See also *arts appreciation, arts languages, theatre reviews/reviews*

arts curriculum

The Arts taught in schools. In Australian schools the Arts curriculum includes five arts subjects dance, drama, media arts music and visual arts. In overview, Arts curriculum focuses on developing in students *Making: Arts Practice* - skills; knowledge, understanding in applying aspects of the Arts - and *Arts Responding* - responding to, reflecting on and making informed judgments about Arts experiences. These two aspects are not separate but inter-connected and inter-related. Australian Arts curriculum also recognises, particularly in primary schooling, the connections between these five arts subjects and arts integration within the broader curriculum.

arts funding

Arts grants

Monetary support for devising or producing drama and other arts activities. Given by government bodies or by private sponsors or patrons.

See also *finance*

arts languages

As we make meaning or express ideas and experiences through verbal language forms - both spoken and written - so do we make meaning through other ways.

The arts use unique symbol systems or languages that are based

on the aural, kinaesthetic, tactile, spatial and visual as well as verbal ways of communicating.

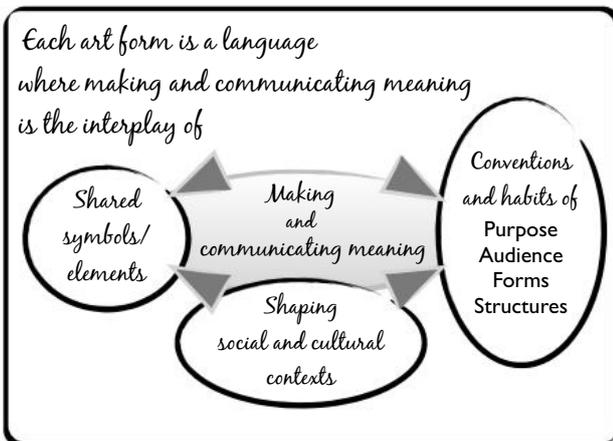
As with language acquisition of a verbal nature, arts languages develop in students through processes of:

“immersion, demonstration, expectation, responsibility, response, approximation, use and engagement”

(The Whole Story-Natural Language and the Acquisition of Literacy in the Classroom, Ashton Scholastic, Auckland).

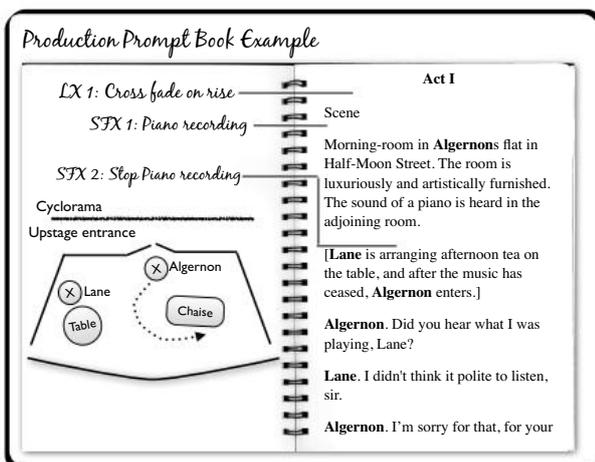
Acquisition of arts languages needs to be systematic and embedded in making meaning in the specific arts forms. We use arts languages in making, creating and presenting, arts criticism, understanding past and present contexts - in communicating arts ideas, using arts skills, techniques, processes, conventions and technologies, responding to, reflecting on and evaluating the arts and in understanding the role of the arts in society.

Learning in the arts can be seen as a form of literacy that provides insights into culture, society and identity through an awareness of conventions, codes and cultural practices. Through using and understanding arts languages, students come to know the nature and contexts of these languages.



In Drama the application of combinations of these arts languages gives rise to a further enactive language which is the integration of aspects of the aural, kinaesthetic, spatial, tactile, verbal and visual when working in role.

Arts languages are concerned both with the expression of an idea and with ways of recording and sharing that idea through notation; in drama there are not yet fully established symbol systems that carry the weight and power of convention that, say, music notation or Laban notation in dance; in drama there is a tendency to use “invented” notation, but there are some conventions used that are found in prompt and production books such as the following:



Arts languages are distinctive languages in their own right; as such they ought not be confused with the use of verbal language to describe and analyse arts experiences; when verbal language is used to describe or discuss arts experiences, it is a cognitive means of reflecting on action in abstract ways; arts languages are physical expressions of ideas and experiences.

Arts languages as a concept is therefore broader than arts specific jargon. Arts terminology is spoken and written language used to describe the technical and theoretical aspects of the arts forms and subjects.

Asian Theatre

The theatre of Asia has many varieties encompassing the beliefs and traditions of almost 40 countries. As a continent with a long and diverse history the development of regional drama varies greatly over its vast land mass, but generally drama was used to communicate religious and historical stories from generation to generation.

See also *Chinese Drama, Indian Drama, Japanese Drama, Korean Drama*

aside

A line or passage of dialogue spoken by a character and addressed directly to the audience but which, by convention, is not heard or acknowledged by other characters on stage.

See also *dialogue, Presentational theatre, Fourth Wall, Shakespearean Drama*

assessing drama

Making judgments about the effectiveness of drama particularly by drama students in schools. The purposes of assessment include helping students progress their learning (formative assessment) and providing teachers with methods of comparing learning progress of students (summative assessment).

Three major assessment focuses for drama in schools are:

Performance/production – application of drama knowledge, understanding, skills through performance

Response – description, analysis, interpretation and informed judgment of own drama and the drama of others

Investigation – research and communication of drama works and contexts (dramaturgy)

assessment folios

assessment portfolios

Collection of materials that show the processes of student learning in drama for the purposes of assessment.

See also *drama portfolios, evaluation folios, portfolios, assessment*

atmosphere

Overall tone or mood of a scene, act or play created by the set, costumes, sound, acting and style.

See also *Elements of Drama, mood*

attention

focus

Direction of thought and effort towards one particular activity or idea.

See also *Elements of Drama, focus, listening*

attitude(s) (acting)

Personal point of view and external habits adopted by a character and reflected in verbal and non verbal communication

attitudes (movement style in acting)

Series of stylised gestures used in acting particularly in pre-Stanislavskian acting e.g. in the Delsarte codification of gestures.

By contrast with contemporary 20th and 21st Century approaches to acting with a focus on natural and credible use of gesture and voice, in earlier centuries there was a focus on acting through attitudes - stylised and conventional poses and gestures that were codified to match emotional states; also accompanied by declamatory use of voice.

audience*Theatre goers*

Participants in drama events who listen, watch and attend to the drama of others; in some traditions the audience is passive, in others they participate actively in the dramatic action e.g. by being assigned roles in a promenade performance. The impact of audience expectations, attitudes, experience and understandings is important in the decisions made about drama production and responses. Audience expectations and behaviour will vary according to shared ideas about knowledge and anticipation of a specific play, production, actors, company, playwrights, directors or a venue. These expectations contribute to an audience member's drama experience. It is important to remember that an audience is made up of individuals and it is difficult to identify the experience of a collection of people in an audience; also, audience reactions may vary from performance to performance of the same material.

See also *space*

audience identification

See *identification*

audience etiquette

Conventions of audience behaviours. Varies according to the venue, event, form and style of the drama.

audience participation

The contribution of an audience, actively or passively, in the action of the theatre.

Active participation occurs when the audience are invited to becoming involved in the dramatic action. This involves the actors breaking the fourth wall convention, e.g. when the audience are asked to vote for whom they think the killer is in the musical *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*.

Passive audience participation occurs when an audience watches a piece of theatre and willingly suspends their disbelief and allows themselves to enjoy the experience of the play. This kind of audience participation is acknowledged by clapping at the end of the play.

See also *Forum Theatre, The Fourth Wall, Theatre of the Oppressed*

audience space*Auditorium*

The area in which an audience views, hears and experiences the dramatic action from.

See also *acting space*

audience theory

The role of audience in drama; the approaches to shaping relationships between audiences and dramatic action.

Audience theory and actor-audience relationships: At the heart of drama lies the relationship between participants who are makers (actors, directors, designers) and participants who are spectators (audience). Grotowski asked: *can theatre exist without an audience?* and concluded that an audience was essential for drama. Actor-audience relationships are shaped by venues, directorial vision and scenographic choices.

Audiences can be positioned as passive and purely receptive participants in drama or they can be seen as active participants. Immersive theatre, for example, sees audience members interactively participating in the action having individualised experiences. More traditional approaches expect audiences to be polite, responsive through identification and applause but respectful and not interfering in the action. Theorists like Brecht challenged conventional approaches to actor-audience relationships and this has been a major Twentieth Century preoccupation in drama and theatre.

Audience theory and meaning making: Postmodern theories challenge the view that there is a single explanation – a Grand Narrative; rather, there are a range of explanations and points of view about experiences. Audiences therefore are not a single entity thinking and feeling the same. Audiences are individuals who happen to be sharing the same space. Each member of an audience brings her or his own history of experiences, dispositions and values to their perception of a drama event. The meanings that members of audiences make is not necessarily the same as that provided by the artist (actor, director, designer) but dependent also on the shaping of personal, social and cultural identity.

audio drama*radio drama*

A dramatic form with no visual elements. It relies on voice, sound effects and music to convey the story to the audience.

audio visual

Technologies and experiences simultaneously combining what is seen and heard.

auditioning

Method of casting a play where actors compete for roles by demonstrating their skills of acting by performing a prepared speech or reading a part from the play for directors or producers. There are different types of auditions: open auditions (where a general call is made to anyone interested in auditioning - sometimes referred to as a *cattle call*); closed auditions (where auditionees are invited to attend often through the agent representing them); group auditions; solo auditions; workshop auditions.

See also *actors, directors, monologues, producers*

auditorium

See *audience space*

Australian drama and theatre

Draws together several threads:

Aboriginal dance drama - corroboree - a fusion of music, dance and mimicry, often depicting animal movements in religious

and social rites such as initiations and tribal ceremony of totemic and magic significance.

Imported traditions - in colonial and post-colonial times, there was a valuing of drama from “over there”, typified by theatrical managements such as J. C. Williamson’s that based a commercially successful but largely imported theatre of overseas stars, light entertainment, musicals and populist drama occasionally leavened with “high culture”. Not surprisingly this tradition of drama reflected overseas trends towards melodrama, musicals, farce and the voices of others. This reliance on a second-hand tradition had a significant restraining influence on the development of a national drama. Vaudeville was one of the imported traditions that was popular in Australian drama.

A search for a national identity and voice through drama - the little theatre movement of the first half of this century (inspired by groups like Louis Esson’s Pioneer Players) was amateur, generally politically committed, envisioning an indigenous vernacular and largely realist drama; but, in the face of commercial theatre this proved to be a coterie theatre. In fact, a uniquely Australian voice came from unlikely sources: vaudeville, variety and radio. It wasn’t until post war stability and subsidy support linked with the setting up of institutions like the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust (1954), the Australian Council for the Arts (1968) and the Australia Council (1975) that there was a resurgence of interest in Australian voices, themes, ideas and characters.

Contemporary Australian drama draws on and reflects an increasingly diverse society and aspirations for a clear sense of identity in the years since Federation. It includes contemporary indigenous Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander drama, urban and rural drama and international themes by Australian playwrights.

Subsidised drama companies supported the development of Australian writing and continue to play a significant role in drama developments. Significant growth areas are youth, women’s and Aboriginal drama.

See also Aboriginal Drama

author

dramatist/ playwright/ playwrite/ screenwriter/ scriptwriter

In the theatre an author is a person who writes the dramatic texts for performance. He or she is more likely to be labelled as a dramatist, scriptwriter or playwright (sometimes spelt playwrite).

See also dramatists, playwright/playwrite, screenwriter, scriptwriter

avant-garde

New or experimental drama, those on the leading edge of new movements; the term means literally *advance guard*, those who go before or ahead of others.

In broad terms avant-garde drama:

- does not accept traditional approaches to plot, character, choice of language; or, prioritises these aspects differently
- identifies a different perspective for actors, sometimes taking actors beyond playing a role and stepping into playing themselves (or a version of themselves); the actor is more consciously present (presentational)
- requires audiences to be more interactive and engaged
- breaks down spatial relationships and barriers
- uses time differently, sometimes in extended ways
- uses non-linear narrative, fragmentation and broken causality; sometimes uses multiple narratives, randomness (apparent randomness) and chance
- often has multiple authorship, collaboration
- focuses on physical theatre more than language based theatre
- works in opposition to tradition and convention; seeks to shock and challenge
- focuses on process ahead of product
- focuses on immediacy and sensation rather than cognition and reflection



backstage

Areas out of sight of the audience in traditional proscenium arch theatres; includes wings, dressing rooms, work areas.

See also dressing room, wings

backstage management

See stage management, stage manager

Banraku/Bunraku

Traditional puppet theatre of Japan, founded in Osaka in 1684. Elaborate puppets half to full size manipulated by three puppeteers in full view of audience though wearing black robes and hood. Bunraku, with Kabuki and Noh drama, is one of the three forms of classical Japanese drama.

See also Japanese drama, puppetry

ballad opera

Drama which incorporates already popular songs into the dramatic action.

barker

Person employed by acting troupes to publicize and attract custom, generally to traveling tent shows.

barnstorming

Traveling and touring performances generally in a range of makeshift theatres such as barns; the term can be used to indicate poor, rough or exaggerated performances.

bathos

Insincere pathos; sentimentality; trite style; moving from the elevated to the commonplace; anti-climactic.

beat

In some translations bit

Scenes are analytically divided into beats in Stanislavski approaches. Beat changes occur when new information is given or there is an entrance or exit of a character.

bedroom farce

Popular broad comedy focusing on sexually compromising situations, mistaken identities and bedrooms. As with all farce, authority, order, and morality are at risk and apparently ordinary people are caught up in extraordinary goings on. Involves much comic stage business. Originated in France though elements can be found in Roman comedies.

See also farce

beginners

beginners call

Summons by the stage manager to those who appear on stage at the beginning of a play, generally called five minutes before the "curtain goes up" for performance.

before time activities

The imagined life and times of a character before the action of a play.

See Stanislavski

Benedetti (Jean Benedetti)

Jean Benedetti was an English scholar of Stanislavski as well as an actor, director and acting theorist, whose work focused on Stanislavski's imaginative approach to acting rather than one based on memory (which the American Method system is based around).

Benedetti (Robert Benedetti)

Robert Benedetti influential theatre teacher who consolidated 20th Century approaches to teaching acting based on the work of Stanislavski and others who followed him. Building on foundations of relaxation, voice, speech, movement and actor's collaboration and frame of mind, Benedetti focuses on action. Dramatic action is seen as having both internal and external forms and is located in the flow of give and take between actors.

Bible/Biblical drama

Drama depicting and developing from biblical scripture.

See also miracle plays, mystery plays

black box theatres

A simple performance space which is versatile and easy to change as performances require; consisting of a large square room with a flat floor; all of which is painted black (or similar neutral colour).

Lighting and set pieces can be moved and removed as each performance requires. Seating can be arranged within the space to form many different floor plans for different dramatic effects.

Black boxes create an intimate performance space for focusing on story and performance rather than technical elements.

See also acting spaces/spaces of performance

blank verse

Lines of verse with an established rhythmic pattern but which are generally not end-rhymed. Used in classical and Shakespearean drama to great effect.

black comedy

Comedy derived from the tragic or macabre.

See also comedy

blocking (directing)

Setting or organizing the action of drama in a performance space; directors and playwrights often use dramatic action or groupings of actors on stage to make plastic or fluid images that advance or underpin dramatic intention. This arrangement of objects and actors is sometimes called blocking the action.

Can also describe where one actor obscures another from the audience.

See also directing, stage directions

blocking (improvisation)

Blocking occurs in improvisation when an improviser does not take up a suggestion for advancing the scene when it is offered by other actors; blocking is the antithesis of yielding or accepting an offer.

See also *improvising, improvisation*

boards

Treading the Boards

The stage; one description of drama is “bare boards and a passion” as Schiller said: *Die Bretter, die Welt bedeuten* translated as *the boards that signify the world*.

body language

Communication of meaning through facial expression, gestures, posture and movement of the human body.

See also *facial expressions, gesture, nonverbal communication*

body percussion

Using the body to make sounds – clapping, tapping, etc – communicating beat and rhythm.

booth theatres

A temporary or portable theatre used through out Europe from about 15th Century; derived from row of raised booths or pageants in which Biblical episodes were played. Punch and Judy puppet shows at the British seaside continue the booth tradition.

Boulevard theatre

Developed on the streets of Paris in the late 18th century, popular and bourgeois theatre companies set up on the *Boulevard du Temple* performing crime stories and melodramas. Fireworks, clowning and pantomime added to the boulevard repertoire, which developed into the commercial theatre of Paris.

Has also come to mean light commercial theatre.

See also *French theatre*

bow

Taking a bow

Acknowledging the applause of the audience generally after the performance; occasionally a bow is taken during a performance but this is seen as breaking the representational frame.

bowdlerise

To edit vulgar, obscene or objectionable sections of plays. Named after Thomas Bowdler (1754–1825), who published an expurgated edition of Shakespeare in 1818.

box sets

A set – generally realistic and representational – that provides three walls and (often) a ceiling with the audience as it were looking in through the fourth, imagined, wall.

See also *stage sets*

boy companies

Popular semi-professional acting troupes of Elizabethan and Jacobean times; made up of choir boys performing Masques and entertainments; generally performed in indoor or private theatres.

See also *Elizabethan drama, Jacobean drama*

braggadocio

Theatrical swagger; arrogance and overstatement

Brechtian drama

Epic theatre

Highly influential twentieth century approach to drama developed through the work of German playwright and director Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956). In his plays and writings such as *Organum Theatrum* Brecht integrated dramaturgical and political dimensions into a coherent counterpoint to Aristotelian drama.

Influenced by Piscator and other avant-garde theatre workers.

The influence of Brechtian drama is marked with many playwrights using this fundamental move from representational to presentational styles and a different use of plot and structure. Brechtian dramatic texts directly challenge the key principles of Aristotelian and Chekhovian drama. However, despite the principles outlined in Brecht's theories, a close examination of his plays in performance show a powerful understanding and manipulation of the elements of drama in ways that deeply move and involve audiences – perhaps more powerfully for the use of theatrical presentational devices.

Key plays by Brecht include *Mother Courage, Caucasian Chalk Circle, Galileo, Good Person of Setzuan, The Threepenny Opera, The Rise and Fall of the City Mahogany* (the latter two in collaboration with composer Kurt Weill)

See also *A effect, Epic drama/theatre, historicification, Presentational drama*

In Aristotelian drama	In Brechtian Drama
Drama appeals to the emotions to an audiences sense of identification	Drama appeals to the intellect, reason; it is distanced
Key relationships are protagonist to other characters, to self or to God	Key relationship is protagonist and society
Audience is drawn close to the action	Audience is moved away from the action. (alienation); deliberate distancing through devices such as stepping out of character/role; directly addressing the audience; use of slides, images; breaking plot
Cartharsis is the object of drama	Cartharsis is avoided
Feelings and emotions are a focus	Information, arguments, points of view are a focus
In the play's world view, man's nature is unalterable, fixed and pre-determined	In the play's world view, man's nature is alterable, responsive, capable of reform
Plot is the focus of dramatic action; rising suspense, causal building of scene on scene to climax and denouement	Episode is pivotal with a focus on what is currently happening rather than what is coming; episode builds on episode though not always in linear and causal ways

Broadway

New York commercial theatre; the long avenue in Manhattan in New York City with the Theatre District in the area around Times Square. Also called *The Great White Way*. More broadly refers to the commercial theatre business in the United States of America.

Brook

Peter Brook (1925-) is a British theater and film director, whose productions with the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) contributed to the development of 20th Century avant-garde theatre.

His ideas about the theatre were explained in his 1968 book *The Empty Space*, which separate the theatre landscape into four types:

Deadly Theatre – conventional theatre, which Brook saw as unexciting and unsatisfying.

Holy Theatre – the ritual and spiritual aspect of theatre best shown in the work of Grotowski and Artaud.

Rough Theatre – theatre of the people, epitomized by Elizabethan drama.

Immediate Theatre – which attempts to discover a style of drama that emphasizes the joy of the theatrical experience. Brook identified his work with this constantly shifting theatre.

His influences include Brecht, Meyerhold, Artaud and Grotowski.

budgeting

To establish planned expenses and revenues for a production or company.

See also finance

built performance space

A complete performance space, that is designed and constructed for a specific production.

bump in/bump out

Bring the sets of a production into the theatre/take them out of the theatre.

bums on seats

Theatrical slang for audience.

buria

Slapstick interlude in *commedia dell'arte* longer than a *lazzi*; not part of the plot but slapstick and visual jokes thrown into break the scenario and entertain.

burlesque/burlesques

Originally referred to an exaggerated performance style, but in the twentieth century was a form of comic revue and, particularly in America, strip tease.

Is also used to describe exaggerated and over-stylised forms of performance.

See also comedy/comedies, cabaret, revue

business (show business)

Commercial and financial aspects of drama and theatre.

See also finance, publicity

business (stage business)

comic business

Action or series of actions performed for dramatic or comic effect e.g. a slapstick routine; also action to fill a pause in a performance, an *ad lib*.

See also stage business

busk

Improvising on stage in an emergency.

See also ad lib

busking

Form of street theatre involving performing for passers by in the hope of payment.

See also street theatre

butoh

A contemporary dance form developed in post second world war Japan. Also collective term for diverse techniques and motivations of movement performance and actor training based on exaggerated, grotesque and hyper-controlled movements.

See also dance



cabaret

Form of performance featuring collections of songs, dances or sketches loosely connected or linked.

Cabaret is traditionally performed in cafes and nightclubs.

This term can be used interchangeably with the terms burlesque and revue.

See also music/musical theatre, burlesque, revue

call

The time actors are required to arrive at the theatre.

Canadian drama and theatre

As with many of the so called New World civilisations, Canadian drama has the elements of European drama - in this case from two differing traditions, the English and the French - overlaying an indigenous tradition. Until recent times there has been little attention given to indigenous and Inuit traditions. However, there is evidence of drama in the Nootka and Kwakiutl Indians of the west coast staging night ceremonies based on ceremonial cycles from clan mythology; they used stage effects, costume, elaborately carved masks that opened to reveal other masks, monsters flying through the air suspended on strings, actors disappearing through traps and using underground passageways to reappear as if by magic.

The growth of European styled drama was stimulated by explorers and missionaries.

English language drama was influenced by visiting companies and stars and the active touring companies (largely sourced from New York). This dominance provided little opportunity for local Canadian talent. It is not until the twentieth century that an identifiably Canadian voice emerged through a strong amateur little theatre movement growing and maturing and a drama based on recognition of the rural landscape and (later) new voices from an urban identity. The impetus for Canadian drama came from the post Second World War push for an identifiable Canadian culture. This saw the growth of subsidised theatre and development of regional drama centres across Canada.

French speaking drama - not surprisingly for a country with two official languages - emerged from influences of the French Jesuit missionaries, the importation of French classics such as Molière and the French speaking Catholic university system. But, just as English speaking Canadian theatre was swamped by touring companies, so too was French speaking drama. The famous actress Sarah Bernhardt toured six times. In the twentieth century, French speaking drama has been recognised

and supported. However, French speaking Canadian drama has reflected the struggle for political identity of French speaking Canadians - a sometimes frustrated search for identity through language.

canon

Repeated patterns of sound or movement for dramatic or musical effect. Where the same movement or phrase is repeated in succession, the second and subsequent repeats beginning the movement or phrase after the first, second etc and before the first performer has completed it.

careers in drama

Occupations in drama

A profession which a person practises for a significant time and with opportunities to advance.

Careers in drama include;

- Actor
- Director
- Stage manager
- Producer/Manager (Budget, Marketing, Front of House Manager)
- Scenographer/Designer (set, lighting, costume, make-up)

cap

Cap and Bells

Insignia of the fool or jester, a three horned headpiece with bells on the end of each horn; worn with the motley, the multi coloured costume of the fool.

See also fool

capital

economic capital

social capital

cultural capital

Drama and theatre are forms of value. They provide opportunities for economic, social and cultural capital. Often much of the value that people find in drama and theatre are not directly economic but indirect. For example, people who work in community theatre often do so voluntarily and without payment. The value of drama events for participants, communities and cultures is often intangible but nonetheless powerful and significant.

Economic capital focuses on the monetary value of drama and theatre, the exchange of value, profit and loss. As people work in drama and theatre, they are paid for their services; others invest in drama and theatre in the hope of making profit – they can also make losses.

Social capital represents the resource in co-operation and mutually supportive relationships between people in communities. Drama and theatre are social activities, they are based on groups of people collaborating (in the shared space between actors and audiences; and, in the collaborative activities of actors, directors, designers, etc.).

Cultural capital is the term coined, to expand the notion of value beyond the economic by Bourdieu, identifying the non-economic value of the arts like drama and theatre. Often cultural capital is stated in intangible terms including a broad array of linguistic competencies, manners, preferences, and orientations that constitute advantage and disadvantage in society. Drama and theatre can highlight or critique cultural capital.

carnivals

Carnivale in Italian

Originally a pre-Lenten festival – a farewell to flesh (meat) in anticipation of the fasting of Lent; excessive, colourful, costumed use of elements of drama such as mask, enactment, story; in essence, carnival is the world turned upside down, rules are broken or abandoned, fireworks explode symbolising the farts in the face of convention and good order; masks disguise; informal abuse and even obscenity are acceptable; rowdiness and roughness link together the serious and frivolous, the sacred and profane.

Cockaigne: land of idleness and luxury, Utopian, unexpected such as houses thatched with pancakes, people paid for sleeping; important element of carnival and folk drama; known by various names: *Land of Prester John*, *Lubberland*, *Sharlarafenland*

Schembartlaufer: masked phantom figures from Bavarian and Austrian carnival

See also *festivals*

cast

The group of actors filling all the roles in a play

See also *actor*

casting

The process of finding actors to fill the roles in a play, usually done by the director, producer or casting directors who audition the actors.

See also *actor, auditioning, director, casting director*

casting director

The person who is assigned to cast the roles of a play through auditioning actors. Casting Directors often work in collaboration with the director and producers of a production.

See also *director, producer*

catharsis

The feeling of emotional release that members of audiences experience after they have travelled through feelings of fear and pity with the protagonist in a tragedy; through sharing the troubles of the protagonist, the audience come to be purged, pleasurably cleansed of the horror of tragedy.

See also *Classical Greek Drama*

cause and effect

One of a range of ways of shaping and structuring drama using narrative structures including cause and effect, linear and episodic plot forms. A cause is why something happens, an effect is the consequence of that action. Cause and effect underpins much drama, e.g. In *Oedipus Rex*, an act of *hubris* or pride by Oedipus leads to his subsequent downfall. Particularly important in climactic structures in drama. Characteristics of cause and effect structure are:

- Clear exposition of situation
- Careful foreshadowing of future events
- Unexpected but logical reversals for characters
- Continuous mounting suspense to a climax
- Logical resolution in what is sometimes called the *obligatory scene* where all is revealed or explained.

By contrast, in absurdist drama cause and effect is distorted or denied.

See also *climactic structure, plot*

celebrity

Star

Famous actor, director, etc. In the Twentieth Century and beyond, there was the rise of actors and sometimes directors as celebrities known for their capacity to generate media headlines as well as their abilities in drama and theatre. Different cultural value and status is assigned to stars and the celebrity of particular actors, directors, designers reflecting particular sociocultural values and economic, social and cultural capital.

See also *the status of actors*

censorship

Censorship of Drama

Censorship sets out to define, control and restrict individual or group freedom and access to ideas or expression.

In the long history of drama, there has been strong recognition of its power to influence thought and to change action amongst audiences. As such a powerful force in society, drama has attracted the attention of many who wanted to control it, curb its influence or to use it for their own purposes. Censorship has been undertaken on the basis of religious belief, political ideology and propaganda, sexual or personal morality. Censorship can be undertaken by individuals, groups, governments or religious groups. Self censorship is another common example or how individual playwrights and actors limit ideas or dramatic action.

Optimistically, wherever there has existed censorship, there has been ingenuity and resilience in drama which questioned or countered the deadening influence of censorship and ensured the power of drama continued to have an impact on society.

See also *intellectual freedom*

centre staging

See *Theatre in the Round*

centering

Focus

Concentration and focus of an actor to ensure that he or she is credibly in character and entering into the given circumstances of the dramatic action.

The centering process is part of an actor's warm up routine.

See also *focus, warm up, Elements of Drama*

ceremony

A formal event performed with ritual significance on a special occasion or anniversary.

See also *rituals, symbolism*

chamber theatre

A particular form of reader's theatre where the performance is presented without theatre lighting and without setting and costume.

See also *Readers Theatre*

change over

See *transitions*

character acting

Refers to the choice of an actor to create very distinct verbal, non-verbal and psychological choices for a character, which are often differ greatly from the actor's own personality and traits.

It can also refer to acting a particular type of role, often the stereotypical characters such as villain and damsel in distress.

See also *characterisation (Acting)*, *character stereotypes*

character stereotypes

Character stereotypes are over simplified ways of creating a character or role in drama, e.g the good girl, the wise elder, the bad guy. Stereotypes are conventional, clichéd and familiar; they are well-known often-repeated formulas.

See also *characters*, *stock characters*

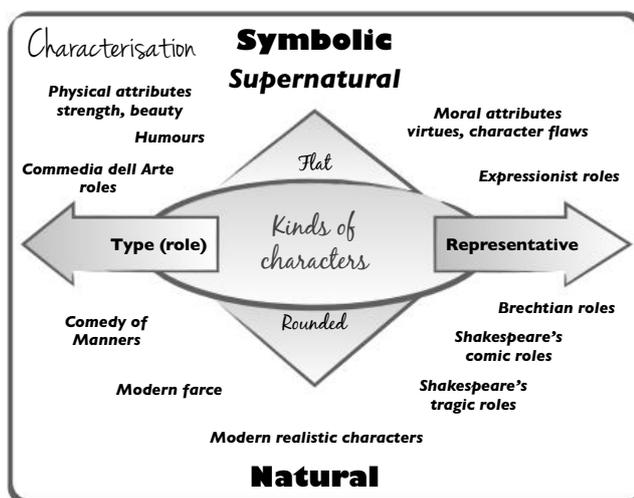
characterisation (Acting)

What actors do to focus and create a character in drama through physical, psychological and contextual factors

- Physical – age, size, posture, use of gesture
- Psychological – emotional, motivational, sub-textual
- Contextual – background, historical information, class

Characterisation can be seen as either dynamic – the character changes, grows or develops as a result of the dramatic action – or static. This can be also understood in the distinction E.M. Forster made in describing characters as either:

flat	two dimensional, types, stock or built around a single or narrow and unchanging focus.
rounded	where there is complexity, dynamic, subtlety, and change; rounded characters are truly three dimensional and pivotal to the dramatic action



Characterisation in drama is shown through what characters do and say about themselves, how they speak and move and what their actions show about their psychology, personality and motivations. Characterisation is also developed through what other characters say about particular characters and how they act and react towards these characters.

In developing characterisation, actors often use exploration of the given circumstances – the text and subtext clues; they also can use imaginative explorations and improvisations about the imagined life of a character using devices such as creating a character profile or role scoring (writing a description of the key aspects of a character/role based on evidence in the text and the actor's imagination).

character(s)

A person or role in drama. Some characters can tap into archetypes while others rely on character stereotypes. An archetype is an image or universal symbol used repeatedly e.g. the hero, the outcast, the wanderer, etc. There is an approach to story that says that all stories are variants of a few themes (Joseph Campbell in *A Hero With A Thousand Faces* argues that all myths across times and cultures follow simple recipes such as the hero's journey)

Stereotypes are an oversimplified or clichéd way of looking at a character e.g. the kindly doctor, the cruel stepmother, etc.

See also *Elements of Drama*, *stereotypes*, *stock characters*

character journey

Complex and well-developed characters in drama, show evidence of growth, change and development during the dramatic action (See rounded characters). Within the focus of a scene or the play as a whole, characters that interest us, show how they overcome obstacles, address dramatic tension and involve us in the story of their changes in response to their given circumstances.

character profiles

character scoring *role scoring*

Detailed notes on characters developed by actors in preparation for playing a role, based on the given circumstances of a script and/or the imaginative speculations of an actor. Character scores may include the character's back story (their life before the action of the play), their imagined interests, characteristics and psychology. This form of intense analysis enables actors to build strong characterisations. Typical questions might include (but are not limited to):

- How does the title of the play relate to the character?
- What is driving the character? Their Super-objective?
- What lies hidden about the character that is a key to the unfolding dramatic action?
- What sound/gesture/colour/animal might be associated with the character?

Chekhovian drama

Plays in the realistic, introspective style of Russian playwright Anton Chekhov (1860-1904): realistic in characterisation with a propensity for introspection and reflection, focused on key but seemingly inconsequential moments and dramatic actions, controlled, even leisurely, in pace.

Features include: psychological realism, a theatre of mood, misdirection, indirectly or obliquely stated meaning, a balance between "subjectively painful" and "objectively comedic" perspectives on life, a linking of the catastrophic with the inconsequential; there is a sense that as time moves forward, lives circle through events from everyday life, returning and departing, remembering and forgetting; noted for the use of counterpoint in dialogue, structure, character and theme.

Influential style with impact on acting style (through the work of Stanislavski) and 20th Century playwrights.

See also *Aristotelian drama*, *Representational drama*

children's theatre

Theatre developed for an audience of children, often with educational purposes.

Chinese drama/theatre

A drama of diversity, complexity and plurality with a large number of distinctive forms and styles. Traditional Chinese drama is presentational in style with strong emphasis on elements of music and dance. It is secular in nature, uses archetypal character roles, formalised speeches and distinctive costume and makeup styles. There is an ordered use of song, narration and declamation. The term - xi - used for drama originally included play, games and acrobatics. Early shamanistic rituals included elements of entertainment such as dancers, jugglers, musicians and puppet shows.

The Yuan period in the 13th century focused drama through *zaju* plays on topics such as friendship, romance, courtship, politics and war; roles were formalised - *mo* (male), *dan* (female), *jing* (villain), *chou* (clown) and both female and male actors took roles of either gender.

In the 16th century (also known as the Ming period), *kunqu* was became the dominant form and was a reflection of a courtly and upper class. *Kunqu* is an adaptation of known music style; slow moving, rhythmic and elegantly melancholy, these plays were performed over three nights. *Kunqu* was drama for an educated elite. At this time, the term flower style covered all other forms apart from *kunqu*. It included popular drama such as *yiyang quiang*: coming from the oral tradition, using colloquial language and local dialect, fast paced and noted for use of an off-stage chorus or *bangquiang*. Another popular form was the *bangzi quiang* or clapper opera, which had a strong rhythmic thrust and used string instruments.

The use of elaborate makeup became a complicated art with the eventual use of whole face *jing* characters where colour and design indicated moral qualities such as red for loyalty and patriotism, black for honesty, etc. Staging in this period was very simple with an open stage that was filled by the actors' art which was complex, elaborate and based on stylised gesture that detailed role. All aspects of performance were integrated into total theatre. At this time, actors were of low social status and often denigrated as wandering vagabonds.

The Beijing style became popular in the 19th century when the popularity of the *kunqu* was usurped by the *jingxi* - often called Beijing opera. This form centred on well-known historical epics and romances, often much simplified. The use of music relied on limited but familiar and repetitive styles; the musicians were integrated both visually and aurally into the dramatic action. The tones in the singing indicated human emotions and there was a melodramatic underpinning of action by musical rhythms. These melodramatic stories are presented on bare stages using minimal props or furniture; colour is used emblematically and costuming is elaborate; actors are trained to use controlled and codified gestures and to improvise from an outline scenario. This style influenced 20th Century playwrights such as Brecht.

20th century Chinese drama shows influences of European models such as Ibsen and Chekhov as the formerly closed country opened to Western ideas. Drama training became formalised and a subsequent raising of status for actors took place. With the revolutionary movement, drama played a political role through street plays and "living newspaper" presentations that incorporated song, dance, mime and propaganda. A significant variation on form was the *yangge*, literally rice planting songs, that were stylised into using simple rhythmic steps accompanied by chants and percussion and presenting elemental themes of village life.

choral speaking

The recitation of dialogue by a group rather than a solo actor.

See also *chorus, unison speaking, verse speaking*

choreographer

Director of dancers; composer of dances.

choreography

Designing sequences of movement through the combination of varying weight, space, time and energy to create relationships between bodies and objects.

chorus

In the Greek Theatre tradition, the chorus participate in the drama through singing, chanting and speaking together, and dancing. The Greek chorus narrate off-stage events, react to the dramatic action of the protagonist and other characters and comment on the action.

Choral work uses movement and voices sometimes in unison, other times patterning many voices. A chorus is much more than narration.

The chorus continues in later traditions in various forms; Shakespeare used a single actor chorus in *Henry V* and *Romeo and Juliet*. The Stage Manager in Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* provides an example of Twentieth Century use of a chorus providing comments on dramatic action.

In non Western drama such as Japanese *Noh* plays there is a chorus of actors who carry similar functions in the dramatic action.

A chorus is also the repeated unison section of a song.

See also *Classical Greek Drama, Shakespearian Drama*

chronicle play

Historical play told in a series of episodes

See also *history drama*

circle staging

See *Theatre in the Round*

circus

Form of popular theatre and spectacle; traditionally a travelling tent show with a variety of animal acts, clowns, trapeze artists, high wire and other acts; not all modern circuses use animal acts (*Circus Oz, Flying Fruit Flies, Cirque du Soleil*); originally the circus was arena for gladiatorial contests such as the Colosseum in Rome

See also *clowning, clowns, physical theatre*

civilisation

The most advanced and organised type of human society. A society that has high level of complex social, political and cultural organization along with material comfort, scientific progress and artistic development.

See also *culture, social customs*

classical acting

The acting style used for performing classical theatre such as Ancient Greek Drama and Shakespeare.

See also *acting styles*

Classical Greek drama and theatre

Often considered the foundation of Western European drama, Greek drama is thought to have been derived from religious festivals, drawing on elements of ritual, known stories and themes and the use of enactment and mimicry.

Greek drama is characterised by the use of masks, choral vocal work and movement; it was performed by male actors and focused on powerful characters, plots and themes; performed in large outdoor theatres as part of festivals.

Most probably derived from Dionysian festivals:

Lenaia: domestic (no foreigners or strangers) festival held during January; involved a phallic procession and a Komos; drama probably introduced in 442 BC with an emphasis on comedy.

Anthesteria: held during February linked to rebirth of the new seasons and invocation to the dead .

The Rural Dionysia: important precursor to City Dionysia and Lenaia; variable dates; touring companies of actors performed for these festivals; celebrated by the whole family including slaves, involved processional revels, phallus and games such as askoliasmes - jumping on inflatable goatskins.

The City Dionysia: largest of all festivals, including processions headed by girl carrying phallus and goat (tragedy is sometimes translated as "goat song"); main dramatic festival lasted five days; three tragic poets were selected and each staged three tragedies and one satyr play each day. The other two days were performances of dithyrambic chorus - a chorus of five boys on one day and five men on the other. In the evenings a comedy was performed. At the end of the competition, performances were judged and winners crowned in the theatre.

The birth of Greek drama is linked to the large scale dithyramps - dances with vocal chanted or spoken accompaniment - and the point where one performer steps out from the dithyramb and established a sense of character; this is attributed to the actor, Thespis.

The major forms of Greek drama are comedy and tragedy. Nietzsche, who was a German playwright and critic in the 19th century, saw Greek tragedy as a balance between Apollonian and Dionysian elements in drama.

agon: a debate between protagonist and antagonist on the relative merits of the thesis or key idea of the play

anagnorisis: the discovery or recognition scene

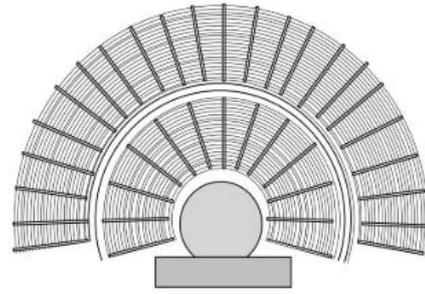
antagonist: the character who is a foil to the protagonist, providing the obstacle or opposing force against which the protagonist must work

buskin: a thick-soled boot worn by actors in Greek tragedy to give their character added height and therefore status; also called *cothurnos*

catharsis: a feeling of cleansing or purging that an audience experiences through having shared with the characters in tragedy feelings of fear and pity as the dramatic action has unfolded

choregeus: the wealthy citizen who was selected as the producer of drama for the festivals; this was a highly prestigious position but it also carried with it the financial burden of having to pay for the training of the chorus and for their costumes

Open air amphitheatre



not to scale

Features of Classical Greek auditorium:

- open air
- built in stone
- examples of seating (kerkis) and orchestra remain today but details of sken, stage machinery and parados are sketchy and conjectural

Mathematical relationships in Classical Greek theatre architecture are significant:

- at Epidaurus, the lower section has 34 rows, the upper section has 21 - which is the ratio of 34 to 21 or 1.618, the ruling number in the Golden Mean
- the ratio of the total number of rows (55) to 34 is also 1.618
- 55 is the sum of the first ten numbers
- 21 is the sum of the numbers 1 through 6
- 34 is the sum of the numbers 7 through 10

deus ex machina: a machine or crane that lowered an actor playing a god into the action so that plot complications could be unravelled and the denouement of the play set in motion; in modern usage, the term is used for a theatrical trick or coup de theatre which sets actors free from impossible plot complications and situations. Latin term translated literally as the "god from the machine"

deuteragonist: the second character added to Greek drama; where before there had been only protagonist and chorus, the addition made it possible for characters to enter into dialogue

dithyramb: a hymn or song of praise sung by a chorus in honour of Dionysus; the hymn was based on an episode from the life of the god and is the basis of drama; at some stage in the development of drama, the leader of the chorus stepped forward and became the protagonist setting up the dialogue between chorus and protagonist

eccyclema: a moveable platform carrying a tableau of actors depicting offstage action episodes: sections of dramatic action and dialogue that alternate with choral odes

epode: the third and last part of a choral ode

hamartia: an error or sin, the fatal flaw in a protagonist that sets in motion the dramatic action in tragedy; for example, pride, poor judgement, etc

hubris: overweening pride, a particular type of hamartia, and cause of many a downfall of the protagonist in tragedy

New Comedy: major form of Greek drama (about 330-150 BC);

comedy of manners and the private lives of a leisured class; used stock characters that are seen also in Roman comedy and commedia; structure based on prologue and five acts with chorus used as entertaining interludes; no connection with cult of Dionysus or religion

Middle Comedy: transitional form (about 400-338 BC); moved away from cult of Dionysus, used more everyday speech patterns, chorus used for musical interludes

Old Comedy: with origins in festivals of Dionysus performed from around 487 BC; loosely constructed with much buffoonery and coarseness; used drama to satirise topical issues; structured using prologue (announcement of the thesis or “happy idea”), *parados* (entrance of the chorus), *agon* (debate) and the *parabasis* (coming forward of the chorus to announce the playwright’s view), episodes, resolution in union and celebration orchestra; originally circular place for the dancing, generally with the altar of Dionysus in the centre

parados: the entering song and dance of the chorus

peripeteia: the reversal, a major plot element where the protagonist is confronted by a reversal of fortunes and through those circumstances moves into the substance of the drama

protagonist: the first, the principal character; originally the only character who stood out from the chorus

satyr: a humorous tailpiece to a set of three tragedies, a burlesque treatment of a mythical theme; satyrs were mythical subhuman characters from the countryside

soccus: low heeled slipper worn by actors in comedy; as opposed to *buskins* worn in tragedy

stasimon: choral ode sung and danced after the *parados*

stichomythia: fast paced, rapidly delivered dialogue - characterised by antithesis, repetition of opponent’s words, sharp retorts

tragoedia: literally translates as “goat song”, considered to be the dithyramb sung and danced to Dionysus and therefore the basis of drama and in particular tragedy

tritagonist: a third actor after the protagonist and deuteragonist, carried the minor roles in later Greek drama

Playwrights and some well known plays

Aeschylus (525-456 BC): *Seven Against Thebes* 467, *Orestia* 466-459, said to have won 13 victories at the City Dionysia

Sophocles (496-406 BC): *Antigone*, *Oedipus The King*; probably won 18 victories at the City Dionysia and others at the *Lenaea*

Euripedes (485-406 BC): *Medea*, *Trojan Women*, *Orestes*, *Bacchae*; although Euripedes won only 4 times at the City Dionysia he competed 22 times and after his death became a highly popular tragedian

Aristophanes (450-388 BC): *popular comedy writer*, *Archanians* 425, *Clouds* 423, *Birds* 414, *Lysistrata* 411, *Thesmophoriazuzae* 411, *Frogs* 405.

See also *Aristotelian drama*, *Dionysian drama*, *drama choruses*, *masked drama*, *Thespis*

classicism

Neoclassicism

Conservative values exemplified through a commitment to models and conventions, rules and precepts outlined in so called classical periods generally considered to be the height of Greek and Roman civilisations; sometimes referred to as *The Golden Age*.

climactic structure

One of the common ways of structuring drama often contrasted with *episodic structure*. Features include

- Plot begins late in story, closer to the very end or climax
- Observes the Unities, in other words, covers a short space of time, perhaps a few hours, or, at most, a few days in a restricted locale, e.g. one room or one house
- Focuses on a few extended scenes, e.g. three acts with each act comprising one long scene
- Focuses on a limited number of characters but generally explores those characters in depth (occasionally there are under-developed characters.
- Linear plot that and moves in a single line with few subplots or counter plots
- The line of action proceeds in a cause and effect chain. The characters and events are closely linked in a sequence of logical, almost inevitable development

climax

The point of highest intensity in dramatic action; it is normally preceded by rising intensity of action and dramatic tension and followed by falling action and resolution.

closet drama

Plays intended for reading rather than performance; literary drama.

clowning

The act of being a clown.

Also refers to behaving in comic and playful ways.

See also *circus*, *comedy*, *clown*, *physical theatre*

clown

Comic descendant of fools, jesters and devil figures in medieval drama, buffoons.

See also *Fool (Drama)*, *Jester*, *circus*, *comedian*, *clowning*

cold reading

Reading from a script without preparation.

colour blind casting

Casting actors without considering their race or ethnic background, e.g. casting an Asian actor in a role traditionally played by Caucasian actors.

collaboration

Working with another person or a group to create or produce a piece of drama.

See also *co-operation*

comedian

commedienne (female comedian)

Performer who entertains through comedy and making their audiences laugh.

See also *clown*, *performer*

comedy/comedies

Pleasant, humorous, light natured, amusing drama; in contrast to tragedy which shows the serious, the life threatening and the gravely consequential, comedy is generally light-hearted, generous-spirited and typified by a return to order and harmony, whatever disruptions there may have been. Not all comedy is inconsequential or frivolous; comedy may provoke thought, underline grave injustices or disruptions of world views (absurdist comedy, black comedy); comedy makes use of devices such as stock characters, well-known comic routines and business, jokes, gags, slapstick, wit and fast-paced exchanges of dialogue (*stichomythia*).

Comedy may also be used in more serious drama, to provide a release of tension - comic relief - that serves to further heighten tension as the dramatic action unfolds.

There are many different sorts of comedy and each has its own characteristics.

Different theories contrast different approaches to comedy (and tragedy):

Comedy built on vanity leading to exposure	Tragedy as guilt leading to atonement, forgiveness and reparation
Comedy based on self-preservation and rhythms of individuality	Tragedy as self-consummation a living out of the <i>vegetation myth of growth, maturity, decline, decay, death, rebirth</i> as a continuing cycle.

Comedy is a subtle and complex dramatic form. One way of classifying comedy is to identify characteristics according to differing purpose, method and tone.

	Purpose	Method	Tone
humorous comedy	to understand and reveal human nature	focus on discrepancies in behaviour, personality, balance; laughing with characters	gentle, sympathetic, compassionate
satirical comedy	to correct folly, to change manners, morality and ideas	use of wit, sarcasm, exaggeration; laughing at characters	either mocking and savage or rational and objective
farcical comedy	ridicule for laughter's sake	invention of improbable situations and excessive (over the top characters); laughing for its own sake	light, cynical, amoral
parody and caricature comedy	to parody other comedy (or tragedy)	exaggeration and excess; laughing at characters and the original source material	light, critical, ironic

See also *burlesque, comedy of humours, comedy of manners, Commedia dell'arte, Fable'aitu, humorous plays, black comedy, comic timing, clowning, farce, high comedy, impersonation, Kkoktu kaksi, masque, performing arts, pratfall, skit, slapstick*

comedy of humours

Drama that satirises character through building dramatic action in response to their dominant traits (or, in Elizabethan and Jacobean times, their humours); there were four main humours:

- choleric** (red; blood),
- phlegmatic** (white),
- melancholic** (black),
- sanguine** (yellow)

People of Elizabethan/Jacobean and similar times believed that these determined the nature of the characters: a balance of humours made for a "good humoured" character and an abundance or lack of a humour made for a "bad humoured" character. Names used were emblematic of humours and strictly defined their natures - Knowell, Ferret, Fly, Subtle, Brainworm, Bat Burst - in much the same way as stock characters or the *commedia* types are portrayed.

Plays by Ben Johnson (1572-1637) are frequently noted for their use of the comedy of humours: *Volpone* is seen as greedy and avaricious. *Everyman in his Humour*, as the title suggests, used this approach as the major focus.

See also *comedies, Elizabethan drama, humours*

comedy of manners

Drama that satirises the manners and customs and habits of a section of society.

Examples;

- Congreve (1670 – 1729) *The Way of the World*
- Sheridan (1751-1816) *The Rivals*
- Wilde (1854-1900) *Lady Windemere's Fan*

See also *comedy/comedies, Restoration drama/theatre*

comic timing

In comedy timing has to do with the use of pause, emphasis and "pointing" key words in a line; it also refers to riding through the laughter of an audience to deliver the next line at the most appropriate point so that comic effect is sustained and not dampened.

See also *comedy, timing*

commedia dell'arte

An improvisationally-based form of comic theatre with plots and comic situations probably derived from Roman comedy and using a cast of stock characters including Arlecchino (Harlequin), Columbine, Pantaloon, Scaramouche; the players appear masked and in costumed that became conventions of this genre; a feature of *commedia* is the use of set pieces of comic business called *lazzi*.

See also *comedy/comedies, improvisation, Italian drama, physical theatre*

communication

Imparting and sharing information with people.

See also *nonverbal communication, oral communication, visual communication*

community theatre

Popular non-professional theatre movement influential in many parts of the world. The tradition of non-professional theatre has forerunners in the guilds performing mystery plays.

There are at least two types of community theatre:

- dramatic events that reflect the stories concerns and values of a particular community or locality
- amateur - not-for-profit - theatre groups serving the dramatic needs of local communities.

See also *amateur theatre, little theatre*

concentration

Concentration is the actor's focus on the moment of drama. In recent times, there has been recognition of the importance of concentration; in training and preparing for drama, the actor enhances concentration through taking part in concentration exercises such as mirroring and imaginative visualisation.

See also *focus*

concept production

A production based on a director's artistic vision that re-interprets traditional or conventional expectations, e.g. a production of MacBeth in the contemporary business world with actors in business suits, carrying mobile phones, etc.

conflict (Drama)

Dramatic tension

Considered the basis for initiating or sustaining dramatic action, the opposing forces against which the protagonist is pitched; as a term, conflict can cause confusion as some look for a physical action rather than identifying the range of possible forces ranged against a protagonist. The term dramatic tension is perhaps preferable since it suggests more than physical violence.

Conflict in drama can be seen to be either:

an opposition of equals – person against person, idea against idea	an unequal struggle - a man or woman against society, the gods, fate
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Conflict may also be internalised and psychological - a character pitted against his or her inner desires, dreams or feelings.

See also *dramatic tension*

construction/de-construction of meaning(s)

Making meaning(s) of drama experiences through a variety of processes.

In other times, ideas of meaning focused on the intended meaning of the playwright or originator of drama or on the intended meaning of the director and actors. In more recent times, there is recognition of several meanings being made including the meaning(s) that an audience construct or make.

De-construction is an approach to interpreting meaning through description and analysis of dramatic action and intention.

constructivism

An approach to stage design using elements such as rostra, scaffolding, ladders, shapes or patterns to suggest a setting linked with the use of lighting to heighten or further add to the effect.

This minimalist approach is associated with the work of twentieth century Russian director Meyerhold. Its influence is often seen in the work of contemporary youth theatre.

contemporary drama

Drama which is created from and follows ideas, events and styles of the current, present times.

contextual knowledge

Contexts are defining circumstances or surroundings. Drama emerges from and reflects dominant concerns of its times, societies and cultures.

When drama is re-interpreted in each new generation, its interpretation is shaped by the contexts of that new time;

Understanding Past and Present Contexts - understanding the role of drama in society in particular places and times; recognising the social, cultural and economic significance of drama - is a key organising principle for a satisfying arts education.

Contexts for drama can be social, cultural and sub-cultural.

- Drama happens in the society when and where it happens - and, therefore, both reflects and leads that culture. Drama can confirm values and dominant cultures and challenges; it can also challenge the values of a society by questioning and providing a voice for non-dominant cultures.
- Drama is social in that in almost every case it involves more than one person
- Drama draws its inspiration and ideas from human interaction.
- Within each society there are many identifiable groups or sub-groups, which express themselves through distinguishable practices, rituals and arts.

See also *dramaturgy*

contrast

Comparing things to show their differences, e.g. hanging energy levels, light and dark, loudness and softness.

See also *Elements of Design, similarity*

Constructions of identity and otherness

A sense of who we are and how that identity relates to other people and their experiences and values.

Identity is developed in each individual through interactions with other people and environments. Identity then is not fixed but capable of being re-shaped according to experience and circumstances. Drama presents constructions of identity and how individual characters fit into the world of the play – and through this helps audience members and actors build their own sense of identity. Drama often focuses on characters that have a sense of alienation from others and that enables the development of understanding of otherness through empathy.

See also *alienation, identification*

conventions

Implied agreements between participants in drama - actors, technicians, directors and audiences; drama - and, in particular, theatre - works through the acceptance of these internal and external agreements or rules. One convention often quoted is the "willing suspension of disbelief" that audiences make when they agree to believe that actors represent action and characters that are obviously not their own lives; the audience accepts a partial representation of reality using imagination to complete the illusion.

Another convention is that drama works largely through action in preference to narration or introspection: it involves the physical as well as the cognitive.

Other common conventions accepted in theatre include the use of an aside (words spoken by an actor so that the audience can hear them but, by convention, the other actors cannot), soliloquies (a speech in which an actor, usually alone

on stage, speaks thoughts out loud). Sometimes to present a particular perspective or point of view, playwrights and directors select, omit, subvert and emphasise particular elements and conventions of drama. There is a dynamic relationship and sometimes tension between existing and emerging drama conventions.

The term conventions is sometimes used in teaching drama: to name teaching and learning strategies used – e.g. role on the wall, tableaux, etc.

See *Drama Learning*

conventions of documenting drama

Scene design	the designer draws an elevation and a plan view of their set design before building a model in a theatre box to figure out the scale of their work and fix any problems before going into building it in the space
Lighting	the designer works with a map of the lighting grid to make decisions on where they will hang lighting for various effects. They also work closely with the set designer and costume designer creating drawings to work out how their use of colour will be affected by the other designers work
Costume	the designer sketches their design labeling the materials and ideas present in their work which represent context or ideas
Sound	the designer either writes a musical score for original music and/or a list of cues for sound effects which are then added to the prompt copy of the script
Budgets	developed by the producers at the beginning of a theatrical production, budgets outline the estimated cost for each aspect of the production e.g. how much money the set designer will have to build their set, how much the costume designer has to buy clothes
Script work	Actors document their process of characterisation and performance by annotating their scripts with thoughts, ideas and blocking. It is most often done in pencil so that it can be changed as new things are found and developed in rehearsal Directors refine their interpretations of characters and situation and indicate their blocking of the dramatic action

co-operation

Groups of people working together towards a common goal.

See also *collaboration, teamwork*

copyright

Performing rights

Intellectual property right of playwrights. Protection accorded to playwrights and originators of drama; while highly complex in application, copyright generally gives the rights or control of a play to the playwright for his or her lifetime and to the descendants of the playwright for fifty or seventy years after his or her death. In general, this prevents others from performing a play without the explicit permission of the holder of copyright.

The copyright situation with group devised drama and similar drama productions is complex and needs to be clearly established at the start of projects.

See also *Intellectual Property (IP) Rights, Performing Rights, Royalties*

corpse

corpsing

To laugh or lose focus when acting and therefore to break out of the dramatic action or shared belief in the character and the given circumstances.

costume

Clothing and coverings worn by actors in drama performance. Costume can create sense of time and place as well as suggest income, status, psychological and emotional identity.

Costumes can be fully representational of character or partially suggest character.

Costumes can also have symbolic dimensions, e.g. colour can be used to suggest character such as red for passion, black for melancholy, white for purity.

Sometimes drama is performed in *rehearsal blacks*, neutral costuming, most often (though not necessarily) in plain black fabric, that is imaginatively transformed in the minds of audience members into any costume appropriate to the text.

See also *dance costume, disguises, period costume, social customs, masks, theatrical costume, wigs*

costume design

The process of designing the costumes for the theatre.

The designer begins their work by discussing with the director the style of the production, then researches the context of the play and the production style before designing and constructing the costumes.

costume designers

Designers responsible for researching and creating the costumes and makeup for a theatrical production. Provides designs for the appearance of characters on stage and insights about the context or style of a drama productions including makeup; works with Colours/style/cut/fit/historical details/fabrics and accessories/colour/effects.

coup de theatre

A surprising theatrical trick or turn of the dramatic action that catapults an audience into new territory or a shift in the dramatic action. For example, two characters in conflict stand in a pristine white stage space arguing; at the climactic moment of their argument, the stage between them splits open to reveal a raging torrent of blood red water; in the course of the rest of the action they walk through this torrent, the white floor of the stage becoming marked by red footprints and their costumes smeared with red.

Coup de theatre have the elements of surprise linked with bold use of symbolism.

See also *symbolism*

creative movement

Active, exploratory motion, often dance, which is used in drama to convey thoughts and stories and characters non-verbally.

creativity*Creative thinking*

Use of imagination and originality in developing drama, art, processes and ideas.

critical frameworks

Sets of approaches to criticism; worldview and methods used by critics or commentators about drama. For example, there are schools of criticism based on cultural studies, deconstruction, feminism, gay/lesbian/queer, marxism, post-colonialism, psychoanalytic, reader response theory, semiotics, structuralism world views and theories.

criticism*Critics*

While the term criticism is sometimes used in modern times to imply negative commentary, in its broadest senses it involves the processes of responding to, analysing, reflecting on, interpreting and evaluating drama experiences, both those we make ourselves and those of others

Criticism is a foundational activity in drama (and all the arts). It can be informal or formal. It is also a fundamental aspect of reflection on and discussion of drama.

Criticism should be distinguished from review where the focus is on providing a description, impression or recommendation about a drama experience.

“A good drama critic is one who perceives what is happening in the theatre of his time. A great drama critic also perceives what is not happening.” Kenneth Tynan

See also arts criticism, review

cruelty*Theatre of Cruelty*

Terms coined by Antonin Artaud in *Le Theatre et Son Double* (1938) which focused on theatre of myth and magic, the subconscious of the audience, their dreams and obsessions; works mainly through movement and gesture rather than words which are focused on ritualistic and incantory purposes. Action often revolves around violence, both physical and psychic, sex and insanity. Influential 20th Century theatre movement. Many other eras of drama have a sense of cruelty; some such as Greek drama deal with violence indirectly, keeping it off-stage; others, such as Elizabethan revenge tragedy, revel in bloodthirstiness.

cue (Theatre)

A signal to an actor to enter or leave the stage or acting area, or to initiate dramatic action; the stage manager will frequently “call” actors or cue them.

A line of dialogue or action that serves as a signal for other actors.

cultural perspectives

Each culture develops shared approaches that either directly or indirectly, consciously or sub consciously, influence artists and others in the ways that they shape their work.

culture*Civilisation*

Expression of human intellectual and artistic achievement. Values and patterns of behaviour of specific groups of people as they

are manifest in customs, standards, language, rituals and religion, contexts such as history, political institutions and the arts.

cultural capital

See capital

See also social capital, economic capital

cultural values

Cultural values shape drama forms, styles and conventions. Own cultural beliefs and values are drawn from experiences of various contemporary drama practices and those of other times, cultures and places. They also reflect the ways that drama practitioners respond to, and interact with cultural values in local, Australian and world settings, as well as the value and importance of drama in the Australian economy. Drama contributes to social, economic and cultural capital, and provides potential career and funding opportunities.

See also values

curtain call

Cast taking a bow at the end of a play.

See also Bow

curtain raiser

A short item or play before the main play, often found in 18th and 19th century drama.

curtain sets

A stage setting using only curtains or tabs; focus is on the dramatic action not the setting.

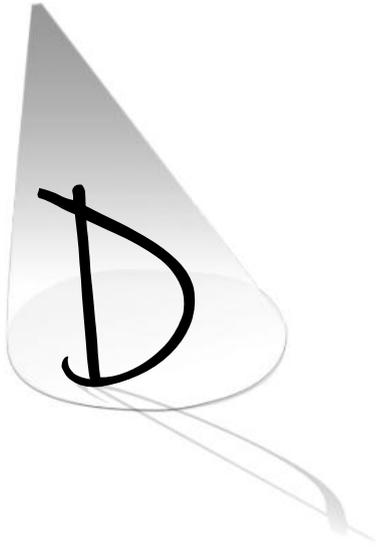
See also stage sets, stage design

cyclical narrative

See narrative.

cyclorama

A large generally white or neutral backcloth used to represent the “sky” background to the setting; an interesting theatrical convention is that audiences accept an appropriately lit piece of cloth as a representation of the sky.



dada

A nihilistic art movement, which began during the First World War and thrived in France, Switzerland and Germany and the USA. The movement developed from disgust and despair over the war and was founded on theories of irrationality, anarchy and cynicism as well as a rejection of the cultural standards of art from the past. Dadaist theatre and art is often referred to as anti-art.

dance

dance drama

Theatrical form where ideas are (generally) expressed through movement. There are some highly specialized and formal forms and styles of dance which have clearly established codes conventions and traditions: classical ballet, jazz, tap, contemporary, etc..

See also music theatre, Natyasastra, revues

dance costume

Costume designed for dance drama, often made of flexible and flowing material to allow for the movement of dancing.

Delsarte

French 19th Century teacher who developed an acting style designed to connect the inner emotional experience of the actor with a systematized set of gestures and movements. The Delsarte approach become widely popular and taught for a time though its focus on external details of posture, facial expression, gesture, etc. came to be thought superficial and artificial and rejected in favour of more psychologically driven approaches.

See also attitudes

denouement

The resolution of a drama, the untangling of dramatic tension; from the French "untying the knot".

See also structure, plot

design (principles of design)

Designer, Costume Designer, Lighting Designer

Set Designer, Sound Designer

Shaping the performing environment, visual images and sounds of dramatic action through

- Spaces of performance

- Set design
- Props (properties)
- Costume design
- Lighting design
- Sound design
- Marketing design – publicity, posters, etc.

The Principles of Design, derived from the visual arts but applicable in drama, are: balance, proportion, unity, harmony, variety, emphasis, contrast, rhythm, and movement. These principles of design can also be applied to the structuring of drama and theatre, e.g. a playwright can use contrast to highlight differences between protagonist and antagonist in a play or the play can observe the unities of time, place and action.

See also costume, lighting, marketing, set design, sound effects, unities of time, place and action

designer

Part of the collaborative team of a drama and theatre production focused on supporting it through the creation of the performance environment, the set, costumes, lighting. In theatre productions this may be one person's responsibility or there may be a team that includes:

SCENOGRAPHER: designs and develops the sensory environment and layout of a performance space for a drama production; works with set and stage design including digital set design; scenery/flats/entrances/exits/fixtures/furniture; technologies; combining of design and other elements to produce overall effects for the audience

LIGHTING DESIGNER: provides illumination, focus, mood and atmosphere through lighting technologies in a drama production; works with patching/rigging luminaires; luminaire selection, modification, direction and angles; colour; intensity; patching and programming lighting boards; LX

SOUND DESIGNER: provides aural support for the action, context and transitions in a drama production; works with soundscapes; mixing/cutting/levels of sound; music/sound effects SFX

COSTUME DESIGNER: provides designs for the appearance of characters on stage and insights about the context or style of a drama productions including makeup; works with Colours/style/cut/fit/historical details/fabrics and accessories/colour/effects

The designer works with the Visual Elements, Sound Elements as well as the Principles of Design.

devised drama

Devised drama begins with an idea or intention rather than from a script. It is developed through collaborative processes such as improvisation.

See also playbuilding, group and self devised drama, scripted drama

diagram

Simplified drawing showing the appearance, structure, or workings of something. Diagrams in drama are usually:

- plans – an overview from above, e.g. a schematic plan of a set
- elevations – a perspective drawing showing three dimensions – width, height and depth – e.g. a drawing of how a set might look if seen by a member of an audience.

dialogue

Speech between two or more characters in drama; in drama, dialogue is rarely a tape-recording from life, but rather a selective heightening of language used in life. Dialogue provides exposition, carries forward action, defines character and

dramatic action. Dialogue is not just the sounds made by the emphases, pauses, silences and implied relationships included in the sounds.

See also aside, monologue, rhetorical devices

didactic drama

Drama intended to instruct or teach an audience.

From Greek tragedy to Brechtian epic and beyond, at least one of the purposes of drama has been to instruct and change an audience. At its heart, catharsis is an educative purging of the soul. Some drama, such as morality plays and agit-prop, make explicit use of drama as an educative tool.

Diderot

Denis Diderot (1713-1784) was a French philosopher and encyclopedia essayist whose theorising on the paradox of the actor (amongst other aspects of drama) continues to be influential.

See also acting

dimmers

Lighting controls to fade in or out light on stage or to set lights to a particular strength or percentage of light.

See also lighting

Dionysian drama

Drama based in spontaneity, primal forces, creativity, imagination. Named for the Greek god of wine and fertility, Dionysus, and drawing from aspects of ritual, the focus in Dionysian drama is on primitive forces and overwhelming passions. Dionysian drama is often contrasted with Apollonian drama.

See also Classical Greek drama

directing/director

Film directing/director

Theatrical directing/director

When drama is shaped, interpreted and the elements of drama – actors, action, setting, costume and technical – are organized to create particular effects. The Director is the person assigned the role of supervising actors as they develop interpretations. The Director co-ordinates all the elements that support performers.

See also group directing

director's vision (directorial vision)

The visualisation of a production as a whole by a director; envisioning the visual or textual elements of a production that detail how a script will be presented with reference to acting style or approach, themes, design aspects and the ideas which will be communicated to the audience. The directorial vision draws from the script but also may include the work of dramaturgs, designers and actors.

discovered

Means that the actor is on stage when the curtain goes up or the action starts; it also indicates a character in hiding who is revealed to the audience or other characters.

disguise

Frequently used theatrical device or structure; characters in drama frequently use disguise to escape, trick, reveal folly or

make laugh; disguise is often used to provide structure or plot complication. Disguise is a comic device often used with serious dramatic intent.

See also costume

documentary/documentaries

Documentary drama

Documentary films

Television documentaries

Drama, television or film productions based directly on historical and documentary evidence that has been transformed into a dramatic text.

See also verbatim theatre

double bill

Two short, usually related, dramatic texts presented as one evening's entertainment.

double take

Acting convention where, to convey the illusion of surprise, the actors looks at another actor or object, looks away and then rapidly looks again at the actor or object; the impact depends on the effective use of timing.

See also comic business, comic timing

doubling

Where one actor takes on two or more roles in a play; this is not simply a money saving production device but can be used to enhance dramatic action; e.g. sometimes in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the roles of Titania and Oberon are doubled with those of Theseus and Hippolyta to make a link between the world of the court where males rule and are victorious and the world of the fairies where the reverse is (perhaps) the case.

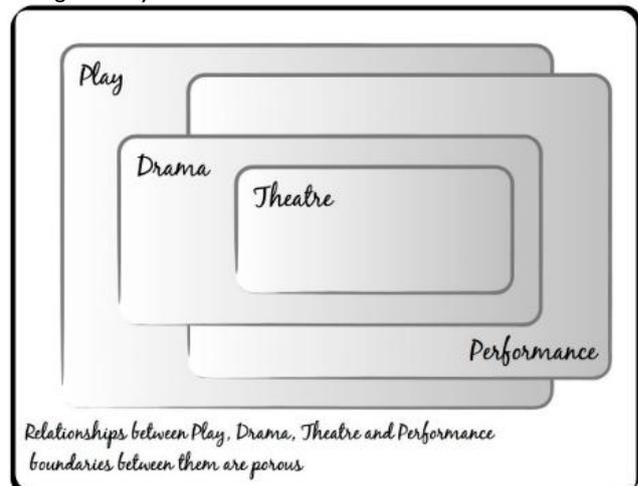
downstage

The area of the stage closest to the audience in a proscenium arch theatre.

See also upstage

drama

The enactment of real and imagined events through roles and situations. In every age and known society, there has been drama in many forms and for many purposes: to entertain, to reflect or change society.



Drama draws on elements of play; it is also an example of performance, a broad category of activity where artistic works are presented to audiences. Theatre is a particular subset of drama. The relationship between play and drama and theatre can be represented diagrammatically as:

Play, drama and theatre share common ground, they also use a shared vocabulary e.g. they are “bracketed from real life”, they look real but are separated from it; they generate tension between spontaneity and structure; they share the boundaries of time, space, representation and display.

Drama symbolically explores the paradox of a fiction with an illusion of reality. Audiences make a “willing suspension of disbelief”.

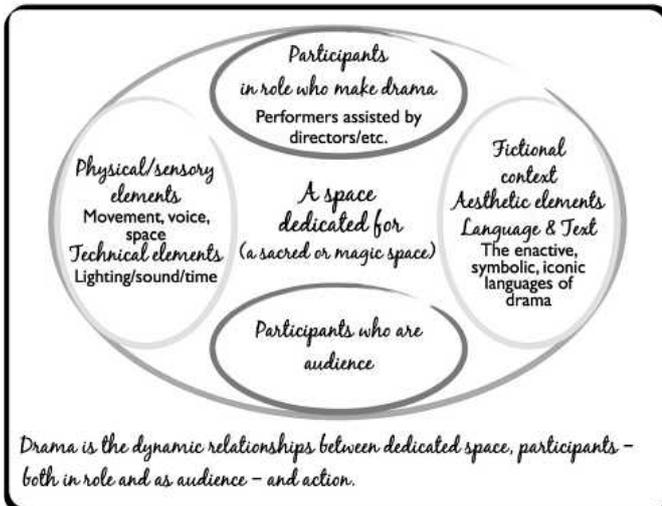
All drama in some way involves dynamic relationships between

- **Participants**
 - Performers in role and
 - Audience together making meaning
- **Space** - a space that is set aside and identified as the playing space
- **Action**
 - Text and meaning
 - A fictional context
 - Physical elements
 - Technical elements

These elements draw together a community who share experiences of wonder and awe through tapping into their spontaneity, imagination and creativity.

These relationships can be represented graphically:

Drama takes place in a sacred, dedicated space (though this space can be a building such as a theatre or a simple space

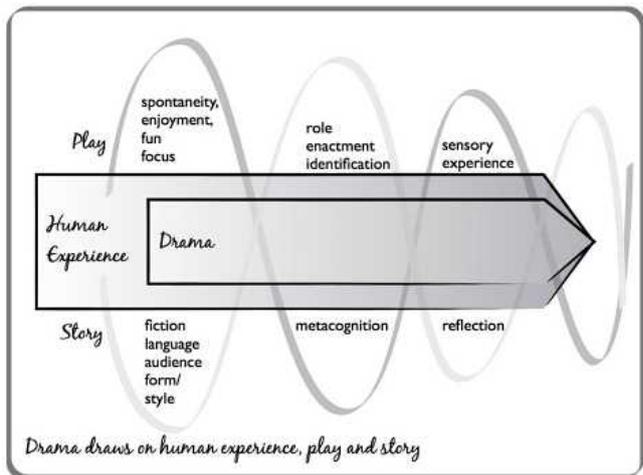


marked out on the ground as in street theatre). In this space there are two types of engaged participants: those who participate as audience and those who participate as performers and associated makers of the drama such as directors and designers. Together, collaboratively, they make meaning through the languages of drama which have enactive, symbolic and iconic dimensions.

Drama springs from human experience in all its rich diversity. Drama draws on elements of Play and Story through enactment.

Elements of play include spontaneity, enjoyment and fun, identification through enactment, role, focus, dramatic tension, space and time, gesture, facial expression and sound and voice.

Elements of story include fiction, language, audience, forms and style, reflection and metacognition.



Features of Drama

Drama is experienced, physical and immediate. It is simultaneously embodied and cognitive.

Drama is:

- temporal - existing in time
- therefore, transitory, traces of drama are secondary and indirect through memories, recordings, descriptions that are not the drama itself
- unique in that, even if repeated, each time is new and intrinsically different though sometimes different in subtle ways
- changeable at the point of expression - improvisational and interpretative
- physical and sensory
 - located in space
 - three dimensional
 - tactile
 - aural
 - kinaesthetic
- blueprinted - written or imagined for future realisation but that blueprint (script or scenario) is not the drama itself
- fictional
- metaphoric
- both real and imagined - paradoxical
- meaning making
- structured and structuring - using ordering structures and categorisation to communicate, express and make meaning
- contexted in
 - heritage and history
 - conventions
 - known forms and styles
 - technical and other codes
 - a commitment to both experimentation and confirming traditions
- skillful - requiring skills, techniques and processes for effective realisation
- the sum of many parts - a sensitive and sophisticated merging of physical, personal, psychological and physical aspects with technical and other elements
- language in action
- a language in its own right
- reflection in action and reflection on action
- socially confirming and socially challenging
- social
- almost inevitably collaborative
- incomplete without an audience - whether formal or informal (including *metaxis* where the performer is simultaneously also audience)
- praxis - both practice and theory integrated

See also *Aboriginal drama, Acting, Act (Drama), African drama, Alienation effect, American drama, Apollonian drama, Australian drama, Canadian drama, Chekhovian drama, Chinese drama, Classical Greek drama, Closet drama, Comedy/Comedies, Comedy of humours, Comedy of manners, Commedia dell'arte, Didactic drama, Documentary drama, Drama conventions, Drama elements, Drama choruses, Drama scripts, Dramatic action, Dramatic tension, Dramatic text, Dramaturgy, Egyptian drama, Elements of drama, English drama, Epic drama, Farce, Feminist drama, Folk drama, French drama, German drama, Grand Guignol, Group devised dramas, History drama, Indian drama, Irish drama, Italian drama, Japanese drama, Jesuit drama,*

See also *Korean drama, Maori drama, Masked drama, Masques, Medieval drama, Melodrama, Mime, Miracle plays, Morality plays, Mystery plays, Narration, New Zealand drama, One-act plays, Pantomime, Performance art, Picaresque drama, Plays, Play reading, Playbuilding, Presentational drama, Puppetry, Radio drama, Religious drama, Representational drama, Revenge tragedies, Revues, Role (Drama), Role on the wall, Roman drama, Screenplays, Situation comedy, Soap operas, South American drama, Spanish drama, Storydrama, Television drama, Tragedies, Tragicomedy, Verse drama, Related terms, Asides, Dialogue, Drama learning and teaching strategies (sometimes drama conventions), Dramatists, Flash forwards, Flashbacks, Monologues, Narratives, Soliloquies, Theatre*

drama folios

Drama portfolios

When actors/directors/designers/students record the processes of drama by writing, describing, negotiating and reflecting they are making their drama folio; these records are variously called logbooks or journals. A drama folio would contain – amongst other things – audio tapes and video tapes of workshops, explorations and performances, bibliographies, costume, set and lighting designs, working notes, diagrams, work schedules, photographs, essays, critical reviews, annotated programs, prompt books, etc. A drama folio can use technology and be a digital portfolio.

Key forms of writing in a drama folio include:

- Describing – recounting, recording and reporting
- Listing, organising, ordering
- Analysing
- Goal-setting
- Questioning
- Interpreting
- Evaluating
- Speculating

Drama students need to recognise the different language registers of different ways of responding to drama.

Other key forms of writing that may also find their way into a drama folio, include;

- Thesis statement
- Fable
- Scenario
- Draft Script
- Character notes
- Scene setting
- Final script

The organization of a drama folio, use of cross-referencing and the making of meaning of the various parts underline the synthesizing and synergising elements of learning about drama. The sum of the parts is more than the parts themselves.

A drama folio may also describe the package used by an actor to display his or her talents when auditioning for a role. This

would include a resumé, display photos showing versatility of approaches etc.

drama in performance

While drama can be studied as a literary genre, divorced from performance, the focus of contemporary study of drama as an art form focuses on drama in performance.

Drama as literature vs Drama in performance: the literary study of drama focuses on plot, character, themes, structure, techniques of playwrighting in particularly cognitive and intellectual ways. The focus of the drama student is the action, the physicalising of these intellectualised aspects of the drama. The action of a play is the plot but the drama student is concerned with how this plot will unfold on the stage, how one event leads to another, the character's journey as the action unfolds, the emotional and psychological choices made by the character and how to translate those into action that an audience can see, hear and most importantly identify with. Drama in literature and Drama in performance overlap but have different ways of showing understanding.

drama language

Drama as a language

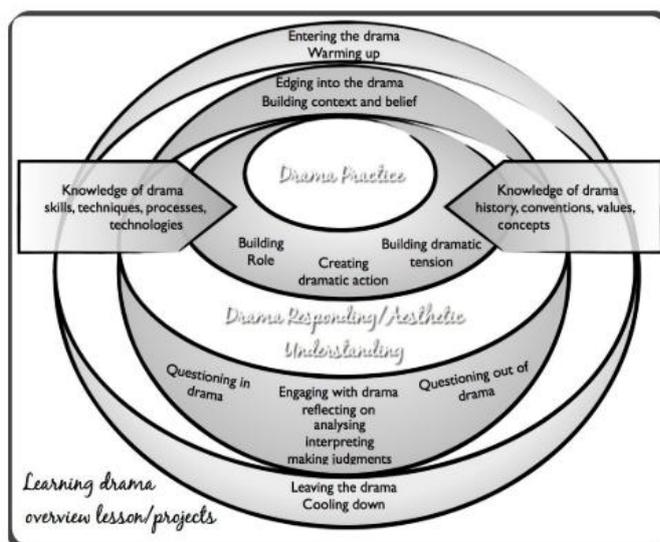
Drama language is the interaction between the Elements of Drama (a symbol system which has agreed meaning between actors/directors and audiences) particular conventions (such as the suspension of disbelief or identification with role) and the social and cultural contexts of the drama.

See *arts languages*

drama lesson

Structure of drama lessons

There are many ways to structure drama lessons but which ever approach is taken, there is engagement with *Making (Arts (Drama) Practice)* and *Responding* leading to *Aesthetic Understanding through Drama*.



drama learning

In Drama students learn how to make, perform, analyse and respond to drama. It involves actively imagining and imaging, using structures and conventions and personal experiences to symbolically explore dramatic situation and character. It involves the development of

- A repertoire of skills, techniques and processes
- An emotional and imaginative capacity for entering into role and dramatic action

Learning in drama is a a balanced integration of the interrelated activities, *Making Drama* and *Responding to Drama*. Drama knowledge and understanding is developed through engaging with the Elements of Drama (see *Elements of Drama*), developing Drama Skills, Techniques and Processes, and using materials to explore a range of forms, styles and contexts.

Learning in drama involves students:

Making creating, presenting and experiencing drama in informed and critical contexts.

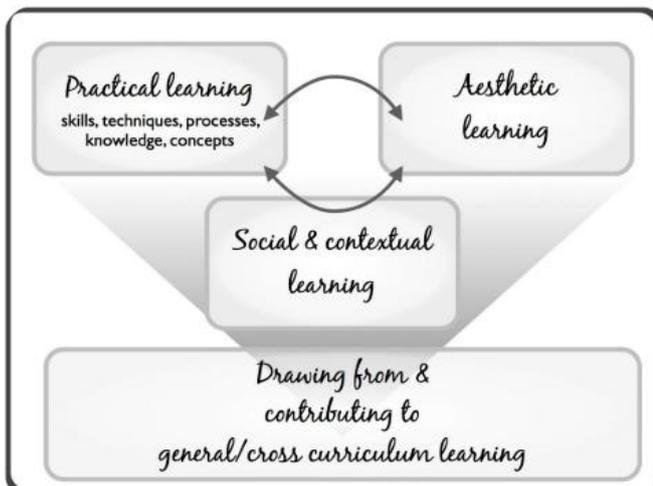
Drama learning focuses on key concepts

- Communicating arts ideas – creating, interpreting, exploring
- Using arts skills, techniques and processes – using the skills, techniques, processes, conventions and technologies of drama, using drama as a language
- Responding to, reflecting on and evaluating the arts – using drama terminology, using their aesthetic understanding and cultural and social knowledge, developing frameworks for drama criticism
- Understanding the role of the arts in society – valuing drama, understanding Australian drama, understanding and exploring past and present contexts – texts and heritages of drama – and understanding the economic significance of drama

Drama learning has been known by a range of different labels

- Child drama
- Classroom drama
- Creative drama
- Creative dramatics
- Curriculum drama
- Developmental drama
- Educational drama
- Informal drama
- Improvisation
- Playbuilding
- Process drama
- Role drama

Despite the multiplicity of names and approaches, there is a common commitment to students engaging with drama as a learning experience as well as drama as an art form.



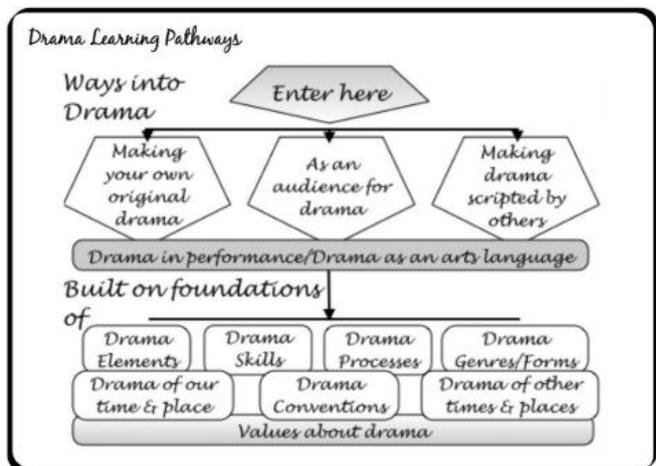
Drama learning is the integration of

- Practical learning – the skills, techniques, processes, knowledge and concepts of drama
- Aesthetic learning – artistic meaning making, expression and communication
- Social and contextual learning – working collaboratively as a team aware of social, cultural and personal contexts.

Drama learning draws from and contributes to broad cross-curriculum learning outcomes.

Three major ways into learning drama:

- making original drama through improvisation, playbuilding and playwrighting
- as an audience engaging with, reflecting on and critically responding to drama
- interpreting the scripts of others as actor, director, designer, manager or producer.



Underpinning each of these entry points is a commitment to drama in performance and foundation dimensions of knowing, understanding and using drama elements, drama skills, drama processes, drama conventions, drama forms and styles, drama of our time and place, drama of other times and places.

DEFINITIONS OF DRAMA LEARNING

The *Curriculum Framework* (1998, p.60) defines the following essential activities, elements, skills, processes and context for drama.

Drama is taking on role and acting out situation	
Key activities	Students demonstrate the major learning outcomes in drama through key activities of playmaking, performance and critical reflection . In <i>playmaking</i> students create and shape new dramatic texts based on their own ideas and on existing drama. They improvise, act, interpret texts, write scripts, direct, rehearse and design. In <i>performance</i> , students use physical movement, vocal and interpretive skills. They integrate technical elements and the conventions of drama to engage audiences, communicate and perform dramatic texts. In <i>critical reflection</i> students describe, analyse, interpret and evaluate their own drama and the drama of others.
Elements of drama	Students use the elements of drama: role and character; situation and human interaction; voice; movement; space and time; language and text; symbol and metaphor; audience; dramatic tension; dramatic forms, genres, styles and conventions.

Skills and Processes	<p>n working with these elements students use skills of movement and voice. They learn to communicate meaning through the processes of improvising and interpreting scripted drama. They use the conventions and technical elements of drama and work with emerging and traditional technologies. They learn how drama is rehearsed, managed, directed, designed and produced. They take into account the relationship between drama and audiences. They respond to and evaluate drama. Students make and critically reflect on drama through exposure to a wide range of dramatic forms, styles and genres from a variety of cultures and historical periods. They experience drama produced in Australia as well as the drama of other students. These contexts are reflected in their own playmaking and performance.</p>	Contexts of Drama	<p>Students experience a wide range of drama genres, forms and styles. They experience repertoire and arts works from a variety of cultures and historical periods, including Australian drama. They experience the drama of other students. These contexts are reflected in their own creative work.</p>
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The Australian Curriculum: The Arts (2013) identifies the following features of drama.

<p>In Drama, students explore and depict real and fictional worlds through use of body language, gesture and space to make meaning as performers and audience. They create, rehearse, perform and respond to drama.</p>		
Organising strands	<p>Content descriptions in each Arts subject reflect the interrelated strands of Making and Responding. Making includes learning about and using knowledge, skills, techniques, processes, materials and technologies to explore Arts practices and make artworks that communicate ideas and intentions. Responding includes exploring, responding to, analysing and interpreting artworks.</p>	
Knowledge	The elements of drama	<p>The elements of drama work dynamically together to create and focus dramatic action and dramatic meaning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role, character and relationships • Situation • Voice and movement • Focus • Tension • Space and time • Language, ideas and dramatic meaning • Audience
	Principles of narrative (story)	<p>The elements of drama are combined to shape narrative (story) through using contrast, juxtaposition, dramatic symbol and other devices of story.</p>
	Viewpoints	<p>In both Making and Responding, students learn that meanings can be generated from different viewpoints and that these shift according to different world encounters. As students make, investigate or critique drama as actors, directors and audiences, they may ask and answer questions to interrogate the playwrights' and actors' meanings and the audiences' interpretations. Meanings and interpretations are informed by social, cultural and historical contexts, and an understanding of how elements, materials, skills and processes are used. These questions provide the basis for making informed critical judgments about their own drama and the drama they see as audiences. The complexity and sophistication of such questions will change across Foundation to Year 10. In the later years, students will consider the interests and concerns of artists and audiences regarding philosophies and ideologies, critical theories, institutions and psychology.</p>
	Forms	<p>In Drama, form is the way drama is structured and students are taught the forms of devised and scripted drama. Drama forms are shaped by the application of the elements of drama within particular social, cultural and historical contexts.</p> <p>In all years, students draw on, use and analyse drama genres, forms and styles from a range of historical and cultural contexts. They begin with the drama in their immediate lives and community and identify the purposes of drama. They draw on the histories, traditions and conventions of drama from other places and times including drama from Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, Asia and other world cultures. As students learn drama, particularly in secondary schools, they broaden their experiences of particular places and times, forms and representational and presentational styles as a springboard for their making and responding.</p> <p>In their drama, students use a variety of sources including stories, personal experiences and historical and current events to create meaning through situations and characters. They also draw on their experiences in other Arts subjects and learning areas.</p>

Skills and processes	<p>Through Making and Responding, students develop knowledge, skills and understanding of their drama making, developing the capacity to use proficiently the techniques of voice and movement to make drama. Students learn the skills of working collaboratively, recognising that imaginative, creative and critically analytic teamwork is central to drama. They apply the elements of drama and principles of story. They interpret and perform texts, devise drama and develop scripts and scriptwriting skills. They apply design elements and production components.</p> <p>In their drama, students develop their understanding of the processes of dramatic playing, role– playing, improvising, process drama, playbuilding, interpreting scripts, rehearsing and directing, and responding to drama as audience. As students progress, particularly in secondary school, they add specific skills and processes of drama practice: acting, directing, scriptwriting, dramaturgy, designing, producing, managing and critical analysis.</p>
Materials	<p>In developing knowledge and skills of drama, students use the materials of their voices and bodies (movement, facial expression, gesture, posture). They also use the production components of props, costumes, lighting, sound and staging equipment and performance spaces.</p>

drama learning

Approaches and structures

Drama learning approaches and structures are many and varied. The following outline some of the key strategies and structures currently used in drama teaching (these are sometimes referred to as drama teaching conventions):

PREPARING FOR DRAMA

- Physical, cognitive, social and emotional warm ups
- Trust and confidence building activities, exercises and games.
- Focus

STIMULATING DRAMATIC ACTION

- *Working from a stimulus* – using ideas, images, props, costumes and spaces as a stimulus for role, character and dramatic situation – can be open-ended or closed
- *Soundscape* – using realistic or stylised sounds to accompany action or create environments to support role, character and dramatic action.
- *Tableaux – and variations such as freeze-run-freeze* – using still images to highlight key relationships, examine elements of key dramatic scenes.
- *Roleplay and simulations* – problem-solving activities using role and roleplay as opposed to character and dramatic action
- *Narrative dramatic forms such as:*
 - *Limited interaction dialogues* – telephone conversations, talkback radio, overheard conversations, reportage
 - *Mantle of the expert* – where groups of students are endowed with given roles of specialist knowledge as the basis of a dramatic exploration
 - *Whole group improvisation* – using structures of meetings, whole group activities where there is a fictional framework, a symbolic in-role negotiated dramatic text
 - *Improvisations* – imagined, invented, unscripted narrative explorations – spontaneous or structured
 - *Playbuilding* – using the processes of improvisation to initiate and support development of linked sequences of dramatic action; improvisationally-based dramatic texts
 - *Character based explorations such as:*
 - *Hot seating* – interviewing a character in role but out of the dramatic framework
 - *Role on the wall* - group development of a character's back story and qualities

See also Process Drama

INTERVENTIONS IN DRAMATIC SITUATION

- *freezing and interrogating dramatic character or action* - moving in and out of the dramatic action as it is in progress
- *narration* - using narration to link and interpret action, to distance (*Verfremdungseffekt*)
- *soliloquy* - entering thought processes of a character in dramatic action
- *chorus* - objectifying the dramatic situation beyond the personalising of individual character; using collective voices to encompass dramatic action
- *multiple points of view* - using a variety of points of view on a common action - e.g. using the voices of witnesses to an explosion to signal a range of emotions: horror, fear, revulsion, approval, etc.
- *teacher in role* - where the teacher/leader manages a dramatic context/text by stepping into an active participants role to “excite interest, control action, initiate involvement, provoke tension, challenge superficial thinking, create choices ... develop narrative, create possibilities ...”
- *forum theatre* - a representative group of actors presents a (usually political) dramatic situation but also empowers the audience to stop, question and add to the action; blurring the distinctions between actors and audience

STRUCTURING DRAMA

- *juxtaposition* - placing dramatic images using contrast and dislocation to provoke fresh understanding and dramatic impact
- *transformation* - exploring dramatic action through using analogy or through transforming known conventions and structures by using them in unexpected ways (e.g. *role reversal*)
- *role reversal* - challenging expectations by playing against them; e.g. characterisation in representational situations using presentational style and techniques
- *play within a play* - making conscious use of the metaphor of theatre to bring drama into focus
- *ritual and ceremony* - using elements of repetition and codified behaviours to explore and extend dramatic situations; not ritual for its own or anthropological sake but as a metaphor in drama
- *mask* - changing perspective on the dramatic action through the distancing provided by mask; simplifying and re-focusing action away from representational to presentational
- *mime* - using movement, action, space, physical gesture and responses as the primary focus for dramatic action
- *folk drama forms* - using existing folk forms - dance, ethnic group ceremonies, myths and legends - as a stimulus and scaffolding device
- *revue/skit/etc.* - using known forms or genres to provide a framework for drama explorations
- *dramatic tension* - the sense of opposing forces or suspense that drive the drama

Structures are scaffolding devices for drama, they enable students to better understand the nature of their drama exploration and to make choices about the elements of drama they use. As such drama structures are useful tools but not substitutes for the drama itself.

REFLECTION, DISCUSSION AND OTHER GROUP PROCESSES

Moving from within the drama to thinking and talking about the drama - and back into the drama; reflection, speculation, thinking are acts of metacognition, thinking about thinking and learning about learning.

WARMING DOWN/COOLING OFF

At the end of a drama experience it is also important that there is a physical and mental warming down or cooling down in preparation for the actor to re-enter their everyday world.

See also *process drama, theatre structures*

Drama learning is focused on learning about the art form - artistic and aesthetic learning - but also contributes to social learning and to general, cross curriculum and over arching learning. Drama learning, like all learning in the arts has intrinsic value and instrumental value.

The relationships between these aspects of learning can be graphically represented:

Specific drama skills and knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and exploring ideas • Using arts languages/drama languages • Understanding and using drama processes • Acting • Performing • Directing • Designing • Stagecraft • Choosing and using practical dimensions informed by aesthetic and contextual considerations • Knowledge of drama structures, forms, styles and contexts • Understanding role(s)
Aesthetic and contextual learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with symbols, images, metaphors, conventions, culture, traditions, heritage, history, structures, forms and styles of drama
Social learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of self and others - intrapersonal and interpersonal learning • Self image, self-discipline, interaction, working with others in teams, working independently, listening actively, reading and using body language, making and sustaining inter-relationships, understanding role and roleplaying in society
General learning - over arching learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to use language effectively - general literacy • Problem solving • Thinking - using appropriate modes of thinking • Group and collaborative skills - working in teams • Working independently • Understanding and using numeracy and mathematical skills • Understanding and using scientific approaches including categorisation, cause and effect. etc. • Using symbol, metaphor, creativity and imagination • Using physical and kinaesthetic skills and understanding • Understanding and using technology • Finding and using information • Coping with change

drama processes

Drama involves a range of related processes:

- Warming up (preparing for drama physically, cognitively and emotionally/psychologically) and Warming down/cooling down
- Roleplaying and acting
- Working in a drama team
- Drama exploration strategies
 - Building contexts
 - Developing narrative
 - Deepening engagement and commitment
 - Focusing dramatic action
- Directing
- Designing
- Dramaturgy
- Playwrighting
- Managing
 - Stage managing
 - Production managing
- Responding to drama
 - As audience
 - Criticism and as critics
 - Reviewing drama
- Theorising about drama

drama styles

Distinctive and identifiable ways of doing something; ways in which drama is performed as distinct from the content or form. Style is often a reflection of time, society and culture, changing with those contextual aspects. For example, compare different ways of performing Shakespeare's plays by looking at different recordings and descriptions from the past; different actors and directors from different times and places perform with different styles.

drama teaching

See *Drama learning*

See also *actor training*

drama values

Values, in general terms, are accepted principles or standards of an individual or a group. Underlying work in drama is a set of accepted values. For example, there are accepted values about respect for the copyright and intellectual property rights of playwrights and musicians; working collaboratively and supportively; avoiding upstaging; listening attentively; staying focused, etc. Changing historical, social and cultural values impact on drama production and response.

dramatic action

The essence of drama, the introduction, exposition, exploration and resolution of ideas, roles, characters, situations and incidents.

When the Elements of Drama are used together to communicate a cohesive role/character in a situation creating dramatic meaning for audiences.

Drama is action.

When you are "in role" - in other words, taking on a character other than your own, as you do in a play or music theatre role - you are enacting something. You are using action. Action is the basis of role.

Action - this dramatic action - has a range of dimensions. It can be *physical* action where you use the capacities of your bodies through facial expression, posture, gesture and movement through space and time. For example, a song or speech in a

play might communicate a sense of happiness and this is shown through the way the character smiles, holds their body in anticipation and paces excitedly towards other people to show how happy they are.

It can also be *psychological* action where you communicate to an audience the thinking and emotional actions of the role. For example, a character might be experiencing a moment of life changing decision as they realise their long-held belief in something is crumbling. The audience need to go on that emotional journey with the character. Psychological action is often expressed through physical actions. In the example just given, this may be shown by, say, the character moving from looking at the photo of a partner to slowly tearing up the image as the moment of realisation is recognised.

Drama is the symbolic representation of action designed to communicate to an audience. Dramatic action is the focus of creating a role or character in drama. Dramatic action can be subtle. It does not have to be overtly signalled (as in, say, an old fashioned silent movie). The point of dramatic action is in how it communicates the sense of person, place and purpose of a character in a particular moment of change and transformation.

In drama - and in singing a song in drama - there is a sense of a character on a journey. Through dramatic action, this journey is made evident to the audience.

dramatic irony

When an audience knows more (or is allowed to know more) about the dramatic action than the characters in the action, e.g. when Oedipus Rex says he will punish the killer of the king, the audience already knows that Oedipus is himself the killer. The irony rests in the contrast between what the character says or expects and what the audience knows will happen to that character.

dramatic play

Improvisation

When the elements of play are shaped - generally spontaneously - for dramatic purposes.

See also *Elements of Play, improvisation, playbuilding, self-devised drama, youth theatre*

dramatic realisation

Giving substance to a text through the staging and performing of it. Making it real.

dramatic situation(s)

Drama is an imitation or reflection of life but not life itself. Drama is always fictional, a selective representation of life. Real life (whatever that might be) is not controlled, selected and manipulated - drama is. Actors can always step out of the moment of drama; teachers and directors can always intervene.

There are inherent limitations to drama situations; this is both the strength and limitation of drama. Drama is not a substitute for life, but a reflection of it and a part of it.

dramatic structure

The ways that drama is constructed.

See also *plot, narrative (linear and non-linear), climactic structure, episodic structure*

dramatic tension*Conflict*

Participants in drama maintain interest in and shape dramatic experience through dramatic tension. The balance between opposing characters, ideas or forces and concerns, provide the sustaining interest in drama; dramatic tension may reveal equal or unequal forces.

Dramatic tension can be focused through a range of opposing forces such as:

- Person vs person
- Person vs supernatural
- Person vs society
- Person vs environment
- Person vs self/psychological identity

See also Aristotelian drama, conflict, tension

dramatic text

Dramatic action – the totality of movement, words and sounds
 – the complete experience of a particular drama experience
 – the drawing together of the contributions of the whole team of actors, directors, designers, playwrights, dramaturges, etc. The dramatic text can also be broadened to include the contributions of particular circumstances such as theatre, audiences, time, contexts.

Sometimes the term dramatic text is used to refer to a script for drama but care should be taken so that the term “dramatic text” is not confused with “script” which is limited to the words on the page, the blueprint for a drama.

dramatis personae

Latin term for list of the cast of characters in a play.

dramatists

See authors, playwrights

dramaturge

Sometimes spelt Dramaturg

Person who studies and interprets plays for actors and directors; may advise on selecting plays, adaptations, translations, program notes, stagecrafts, etc. Often much of the work of a director is dramaturgy.

See also directors, dramaturgy, producers, scriptwriters

dramaturgy

Study and interpretation of plays with particular attention to translating and explaining the contexts, society, values and mores of a dramatic text from another place or time from contemporary actors and directors; the dramaturge may take part in adaptations, translations, advising on costumes, clothing, customs, manners and times, and writing program notes.

In modern use, a dramaturge may also have a role in the development of a new text – acting as a script editor; providing a sense of perspective and interpretation of the work of the actors and director. The dramaturge provides aesthetic distance.

See also dramaturge

drawing room comedy

Distinctive style of High Comedy that takes its name from its setting; characters are most frequently upper-class and there is emphasis on wit, verbal humour and sophistication.

See also high comedy, Restoration comedy

dream play

Fantasy and dreamlike drama using non-realistic techniques, discontinuity and a rejection of logic, continuous time, place and connected action. Term comes from August Strindberg's *The Dream Play* but the form has been variously explored since.

See also Surrealism, Theatre of Cruelty

dress rehearsal

A full rehearsal with all actors, scenery, costumes, lighting and effects

See also rehearsal

dressings rooms

A backstage area where the actors get into their make up and costumes before a performance

See also backstage

dry

Forget a line.

dueling

Fencing

A contest with deadly weapons used to settle a matter of honour between two characters.

In theatre the weapons used are not deadly and the choreography is staged so that both actors know what is going to happen so that no one is injured

See also stage combat

dumb show

Mimed performance, frequently a play within a play or a prefiguring of dramatic action in mime.

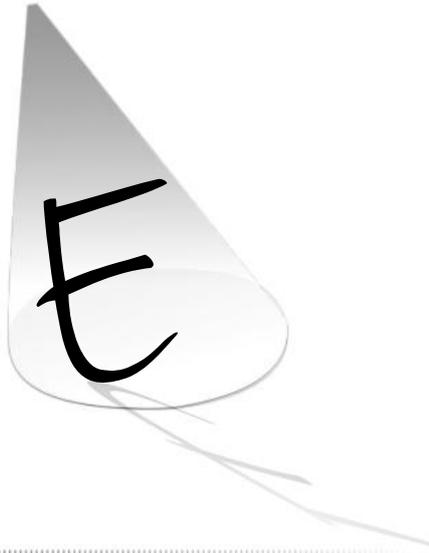
See also mime

dynamics

How a sound or movement is varied in performance. Dynamics in movement includes varying weight, space, time and, energy. Dynamics in sound includes varying the relative volume, pitch and intensity of sound.

dynamic relationship

Describes the changing relationship between performers and audience members. As an audience will never be comprised of the same people each night this relationship is constantly shifting and giving feedback to the performers, thus informing and evolving their work each performance.



ecclesiastical drama

Liturgical drama performed in churches or serving religious purposes

See also religious drama, biblical drama

eclecticism

Eclectic drama

Label for mid-to-late twentieth century approaches to drama that focus on practitioners in drama picking and choosing performance approaches, styles and techniques from a range of possible dramatic and philosophical possibilities; as opposed to conventional approaches to drama that use well-established models; eclecticism frequently challenges these conventions, incorporates what is verbally inarticulate and uses non-verbal codes; there is an emphasis on collaborative and self-devised drama, radical re-working of conventional texts, an emphasis on the role of the actor as key contributor as opposed to that of the playwright or director as the arbiter of dramatic action and interpretation; evolution and development rather than a finished literary script; script is generally more akin to scenario; there is considerable commitment to improvisation, the inclusion of collaborative experimental material and less focus on conventionally plotted drama

The term is sometimes indiscriminately used as a catch-all label.

See also improvisation, self-devised drama, youth theatre

Egyptian drama

Has its origins in coronation rituals in the early Dynastic Period (3100-2686 BC) with key elements of enactment and dialogue. In the Old Kingdom (2686-2181 BC) ritual drama explored mysteries of creation, life and death and the conflict between good and evil.

On ascending the throne, every King of Egypt became Horus, son of Osiris and Isis, and the story was enacted during annual festivals. By the time of the Middle Kingdom (2133-1786 BC) there is evidence of a civilisation of frequent holidays, ceremonies, parades, amusements, music and celebrations. Osiris plays continued into the Christian era.

Later Egyptian drama reflected the influence of conquerors from Greece and Rome.

Some extant fragments of Egyptian drama include:

Triumph of Horus

The Mephite Drama

The Abydos Passion Play

Books of the Dead

Drama Key Terms & Concepts Third Edition

electronic journals/digital journals/folios

Electronic logs

Drama journals and folios written in an electronic form, that is on a computer or in a blog.

See also drama folios

Elements of Drama

The fundamental building blocks in making and responding to drama.

Various overlapping approaches to defining the Elements of Drama have been made.

<i>Aristotle The Poetics 5th Century BC</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action or Plot • Character • Thought/theme/ideas • Language/ Diction • Melody: Song or Dance • Spectacle
<i>Haseman and O'Toole (1998)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The human context (situations, roles, relationships) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>driven by</i> • dramatic tension <i>directed by</i> • focus <i>made explicit in</i> • place and time <i>through</i> • language and movement <i>to create</i> • mood and symbols <i>which together create the whole experience of</i> • dramatic meaning <i>All dramas are fictional models of real life human behaviour.</i>
<i>National Statement on the Arts, Curriculum Corporation (1994)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • role • situation • human interaction • focus • space and time • language and text • dramatic tension • mood • symbol and metaphor • contrast
<i>Curriculum Framework Western Australia (1998)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • role and character • situation and human interaction • voice • movement • space and time • language and texts • symbol and metaphor • audience • dramatic tension • dramatic forms, genres, styles and conventions

The Australian Curriculum: The Arts (2013) identifies the following Elements of Drama

role, character and relationships	<i>role and character:</i> identification and portrayal of a person's values and attitudes, intentions and actions as imagined relationships, situations and ideas in dramatic action
	<i>relationships:</i> the connections and interactions between people that affect the dramatic action

situation	the setting and circumstances of the characters/roles actions
voice and movement	<i>voice</i> : using voice expressively to create roles, situations, relationships, atmosphere and symbols
	<i>movement</i> : using facial expression, posture and action in space and time expressively to create roles, situations, relationships, atmosphere and symbols
focus	directing and intensifying attention and framing moments of dramatic action
tension	sense of anticipation or conflict within characters or character relationships or problems, surprise and mystery in stories and ideas to propel dramatic action and create audience engagement
space and time	<i>space</i> : the physical space of the performance and audience, fictional space of the dramatic action and the emotional space between characters
	<i>time</i> : fictional time in the narrative or setting; timing of one moment to the next contributing to the tension and rhythm of dramatic action
language, ideas, dramatic meaning, mood and atmosphere and symbol	<i>language, ideas and dramatic meaning</i> : the choice of linguistic expression and ideas in drama used to create dramatic action
	<i>mood and atmosphere</i> : the feeling or tone of physical space and the dramatic action created by or emerging from the performance
	<i>symbol</i> : associations that occur when something is used to represent something else to reinforce or extend dramatic meaning
audience	experience of participating in the drama

The Elements of Drama work dynamically together to create and focus dramatic action and dramatic meaning. Drama uses movement and voice along with language and ideas to explore roles, characters, relationships and situations. Drama action is shaped by dramatic tension, space and time, mood and atmosphere to symbolically present and share human experiences for audiences.

Heathcote identified that drama works in the aesthetic territory between light and dark, sounds and silences, stillness and movement, colour and absence of colour, empty spaces and filled spaces. The Elements of Drama are the fundamental components of the aesthetic experiences of making and responding to drama. They are essential and present in some combination and uniquely mark out the territory of aesthetic understanding that we identify as drama.

However drama is created, performed, learnt and taught, the fundamental components – the elements – are combined into aesthetic patterns that create meaning



Light /Dark

Sounds/ Silence

Stillness/ Movement

Colour/ Absence of colour

Empty spaces/ Filled or closed spaces

Drama Foundations

elements of design

Design uses visual and aural elements in drama to communicate ideas, roles and action for audiences.

The formal Visual Elements are: line, shape, colour, form, texture, value, space, time.

The elements or principles of design are: balance, proportion, unity, harmony, variety, emphasis, contrast, rhythm, and movement.

See *design*

elements of play

Drama draws on the elements of purposeful play.

- spontaneity
- imagination
- roleplaying
- exploration
- risk-taking

elements of theatre

- participants – actors, audience, acting space, dramatic action
- text, sub-text and context
- forms and styles
- physical, aural and visual elements
- technical elements
- spectacle

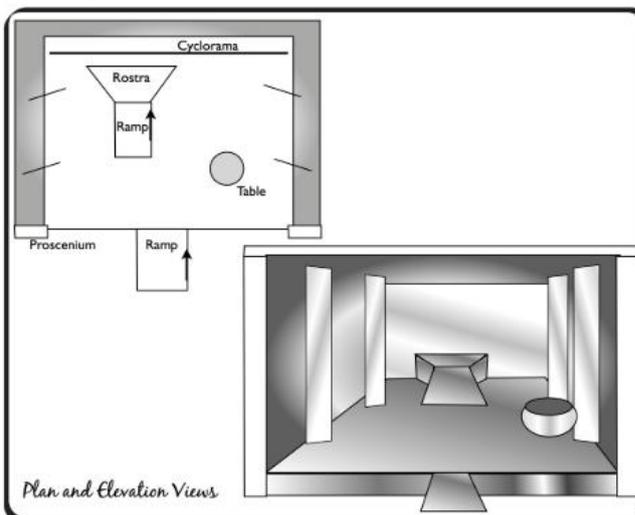
elements (visual)

See *Visual Elements, Design, Principles of Design*

elevation

A drawing or rendering of a set from the eye level of an audience member (as opposed to a plan which shows the set from above).

See *plan*



Elizabethan drama

Elizabethan theatre

Elizabethan drama, coinciding with a time of relative prosperity, political stability and economic dominance and influence under Elizabeth I (ruling from 1558 to 1603), was a drama of diversity, variety and brilliance. It drew on influences of Renaissance Europe in terms of ideas and philosophy and conventions of the Italian stage but produced a drama that was unique and identifiably English. Medieval religious drama provided loose constructions, intermingling comedy and tragedy, didactic or

moral frameworks, and an open staging on multiple simultaneous sets. Medieval drama also brought with it a popular middle and lower class audience. Classical drama models included Plautus, Terence and Seneca: comedies based on stock characters, mistaken identity, intrigue, romance; tragedies of extreme action, characters in extreme moments such as madness, grief or jealousy; and poetic imagery.

The interest in classical drama showed the influence of the universities but Elizabethan drama was popular and attended by all classes. The themes and use of language were responded to by all classes of people.

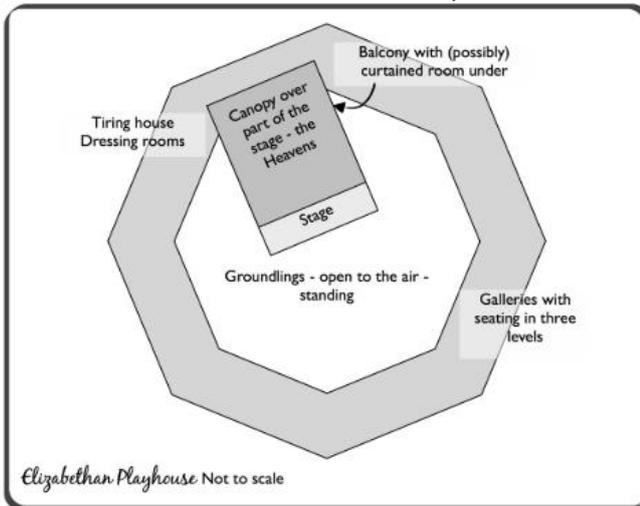
Elizabethan drama is notable for the emergence of a playwright's theatre, where Shakespeare - perhaps unfairly - dominates.

Rarely rivaled in terms of variety, richness of imagery, complexity of ideas and linking ideas, depth of characterisation, Shakespeare has had a lasting influence on subsequent drama. But Elizabethan drama is also notable for a wealth of dramatic activity: Marlowe (1564-1593) *Tamburlaine the Great*, *The Tragical History of Dr Faustus*, *The Jew of Malta*, *Edward II*; Kyd (1558-1594) *The Spanish Tragedy*. Ben Jonson (1573-1637) *Volpone*, *Bartholemew Fair*, *The Alchemist*.

The features of the Elizabethan public outdoor playhouses include:

a thrust stage, set in an octagonal or round shaped building with the central courtyard open to the elements; dimensions are conjectural except for the Fortune (the New Fortune in the courtyard of the Arts Faculty of the University of Western Australia is built according to the known dimensions)

There were also indoor theatres most notably at Blackfriars.



Female roles in Elizabethan drama - while showing insight into the psychology and nature of women - were played by adolescent boy actors; women were not permitted to be actors on stage until Restoration times.

Inn yards were also used to stage plays.

Elizabethan drama is also distinguished for the companies of child actors: the Children of Windsor Chapel and their rivals from Saint Pauls were companies of choirboys who also presented plays that were highly popular and which contemporary critics described as polished and well performed. These companies used indoor halls which were (by comparison with the public theatres) well equipped and lit.

Groundling: the spectators at Elizabethan plays who stood to watch the action (reputed to have eaten many hazelnuts while doing so)

Inner stage: feature of Elizabethan stages used to conceal and reveal actors; also called a discovery space **Heavens:** the visible underside of the canopy over the stage, thought to have been

elaborately decorated with stars and clouds

Platt: an outline or plot of a play; literally, an outline of the play prepared by the "book-keeper" of the company and hung where the actors could access it during performance; written on foolscap in a two column format showing script words, and properties and effects, these were pasted onto thin wooden board and pierced at the top for hanging.

Private theatres: indoor playhouses as opposed to the open-air theatres; although called "private", they were open to the public and fees were paid for entrance.

Public theatres: open air theatres; in approximate chronological order - the Theatre (c 1587), the Curtain (1577), the Rose (c1587), the Swan (1595), the Globe (1599), the Fortune (1600), the second Globe (1614).

Tiring house: section of Elizabethan theatre directly behind and giving access to playing space where actors "attired", may also have been the wardrobe and props store.

See also *boy companies*, *English drama*, *Comedy of Humours*, *masques*, *Revenge Tragedies*, *Shakespearean Drama*

emotions

Instinctive states of mind that define a range of human experiences.

See also *mood*

emotional memory

sense memory, *affective memory*

Stanislavski's concept of actors recalling sensory experiences (visual/auditory/kinesthetic/olfactory/taste) relevant to the experience of their character in their situation. By reliving their own personal experiences, actors are able to bring freshness to their performances of character and situation.

emotional space

The imperceptible and perceptible give and take between the audience and the actors in theatre, the audience are affected by the actors work and by being affected give feedback to the actors as to whether they are communicating the story in the way they want to.

The relationships between characters in a drama event shown through the exchange of emotions within and between characters and also through the physical relationships in the acting space (proxemics).

See also *dynamic relationship*, *proxemics*

empathy

Ability to understand and share the feelings of another person. Key to acting and being an audience member in drama.

See also *cartharsis*

Empty Space (the)

Title of highly influential book by Peter Brook (1968) to signal his approach to theatre.

I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage. A man walks across this empty space whilst someone else is watching him, and this is all that is needed for an act of theatre to be engaged.

In *The Empty Space*, director Peter Brook outlines his theories on the theater by exploring four different meanings of the word theater - Deadly, Holy, Rough, Immediate. Deadly theatre, linked with commercial theatre, relies on cliches and past practices and is critiqued by Brook. Holy theatre is more personally driven, creative though less popular. Rough theatre is community-

based and focused on social commentary and issues. Immediate theatre is where there is direct communication only for those present. Brook contends that the fundamental reason theater exists is to awaken in audiences an understanding of the human condition they were previously unable, or unwilling, to understand or apprehend.

emphasis

Bringing attention and importance to something through focus or by making it louder or bigger than other things. Can be used in design or vocal and physical work.

See also Elements of Design, dynamics

encore(s)

Enthusiastic calls from the audience for a repeat performance.

See also standing ovations

English drama and theatre

See Elizabethan Drama, Jacobean Drama, Mummer's Plays, Pinteresque Drama, Restoration theatre

ensemble

A group of actors who perform together.

ensemble acting

Where the whole team works as a unit; antithesis of "star billing" where the focus is on one performance.

The ensemble approach has its roots in the work of the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen (1866-1914) and his focus on extended, intensive rehearsal and ensemble acting as well as directorial vision and control over all aspects of production. This was in marked contrast to the ways that theatre was produced at the time and was to deeply influence others such as Stanislavski and Ibsen. There are clear links to the concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, a term attributed to composer Richard Wagner, to refer to an operatic performance fusing the elements of music and drama, a synthesis of the arts but also including the total experience of the theatre architecture.

environmental theatre

Style of performance and theatre, which encourages the audience to be immersed in the performance.

For example: the actors could happen in the aisles or address the audience members directly.

See also Presentational Drama

entertainment

Act(s) of giving or being provided with amusement and enjoyment.

An event, performance or activity, which is designed to provide enjoyment and relaxation for an audience.

See also performing arts

entrance

making an entrance

Indicates the point in a script or performance where an actor enters the action.

Also describes the physical place or point where an actor enters the performance/playing space

Making an entrance is a term for entering the scene with theatrical flourish or impact

epic acting

Acting style for Epic Theatre, characterized by the use of both presentational and representational acting.

See also Acting styles

epic drama

Epic theatre

Theatre style, "created" by Piscator and Brecht and popularized by Brecht in Germany in the 1930s.

See also Brechtian drama

epilogue

A concluding speech for a play generally addressed directly to the audience; can also be given outside the structure of the play after the curtain and as an encouragement for applause.

episodic structure

In contrast with drama that has a climactic structure an episodic drama has a looser (though not haphazard) approach. Features of Episodic Structure:

- Plot begins relatively early in the story and moves through a series of episodes
- Does not follow the Unities, e.g. may range over an entire city or even several countries; may cover a longer period of time: weeks, months, and sometimes years - has epic scale
- Uses many short, fragmented scenes; sometimes an alternation of short and long scenes
- There can be many characters, with interwoven lives
- There are often several threads of action, such as two parallel plots, or scenes of comic relief in amongst the serious
- Juxtaposition of scenes and tone.
- Has a different sense of cause and effect from climactic structure, e.g. an event may result from several causes, or no apparent cause, but arises in a network or web of circumstances.

See also climactic structure, juxtaposition

ethics

Values

Drama deals with significant issues and ideas, as such it carries an ethical responsibility to reflect honesty and truth about human experience. Drama therefore carries a responsibility to deal with issues and people with ethical integrity.

Occupational Health and Safety is an important ethical issue; health includes physical as well as psychological considerations.

See also values

existentialism

An approach to philosophy that emphasizes the existence, freedom and responsibility of finite human individuals; as a movement existentialism has influenced and shaped drama – e.g. Absurdism, Theatre of Cruelty – and approaches to characterisation, plot and the processes of creating dramatic texts.

It is often misunderstood as meaning human existence is pointless, however it has more to do with the world view that humans use to define their own existence.

Key existential playwrights: Sartre, Camus, and many of the writers of Absurdism.

exit

Latin for he or she leaves the stage, used in scripts to indicate where an actor leaves the stage; occasionally used is the plural form *exuent*, which is literally, *they leave the stage*.

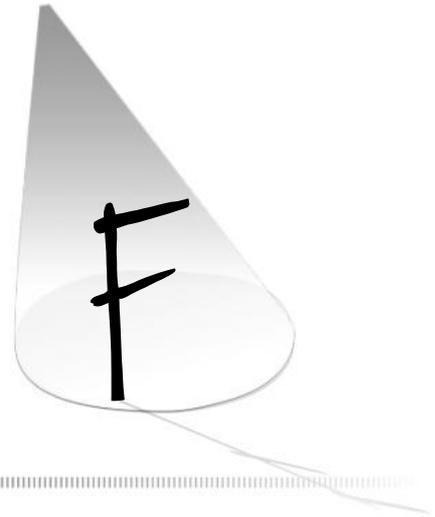
expressionist theatre*Expressionism*

A 20th Century theatre movement that seeks to show inner psychological reality through the distortion of scenery, lighting, costuming and acting styles; key playwrights Strindberg, Wederkind; major influence on design and conceptualization of silent films such as *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*.

extend (improvisation)

In improvising when an actor responds to an offer from another improviser by developing the idea or stimulus further.

See also accept, improvisation, blocking

**fable**

A deceptively simple telling of a story that contains the key concepts, ideas or values of a dramatic text; often metaphoric or allegorical.

The term was used by Brecht as part of the critical and analytical processing of plot in developing and rehearsing drama.

Articulating the fable of a piece is a useful writing and rehearsal discipline enabling actors and directors to identify and distill the essence of a dramatic text.

A fable is also used in literature to describe a short tale with a moral, a story about supernatural or extraordinary events and people, a legend or myth.

See also Brechtian drama

facial expression

Movement and positioning of the face to express different emotions and states of mind to an observer.

See also body language, non-verbal communication.

fale'aitu

Form of Samoan ritual theatre where traveling parties of village chiefs travel around the country communicating the history and traditional stories of the Samoans.

See also Oceania drama

falling action

Dramatic action following the climax, which leads to the resolution or denouement.

farce

An extreme form of comedy characterized by sight gags, coarse comic wit, exaggerated situations, coincidences, improbabilities and incongruities; farce depends on skill in acting and direction; it builds on understanding of timing, use of stock characters, quick tempo and physical action while maintaining in audiences a sense of belief in the face of improbability. Farce has its roots in earliest drama such as satyr plays and continues to be a popular form of drama; sometimes referred to as *seducto ad absurdam*.

See also bedroom farce, comedy

fatal flaw

See Classical Greek drama (harmatia)

Feast of Fools

Festivities in medieval times with elements of drama; minor clergy took on roles of their superiors; the King of Fools, also known as the Boy Bishop evolved into the role of the Lord of

Misrule; ribald, crude burlesques of religious practice; suppressed by the Church.

See also *festivals, Medieval drama*

Feldenkrais

Feldenkrais Method

The Feldenkrais Method, originated by Dr Moshé Feldenkrais (1904-1984) is an educational movement system designed to facilitate greater awareness of the body; particularly posture, movement, coordination and flexibility. It is used in actor training to build mindfulness of the body so that it can be accessed to create character.

feminist drama

Emerging and still defining understanding of drama resulting from a re-examination of the roles of women in society; feminist drama has resulted in a re-evaluation of established, traditional views of drama.

By and large, recorded histories of drama more readily recognise male rather than female playwrights and makers of drama; in some societies and their drama, there were prohibitions against women participating; in Greek theatre choruses were male, in Elizabethan drama female roles were played by boys and young men and it is not until Restoration times that women were generally allowed to take roles on the English stage. These attitudes to drama have been questioned as part of broader questioning of the roles attributed to women in society.

Feminist drama argues for (amongst other things):

- recognising the voices, points of view, processes and dramatic texts of women, with particular attention to dramatic structure and language
- assessing plays written by women playwrights, particularly those ignored or obscured
- adjusting understanding of drama heritage and contexts to recognise feminist perspectives, participants and playwrights
- questioning portrayals of women that rely on gender stereotyping or bias
- addressing the relatively few strong and significant roles for women
- evaluating characters and dramatic action from within modern feminist perspectives

There is also a need to examine female protagonists in the contexts of their given historical times, society and allocated roles.

fencing

Armed combat sport, in which the participants fight with various swords, knives and foils manipulated by the hand, there is no real danger to participants as they are heavily padded.

In the theatre fencing is a way of giving an illusion of combat on stage.

See also *dueling, swords*

festival

An event, day or period of celebration held traditionally for religious purposes.

See also *social custom, carnival, Feast of Fools, Hakari, pageant*

fiction

Fiction is created stories. It is used in storytelling, when an individual or group tells an audience a created narrative. Drama is intrinsically fictional (even when setting out to be documentary drama) because someone stands for/represents/

presents a composed reality.

Fictional space is the imagined world created in drama,

See also *narrative, storydrama*

figures of speech

Drama is language-rich and draws on abundant traditions of language use, rhetoric and poetry. In interpreting drama, familiarity with some standard figures of speech and rhetoric and conceits are useful keys into understanding and communicating meaning. Identifying figures of speech merely for their own benefit is largely fruitless activity.

A **conceit** is an extreme, unusual or witty poetic invention.

In this famous opening of a sonnet, Shakespeare compares his love to a summer's day and the surprising juxtaposition carries a powerful image.

*Shall I compare thee to a Summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate.
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And Summer's lease hath all too short a date.*

allusion is reference to classical stories or ideas

She'll not be hit with Cupid's bow

is an allusion to Cupid, the Roman god of love and the symbol of an arrow that is used to signify his method of making his presence felt.

imagery: using words to create mental pictures that convey ideas; figurative language using metaphor and simile and other figures of speech.

*Now is the winter of our discontent, made glorious summer
by this sun of York*

plays on the image of winter being replaced by summer sun and also on multiple meanings of the homophone sun/sun.

metaphor: a direct comparison

*But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east and Juliet is the sun.*

simile: a comparison using "like" or "as"

*... for thou art
As glorious to this night ...
As is a winged messenger of heaven
Unto the white upturned wondering eyes
Of mortals...*

personification: giving human attributes to inanimate objects

Arise fair sun and kill the envious moon

assonance: repetition of vowel sounds

*God, the best maker of all marriages
Combine our hearts in one, our realms in one!*

alliteration: repetition of consonant sounds usually at the beginning of words

*From camp to camp through the foul womb of the night,
The hum of either army stilly sounds,
That the fixed sentinels almost receive
The secret whispers of each other's watch:
Fire answers fire ...*

puns: playing on the multiple meanings of words that have the same sounds; the dying Mercutio in Romeo and Juliet says

Send for me tomorrow and you will find me a grave man

the word "grave" carrying both meanings of a grave or serious person, and a person in the grave, buried; the use of this pun in the face of certain death gives us some indication of the character of Mercutio.

rhetorical figures: many playwrights are trained in and use many of the techniques of rhetoric, the art of speech that was taught to public orators such as lawyers. Some of these techniques include patterns of accumulation based on three or five rather than on two or four.

apostrophe: a direct address to an absent person e.g. Romeo in his soliloquies of love says:

He jests at scars that never felt a wound

rhetorical question: a question asked but not designed to be answered rather to achieve a stronger emphasis

The Chorus at the opening of *Henry V* rhetorically asks

... Can this cockpit hold

The vasty fields of France? or may we cram

Within this wooden O the very casques

That did afright the air at Agincourt?

hyperbole: deliberate exaggeration or overstatement

understatement: deliberately under-representing

oppositions: balancing contrasting ideas within the line of verse structures;

O brawling love! O loving hate!

Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health,

Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!

repetition: repeated sounds or words for cumulative or poetic effect

Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow creeps ahead its petty pace

accumulation: gradual adding of material for emphasis

In his funeral oration over the body of Julius Caesar Mark Antony uses accumulation to open his speech

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears

Accumulation is often in threes, fives or even sevens, rather than in twos, fours or sixes.

rising and falling cadence

The rhythmic flow of a line - not to be confused with metre - that gives it a particular colour, variety and meaning. Falling cadence indicates that the key idea is at the beginning of the line and "falls away" by the end of the line; vice versa for a rising cadence.

The opening of *Henry V* uses strong rising and falling cadence:

Oh for a muse of fire, that would ascend

The brightest heaven of invention.

A kingdom for a stage, princes to act

And monarchs to behold the swelling scene!

Then would warlike Harry, like himself,

Assume the port of Mars; and at his heels,

Leash'd in like hounds, should famine, sword and fire

Crouch for employment. But pardon gentles all.

See also *aside, conventions, enjambement, rhyme, rhythm*

film drama

film acting

With television, film is the most popular medium for drama in the 20th Century.

Film and Television are distinctive drama forms. They use many of the conventions of drama and theatre. However, in essence they are recordings and transmissions of one particular performance. They have different relationships to their audiences.

They are often constructed dramatic realities; only rarely is a film or television performance a continuous one, but made up of sections that are joined together to create a sense of continuous narrative. By contrast, drama in theatre is continuous, variable at the point of performance, capable of shifting interpretation and responsive to the needs and moods of different audiences.

The dominant style of film and television drama is narrative and strongly influenced by realism, naturalism and representational drama. In turn, film and television has influenced modern theatre, the ways plays are constructed, the use of dialogue and characterisation. This dominant style has also led to a re-evaluation of the strengths of theatre and encouraged explorations in aspects such as physical theatre, presentational styles and the immediacy of the live relationship between audiences and performers.

The popular realistic narrative style of most film and television drama contrasts with the metaphoric and symbolic power and immediate physical presence of most theatre. There are obvious differences between live and filmed/recorded performances: while a filmed performance can be repeated until the director is satisfied with the "take", a live performance is ephemeral and fresh every time it is given to an audience.

See also *directing, film scripts, television drama*

film directing

film directors

Shaping and interpretation of the dramatic action of a film or television drama.

film making

Act of producing and creating drama for film, i.e. the development of script, casting, filming and editing film drama. Filmmaking also includes documentary film.

See also *film drama, screen drama, video drama*

film set

Set designed and used for the production of film and television.

See also *sets*

finance

arts funding

See *arts funding/budgeting*

finger plays

Educational drama using hand gestures to mime action or finger puppets and thus create the drama. Used in pre-primary and primary schools.

flash forward

prolepsis

A scene in a play, which takes the plot into the future to an expected event or an imagined occurrence, before returning to the present in the next scene.

flashback

analepsis

A scene in a play, which takes the plot back from where it has already reached, to recount events which are crucial to the continuance of the plot or character development, or to re-iterate events which have already happened.

flat*stage flat*

Canvas or plywood covered wooden frame that is used as stock unit to make traditional sets, particularly box sets.

See also *box sets, stage design*

floodlight

Luminaire (light), which creates the artificial lighting on stage for an indoor performance. Generally refers to luminaires that provide a broad wash or light rather than isolating spots of light

See also *lighting*

floor plan

See *plan*

fluffed line

A slip or mistake in delivering a line of dialogue either by delivering the incorrect line, a line out of sequence or by in some way getting words out of order.

focus

The act of staying concentrated on character and dramatic action within drama.

Focus is also used to describe the technical action of adjusting the size, shape and direction of a stage light.

Four closely related areas of focus:

the scene	the text; the specific given circumstances of the text; the situation being explored and realised through drama
the audience	evoking audience attention and responses; e.g. placement in performance space and audibility for audiences to see and hear; timing for impact on an audience
character	developing characterisation; e.g. objectives, super-objectives and before life of a character
the actor	technical skills and processes of the actor; e.g. dynamic variation of voice and movement, blocking action in performance space

See also *attention, centering*

folios

Are literally pages; they refer to a particular way that plays were published; for example Shakespeare's First Folio (1623); folio is used in printing and publishing to mean "a page number".

Folios are sometimes also student portfolios.

See also *drama folios, portfolios*

folk drama*folklore*

Folk drama is drawn from identified cultural or racial groups and depicts and celebrates these racial or cultural systems in setting, characters, language and values.

Folk drama uses existing folk stories and forms, dances, ethnic ceremonies, myths and legends as a stimulus for dramatic action. Some characters from folk drama include Jack-in-the-Green, the Green Man.

Kolam folk drama from the south coastal region of Sri Lanka; used full face masks, stock characters, ritual dances and chants, performed in open space in villages.

See also *Mummer's plays*

fools

Clown wearing multi-coloured suit called the *motley* and a cap and bells. In Elizabethan drama, the fool often carried the wisdom of the play disguised in jokes and wit.

See also *Cap and Bells*

forces

Shaping contextual factors that influence a society and its culture and which in turn impact on drama of that time and place. These contextual factors include (but are not limited to) the political, economic, social, cultural, religious dimensions of human experience.

foreshadowing

Suggesting to audiences early in dramatic action what is going to happen later in the drama.

e.g. a character enters with a dead rabbit, broken-necked and limp; later in the play, this character is discovered, having hanged himself.

form (drama forms)

The structure of drama. Aesthetic principles and practical considerations shape form resulting in a focus on tragedy, comedy, tragic-comedy, farce, melodrama, or history.

Drama forms is a broadly inclusive term that includes the genres of drama as well as the structure of drama. Drama forms are shaped by the application of the Elements of Drama within particular social, cultural and historical contexts notably within the major categories of representational and presentational or non-realist drama. Drama forms reflect trends in contemporary drama and the drama of other times, cultures and places.

Sometimes confused with drama forms are drama styles: the distinctive identifying elements of particular dramatic texts. There are three dimensions of style: historical, performance and personal style.

See *physical forms; style forms; tragedy; history; comedy; tragic-comedy, farce, melodrama, style(s)*

forum theatre

Drama strategy where spectators are invited to enter and transform dramatic action; innovation used mainly for political purposes by Augusto Boal and others.

Members of the audience watch a scene – usually on a political or social theme – and are then invited to stop the action and to suggest alternative ways of playing the scene.

The audience become *spect-actors* rather than passive spectators.

See also *Theatre of the Oppressed, audience participation, improvisation*

found space

When drama is performed in an unconventional space – e.g. school canteens or a disused prison or warehouse- rather than in a purpose built spaces such as a theatre.

See also *adapted space, stages*

fourth wall

A convention of realistic acting and representational drama where there is no acknowledgment of the audience who are, as it were, looking into the action through a fourth wall on the set.

fragmented time

See *narrative*

freedom

Ability to act, write speak and think without impediment or limitations.

See also *intellectual freedom, censorship*

freeze frame image

freeze frame

freeze run freeze

A frozen image of a particular moment in the dramatic action. Freeze run freeze is where the action starts and finishes with actors in a still image with an interlude of action between the two frozen images.

An arrangement of bodies.

See also *tableaux*

French drama

French theatre

The popularity of religious drama during medieval times was brought to a end with the suppression of drama by an edict of Parliament in 1548. Monopoly was given to the religious order the *Confrérie de la Passion* and a pattern of drama as political and religious protest was suppressed until the French Revolution.

With the rehabilitation of drama under Cardinal Richlieu and royal patronage, there was a commitment to a humanist but literary drama under the inspiration of Roman and classical writers such as Seneca which led to a commitment to five act tragedies short on dramatic action and long on monologue and argument; distinguished by the use of Alexandrine verse (lines of 12 syllables consisting of hexameters of iambic feet).

This constraining influence on the development of French drama was reinforced by the control over life and letters exercised by the Academie Française (awarded royal charter 1635): drama, to be allowable, must teach, must accurately represent life, eschew fantasy, strictly adhere to unities of action, time and place; soliloquies were to be avoided as they represent "unnatural" approaches; argument replaced narrative and romance; the grip of classicism on French drama was all but absolute. It took playwrights of great skill and imagination such as Molière to work within the restraints of classicism.

In this time, drama was a precarious profession and the status of actors was low.

Even the establishment of the *Comedie-Française* in 1680 did little to break the cycle. This company, formed by merging the troupes of Molière and the Hotel de Bourgogne in 1680, provided a single licensed company to present plays in French in Paris; the constitution provided for a co-operative society, where all members were guaranteed a share but also a strict code of discipline for members.

Other competing companies - such as the *Comedie-Italienne*, a rival company based on *commedia* styles and forms - were allowed limited permission to operate but paid dearly for the privilege and were eventually excluded.

This narrow focus for drama remained until the French Revolution (1791) when in Article 1, the new government declared, "any citizen will be able to open a public theatre and to have performed there plays in all genres".

Nineteenth century French drama diverged: a move towards realistic drama contrasted with a populist theatre of entertainment, farce, music and dance. A popular theatre - based on melodrama, spectacle and appeals to bourgeois morality - is a contrast to the carefully constructed - *pièce bien faite* - plays

of Eugene Scribe (1791-1861) and the growth of realism under the influence of Zola (1849-1902). As technology provided increasing flexibility, directors such as Adolphe Apia (1862-1902) explored use of lighting and design to match mood and dramatic intent.

With the founding of the Théâtre National Populaire in 1920, there was a move to a different form of state support for drama. This support was extended in the late forties and a shift in emphasis saw support for regionalisation of theatre. Avant-garde influences had far-reaching impact on drama beyond France: Artaud, Jarry, Cocteau and explorations of styles such as absurdism, surrealism, existentialism.

Belle Epoque: period 1890-1914 when drama (and society) was characterised by light comic entertainment

Boulevard drama 19th century French drama with elements of farce and domestic drama and a spirit of materialism and irreverent comedy focusing on the adventures of dashing young Parisian men. *Boulevard theatre* is a term used as an equivalent of Broadway, established commercial theatre.

bourgeois drama 18th century French drama focusing on middle class society and featuring use of pathos, sentiment and moralising.

café chantant: 19th century variety entertainment

café concert: featured romantic ballads, erotic innuendo and nonsense songs

café spectacles: songs and farces, operettas

cabaret: small scale entertainment based on songs, sketches, satire; later popularised and commercialised.

coup de theatre: a sudden, breathtaking theatrical trick or surprise that shifts the direction or upsets the expectations of audiences

le drame: term coined by Diderot (1737) for serious domestic drama investigating real conditions in which people lived; precursor to realism.

French farce: an extreme form of comedy characterised by sight gags, coarse comic wit, exaggerated situations, coincidences, improbabilities and incongruities

pièce bien faite term coined by Scribe to describe well made play

See also *absurdism, Boulevard theatre, Existentialism, Grand Guignol, Theatre of Cruelty*

french scene

A scene change which is marked by the entrance or exit of a character rather than lights going up or down.

Front of House

F.O.H.

The parts of a theatre open to the public. Also the management of ticket sales, marketing, publicity, etc.

See also *Front of House Management*

front of house management

Theatre management

Used to describe the management side of running the theatre such as selling tickets, advertising, financial management, production and ancillary business such as merchandising, running bar, etc.

Ushers: Front of house staff who check tickets, show patrons to their seats and manage health and safety.

See also *Front of House*

Futurism

20th century theatre movement focusing on the “dynamism of the Machine Age”; rejected all former stage practice and argued for the inclusion of the dramatic energy of other forms such as circus, music hall and cabaret; a compression of drama into brief situations.

Influenced many later 20th Century innovations such as the use of new technologies, multi-media approaches and environmental theatre.

FX

Short for Effects

Abbreviation for sound or special effects. Used in prompt scripts and theatre talk. Sometimes Sound Effects are abbreviated as SFX.



gag

running gag

A joke, a piece of comic business such as lazzi.

games

drama games

A structured activity undertaken for enjoyment and often educational purposes.

Drama games tend to fall into three categories: verbal, non-verbal and focus-oriented, and are often used to warm up actors before rehearsal or performance.

See also play

gender neutral casting

Casting without regard to the gender stipulated in a play text, for example, a female Julius Caesar.

Genesius (Saint)

Patron saint of actors reputed to have interjected declaration of his conversion to Christianity into his performance before the Roman Emperor Diocletian. Feast day is August 25.

genre

Kind, sort or type of drama such as live theatre, radio, television and film drama, opera, puppetry and mime.

German drama

Has had a rich and varied growth since early Medieval forms such as mystery plays and *Fastnachtspiel*. Despite the relatively recent emergence of a political identity, the various sections that make the geographical place have produced a drama that is rich in variety. Social and political ferment, intellectual and emotional hubbub has been reflected in a vibrant and often contradictory drama. The influence of English forms of drama and particularly Shakespeare is notable. This blended with a taste for bourgeois drama, rather than a court or popularist coarse folk drama. But these traditions of German drama were never completely lost.

Lessing (1729-81) wrote many popular middle class domestic tragedies under the influence of English styles. Romantics Goethe (1749-1832) and Schiller (1759-1805) led a move away from popularist illusory drama to a transformation of ordinary lives through the excesses of *Sturm und Drang*.

Styles of acting have moved from formalistic and wooden to extravagant and overpowering. The period 1850-1915 saw a greater commitment to artistic unity and a single controlling vision in drama, a *Gesamtkunstwerk* fusing all parts of a

production together; a living out of the romantic vision of individualism.

The political drama that emerged during the first part of the twentieth century was, at least in part, a rejection of such a controlling vision. Expressionism with its emphasis on subjectivity and distortion, the use of what was often considered "low forms of drama" such as cabaret and the exploration of new media such as film all contributed to a powerful - though often rejected - counter drama. Political drama under the influence of directors such as Piscator (1893-1966) and writers such as Brecht, Weill and others of the political left was a contrast to a lightweight or sentimentously serious, the rather formal and excessively conservative mainstream drama.

Bürgerliches Trauerspiel: bourgeois tragedy, late 18th century, set in homes of bourgeois rather than in courts and historical settings; significant foreshadowing of concerns of naturalist and realist dramatists in the 19th century

Hamburg school: a style of acting focussing on realism, formalism and intuitive bringing of motivation to surface; also reliant on virtuoso performance at the expense of ensemble

Haupt-und-Staatsaktionen plays combining episodic structure of English chronicle plays and improvisational flexibility; noted for bombastic acting and sensationalistic gore

Leipzig style: formal, wooden style of acting in early 18th, marked contrast to the rough improvisational style then prevalent; highly formal acting with florid gestures; supplanted by Hamburg style

Ritter drama: 18th century historical drama based on medieval knights

Rührstücke: sentimental domestic melodramas

Schicksalstragödie: a "fate tragedy" a romantic interpretation of the Sophoclean concept of fate as an inescapable force.

Sturm und Drang - literally translates as "storm and stress", highly romanticised drama, anti-rationalist, focusing on rights of individual, personality, heroes with dominant, powerful personalities, sensationalistic in tone and content.

Weimar style outlined by Goethe, provided a detailed code of rules covering articulation, tempo, speaking tone, posture, movement and behaviour off stage; created an integrated ensemble and approach

Volksbühne: people's theatre

Volksstück: folk play written in local dialect for popular audiences

gesture

Movement of parts of the body to convey or emphasize a thought or meaning. Gesture is a form of non-verbal communication.

See also *body language, non-verbal communication, stylised gestures*

gestus

Sometimes referred to as the social gest, gestus is a theatrical technique created by Brecht which combines gesture and social meaning in one movement, stance or vocal display. It is the embodiment of an attitude or aspect of a character; it is never cliché but very specific and can only come out of a deep exploration of character, context and story. In performance it serves to alienate the audience in order to show them the bigger picture.

given circumstances

Approach to acting based on analysis of a character's life circumstances: personality, shaping influences, situation and context. Can include family background, upbringing, society, culture, religion as well as back story (imagined experiences of

the character before or outside the action of a play that can be developed through what is implied by the playwright or relayed by other characters or drawn from the actor's emotional memory)

See *character profiles, character scoring, role scoring, Stanislavski*

ghost light

Single bare light bulb left burning in the middle of the stage; safety precaution.

Grand Guignol

Popular 19th Century French dramatic genre based on short plays featuring extreme violence, murder, mutilation, rape and elements of horror; Grand Guignol effects continue to be the staple of horror films.

See also *French Drama, melodrama*

Greek drama

Greek theatre

Modern Greek Drama. The drama of modern Greece is one that draws on the rich traditions of Greek Theatre while also embracing the many developments in theatre since ancient times. Greek drama includes many different international theatre styles as well as home grown theatre.

See also *Classical Greek drama*

green room

Actor's room backstage; for relaxing, as distinguished from a dressing room.

See also *dressing room*

Grotowski

Jerzy Grotowski (1933-1999) was an innovative Polish theatre director, teacher and drama theorist, who originated *poor theatre* and founded the Polish Laboratory Theatre in 1959. He worked with ritual traditional drama, and stressed the importance of uniqueness in every performance.

Grotowski also worked to advance the theories of Stanislavski, particularly those concerning the actor and their psychophysical actions.

His ideas and work had and continues to have a significant influence on the development of modern theatre and approaches to acting.

See also *Poor Theatre, Stanislavski*

group devised drama

Self devised drama

Student devised drama

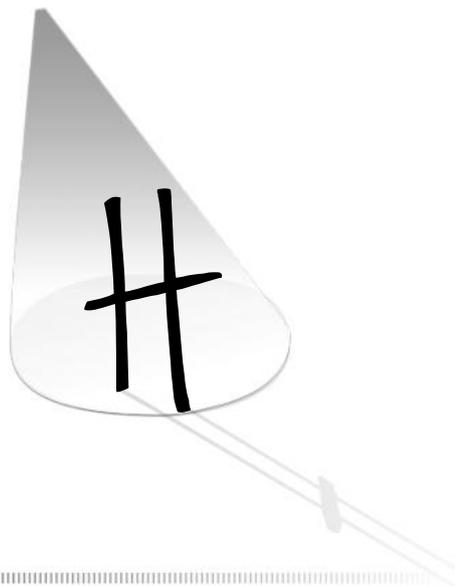
Drama which is developed through improvisations of group participants; most often group-devised drama is group-directed; group devised drama is based on a non-traditional relationship between the originator(s) of ideas and those who realize them.

See also *group directing, improvisation, play building, process drama, self-devised drama, student-devised drama, youth theatre*

group directing

Group direction takes place when members of a group working collaboratively undertake the role of the director rather than to assign that role to any individual

See also *collaboration, directing*



Hagen (Uta Hagen)

(1919-2004) American actor and influential acting teacher springing from the Stanislavskian tradition as interpreted in America. Hagen's approach focused on acting through an intense identification with character.

half hour call

"The Half"

A call given to actors by the stage manager to let them know how soon the performance will be beginning. Calls are also given at 15 minutes, when the house opens (when the audience is allowed to enter the theatre) and at 5 minutes. The etiquette of a professional theatre requires the actors to repeat the call and thank the stage manager or assistant, so as to let them know it has been heard e.g. "half hour, thank you".

See also beginners

ham

An "over the top" actor using exaggeration or declamatory style; generally a derogatory term.

hand props

Objects actually handled by actors on stage.

See props.

happening(s)

Confrontational improvised or unannounced performance events; sometimes street theatre where spectators could mistake dramatic action for real events. In contemporary times, a similar event might be a Flash Mob.

harlequin

Mischievous masked character in distinctive tight fitting spangled costume and, with Columbine, main figure in Harlequinade.

See also Commedia Dell'arte, Harlequinade

harlequinade

Forerunner of English pantomime, derived from *commedia*.

See also Commedia Dell'arte

harmartia

In Classical Greek tragedy a personal weakness that leads to a hero's downfall.

See Classical Greek Drama, fatal flaw

health

See Safety and Health/Occupational Health and Safety

heroic drama

Popular form of tragedy in Restoration England in which protagonists were larger-than-life and exaggerated performing spectacular deeds and professing grand passions.

high comedy

High comedy acting

Sophisticated comedy using wit and intellect, word play and sophisticated plots about characters from high levels of society. The focus of high comedy is inconsistent human behaviour and follies in society; often satiric purposes, high comedy can make comment on social values, mores and habits.

See also acting styles, comedy, drawing room comedy

history drama

Chronicle plays

History plays

Drama which deals with historic subjects most notably the history of royal or noble families such as the Tudors and Yorks in the cycle of histories written by Shakespeare.

See also chronicle plays, history plays, Shakespearean drama

history of drama

Drama and theatre have a long history across time, places and cultures.

The history of drama includes: key features of drama forms, styles, and conventions of other times and places. as well as our own times and places. Specific drama forms, styles, conventions, techniques and technologies relate to broader historical, social, political and economic issues. Artistic and aesthetic choices are made by drama artists in particular eras, and are related to key political and social ideas and concepts of that time. Drama and theatre impacts on social and cultural attitudes.

historical style

See style

historification

A convention favoured by Brecht, which uses historical events to comment on events of the present. The technique is used to *alienate* the audience from emotional identification and as such have greater didactic impact.

See also A-Effect/Alienation, Brechtian Drama, Epic Drama

hot seating

Drama teaching, learning and rehearsing strategy (or convention) where an assumed character is questioned in role by others who are out of role. Purpose is to deepen understanding of the character and build context.

See also improvisation, play building, process drama

hubris

Overbearing pride or arrogance displayed by characters in Classical Greek tragedy.

See Classical Greek drama

human behaviour in drama processes

See *cooperation/ ethics/ social customs/ teamwork*

human movement

Facial expression

Gesture

Movement (Physiology)

Posture (Acting)

The act of changing the position and placement in space of the face and body to express thoughts, ideas and emotions.

See also *creative movement, facial expression, gesture, movement (physiology), posture (acting)*

human situation

In Drama expression springs from human experience; dramatic action focuses on human situations, the set of circumstances of who, what, where, why and what's at stake.

See also *situation*

humour

comedies

humorous plays

Ability for people, situations, actions or objects to amuse other people, to make them laugh.

In drama humorous plays evoke a sense of amusement in audiences through comedy.

See also *comedy*

humours

The four humours of Medieval and Elizabethan times describe both physical conditions and also mental qualities and dispositions. Characters in drama were often described through their humours.

blood	sanguine
phlegm	phlegmatic; practical
choler (bile)	choleric; hotheaded
melancholy (black bile)	melancholic; sad; depressed

hybrid arts

An emerging classification of arts works which cross over the traditional boundaries of arts disciplines: e.g. dramatic texts made from a collaboration of improvising musicians, visual artists and actors.

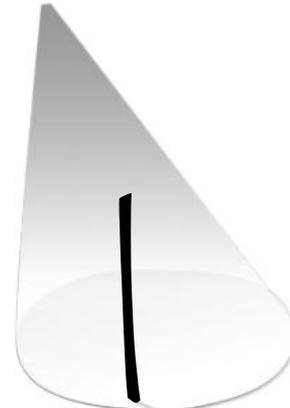
Most often hybrid arts use electronic media such as interactive multi-media.

hymn

Ode sung at festivals and services in praise of gods in all religions. Drama is said to have sprung from these hymns.

antiphon: singing using statement and response, two groups balancing contrasting ideas

chant: reciting words to music, generally on a single line of



identification

Drama and acting involve an actor and audience identifying with the situation(s) or character(s) - they enter a tacit contract or agreement (*a willing suspension of disbelief*).

At its heart, drama is a focus for the identification made by both the actors and the members of the audience; through the drama, they align themselves emotionally and spiritually with the dramatic situations and characters; in the safety of fiction, they share and experience the emotional and physical journey of the drama. They imaginatively identify and explore characters, situations and action that may not be possible in their own lives.

inside out acting

A term that references working from a psychological beginning place to discover and develop character and emotional connection to character. Stanislavski pioneered this approach to acting.

See also *outside in*

imagination

Make believe

Act of imagining, creating and visualizing ideas and concepts out of objects and thoughts, which are not present to the senses.

All stories come from the imagination of writers even when they are based on documentary or reality incidents because the imagination of the writer interprets the given.

See also *fiction*

immersive theatre

An emerging style of theatre where performance is treated like an art installation. The audience is free to wander the performance space following different performers and story threads or just exploring the space which is often highly detailed and expansive. Immersive theatre is highly individualised audience experience.

See *audience theory, interactive theatre*

impersonation

Act of pretending to be someone else, copying their mannerism and physical traits. Often used for comedic purposes. Mimicry.

See also *mimesis*

impressionism

Subjective creation of dramatic action through sensory responses rather than objectively representing reality; akin to the impressionist school of visual arts, impressionism attempts to suggest the surface appearance through mood, colour and lighting.

improvisation

Dramatic action that is spontaneously created by actors without a script; in improvisation actors use all their physical and mental capacities in response to what is offered by the situation, setting or other actors. Key concepts in improvisation: offer, accept, extend. In improvisation actors make offers, they provide an idea or stimulus for an improvisation. Effective improvisors take the offer, they accept it and then springboard from it by extending the improvisation through adding a new dimension or developing the original offer. Offer, accept and extend are counter to blocking in improvisation.

Improvisation may be

- In response to something going wrong or differently in performance (sometimes referred to as *ad lib*)
- An exercise in the development of characterization or dramatic action
- A rehearsal and workshop technique which is used to better understand dramatic action including imagined action outside the frame of a script.
- The basis of self-devised and group-devised drama where material initially made through spontaneous improvisation is reworked, shaped and refined.
- A style of improvised performance such as *commedia dell'arte*

See also *accept, ad libbing, blocking (improvisation), Commedia dell'arte, dramatic play, extend, hot seating, Forum Theatre, group devised dramas, playbuilding, Theatre of the Oppressed*

in the round

See *Theatre in the Round, Arena staging*

Indian drama

Indian theatre

The Indus Valley Civilisation (2700-1500 BC) was a sophisticated society incorporating music and dance and religious ideas in rituals that were passed from generation to generation through oral traditions.

The Aryians (1500-500 BC) who destroyed the Indus Valley Civilisation included brief dialogues in some of the hymns in the *vedas*, principal religious ideas. But there was little evidence of further elements of drama or theatre. Eventually, these *vedas* were recorded in *Veddic*, the parent language of Sanskrit.

The *Natyasastra* (200 BC-200 AD) comprehensively outlined principles of acting, theatre architecture, costume, make-up, props, dance, music, play structure, company management, audiences, drama competitions and dramaturgical theories of *rasa* (sentiments) and *bhava* (psychological states).

Sanskrit drama (100BC-1200AD) was a highly developed form using 9 *rasa* and 9 *bhava* and structures from 1 to 10 acts. Drama was performed in 3 types of playhouses: triangular, square and oblong. There were temple-based and social or community-based drama forms.

Folk dramas developed 1600-1800.

cavittu Natakam: mid 16th century, southern Indian Christian drama based on quasi-historical and mythological characters, vigorous masculine dance with strong stamping movements and contrasted with the refined, sophisticated, subtle gestures of Hindu forms such as *kathakali*

The *Natyasastra* divides dance into 3 groups:

- *natya* dance dramas telling a story
- *nritta* pure rhythmic dances
- *nriya* fusions of song and dance

Kathakali dance drama based on stories of the *Ramayana*

(16th century) with dialogue sung by reciters accompanied on rhythmic instruments while actors with elaborately painted faces, head gear and costumes, using gesture and movement.

nantanki - operative dance about historic heroes

ramalila and *krishnalila* - religious pageant drama

swang - secular buffoon plays

bhavai - medieval tales of chivalry involving dance, music and mime

terukoothu - street drama

yakshagana - dance drama

Playwrights and plays

The Mahabharata - an extended epic narrative - included the *Bhagavad Gita* a dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjuna and has continued to be enduring inspiration.

Two well known plays were

The Little Clay Cart social drama (*prakarana*) and

Shakuntala a romantic story (*Nataka*)

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) well known major modern playwright and Nobel Laureate

See also *Natyasastra, Sanskrit drama*

indigenous drama

Drama of indigenous or first peoples of a country/nation. Indigenous drama usually arises from a need to pass traditions, religion and histories from generation to generation.

See also *Aboriginal drama, Oceania drama, Maori drama*

information literacy

Overall ability to access, evaluate and use information from a variety of sources and in different life contexts. For the techniques involved in finding, processing and communicating information see *Information skills*.

intellectual property (IP) rights

An umbrella term for the specific legal rights of authors, playwrights, inventors, musicians, filmmakers, etc. have over what they create. IP includes copyright, patents, trademarks.

People working in drama have some specific IP rights; by the same token, they need to respect the IP rights of others.

See also *copyright*

interactive theatre

Interactive theatre challenges traditional conventions that separate actor/performance from audience/spectator. Often in site specific venues, the performance happens amidst the audience who may be involved as participants or, in some cases, called on to alter the action (see *Boal and Forum Theatre*).

See *immersive theatre*

interludes

Originally plays performed in Elizabethan times as an entertainment during banquets; in later times, interludes were short plays given between the acts of longer plays

International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)

Commonly used system of transcribing sounds of speech that is independent of any particular language. Used to help actors accurately reproduce dialects.

interpersonal skills

Life skills

Skills of interacting with other human beings. These skills are critical for drama and the theatre as all drama is a collaboration between actors, directors, designers, playwrights, audiences and many others.

interpret

interpretation

Discovering and making meaning.

In developing characterization and realizing dramatic texts, interpretation involves the particular emphases and points of view that are used to shape an individual and unique performance.

In arts criticism, interpreting involves assigning meaning(s) - particularly personal meaning(s) - to arts experiences.

See also script interpretation

Irish drama

Early Irish-Gaelic culture had no known distinctive drama forms but relied on epic, saga and lyric. It was not until the colonisation of Ireland by English culture and the subsequent struggle for an Irish identity that drama emerged as a driving force.

The establishment of the Irish Literary Theatre movement in 1897 and the translation of Irish heroic legend and peasant tales to the stage through writers such as Lady Gregory, Synge and Yeats proved to be a powerful catalyst to Irish drama and establishment of theatres such as The Abbey. Irish drama has been driven by a need to replace the caricature of the "stage Irish stock character" and a search to find poetic non-realistic theatre that restored primacy of feeling. It served political purposes and has often been the centre of controversy.

Irish drama is dominated by the "sovereignty of words", the capacity to use language with lyrical and poetic intent to shape and construct meaning: "we can make this country whatever we want to be by saying so"

In the 20th century, Irish drama could be characterised as realist drama in poetic transformation.

John Millington Synge (1871-1909) *Playboy of the Western World, Riders to the Sea*;

Sean O'Casey (1880-1964) *The Shadow of the Gunman, Juno and the Paycock, The Plough and the Stars*.

irony

Distance felt as an audience between appearance and reality, between what is said and what is meant.

See also Dramatic Irony

ISMs in drama

Theorists have sought to categorise different sorts of drama and theatre to better understand different approaches. Any such labels should be used with care and generalizations should be scrupulously avoided.

The following table summarises some of these approaches (in broad terms).

constructivism	anti-illusionary drama associated with futurism and cubism in visual arts, focused on theatricality over creating illusions of setting. Techniques included use of skeletal sets of metal and wood, stock platforms, rostra and steps, a stripped bare stage.
expressionism	focused on communicating subjective experience though with an emphasis on social conditions, materialism. Techniques included montage, episodic structure, focus on single person's perspective, universal imagery, often used declamatory language
futurism	avant-garde movement rejecting traditional drama and theatre focused on intermingling of performers and audience, confrontations and provocations (such as selling the same seat twice; having wet paint on seats), multi-media performance, anti-literary approaches, breaking down barriers between art forms. Techniques included simultaneous action, collage, brevity.
naturalism	scientifically based extension of realism deeply influenced by scientific writing, evolutionary theories, deterministic philosophies, the role of environment on character
realism	focused on presenting objective experience on stage in as value-free and non-judgmental ways as possible. Concentrated on "ordinary, everyday people" as protagonists, closely observed humanity, Mimics life selectively. Techniques included prose (rather than verse), subtext, cross-talk, daily existence (even the most trivial and ordinary).
surrealism	akin to expressionism in a focus on subjective experience but more focus on psychological aspects such as the unconscious, looking inward, dreams, etc.
symbolism	reaction against realist drama through a focus on emotional states and inner psychological realities. Techniques included short static plays focusing on interior life of characters and atmospheric effects rather than explicit dramatic action.

Italian drama

Renaissance Italy was a seed bed of modern European drama. Through its connections with classical worlds and cultures of Rome and Greece and the vitality of its courtly patronage of the Arts, Italian drama flowered and brought to fruition a revolution in staging conventions, scenic design and theatre buildings.

The significance of perspective in design and the ways reality is represented brought to drama illusions of depth and three-dimensionality that in turn led audiences to a move away from a free-form open stage. Design and structure became more important than episode and broad character. As such it sowed a seed of representational drama.

The humanist re-discovery of Greek and Roman culture and drama - *commedia erudite* - paralleled resurging interest in popular traditions such as *commedia dell'arte*.

Renaissance drama had enormous influence on Elizabethan and later English drama. The sway of Italian drama styles on French drama was marked during the 16th and 17th centuries though

developments in Italy itself limited. In the 19th century the *verisimo* movement showed the influence of realism but with a particular focus on regional subject matter and the social psychology of bourgeois life.

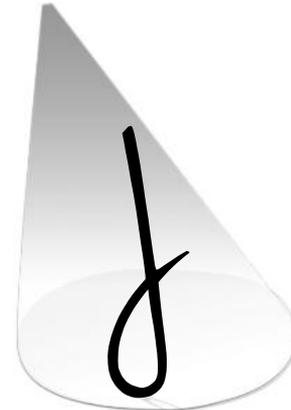
With the emergence of the modern Italian nation from a succession of loosely linked city states, has been a search for stability. In the 20th century there has been state intervention and support through the subsidy, the establishment of the *Accademia d'arte Drammatica* in Rome in 1935 as an actor training school and the setting up of *teatro stabile* or permanent companies.

Contemporary Italian drama ranges from political and social plays (by playwrights such as Dario Fo and Franca Rame) to frothy farces and entertainments.

See also *Commedia dell'arte*

Italian run

A rehearsal technique where the acting is done in an extreme way, i.e. really fast or really big, to generate energy or get performers out of a rut.



Jacobean drama

Named for James I who ruled from 1603 to 1625 – evolved from and enriched by Elizabethan drama, is characterized by a gradual shift from a “probing analysis of human condition” to entertainment, simplistic subject matter and theatrical contrivance.

See also *Elizabethan drama, English drama*

Japanese drama

Banraku/Bunraku

Kabuki

Kyogen

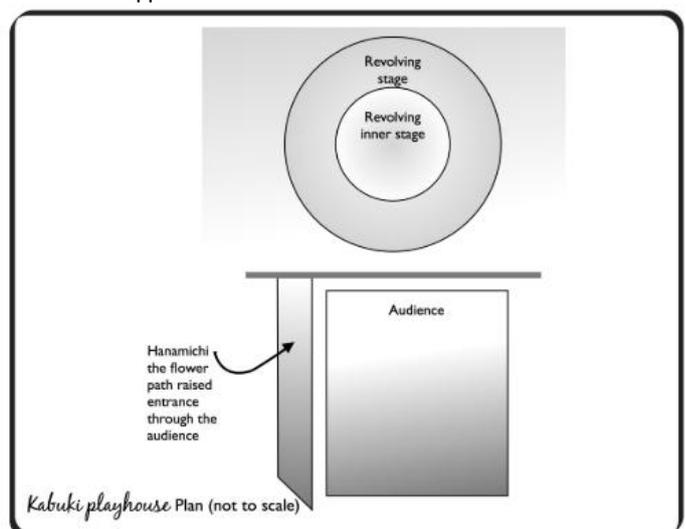
Noh theatre

Has a long and sophisticated history with evidence of musical instruments, masks, singing and dancing, folk dances and skits found as artifacts in the Yayoi period 350BC-250AD.

In the 6th century AD *Uzume* had the basic elements of all Japanese drama: the supernatural, the erotic and dance.

Banraku/Bunraku: doll theatre – intricately articulated puppets 5/8 adult size; audiences accepted the convention of each of the puppets being manipulated in full sight by three black clad puppeteers while the narration was provided by a storyteller or *jojuri*.

Kabuki: a popular form of drama in Japan depicting epics of history, tragedy farce and melodrama through spectacle; use of stylized make-up and wigs, ritualistic movement. In Kabuki theatre, actors mark intense moments by striking a pose with eyes crossed, chin, turned and big toe pointed skywards. This is called a *mie* pose and is accompanied by several beats on a *ki* a wooden clapper.

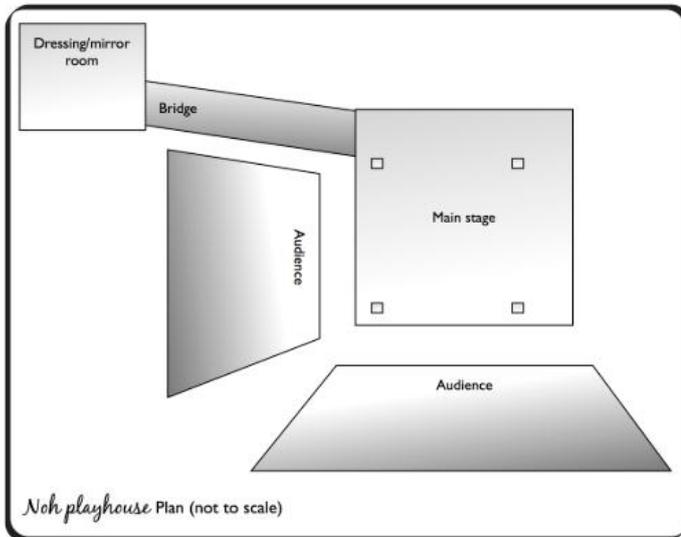
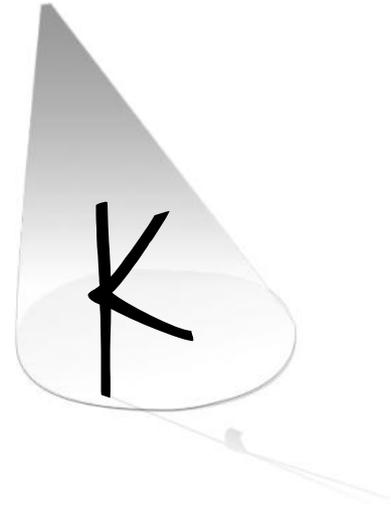


Kyogen: (literally translated *mad words*) were short farcical comedies dealing with a world of greed, drunkenness and coarse behaviour using stock characters; forerunners of kyogen were *sarugaken*, coarse vulgar mimes (monkey music).

Noh Theatre: (literally *highly skilled or accomplished*) is a most important form of Japanese theatre derived from religious ceremonies and focusing on five types of dramatic action:

- A play in praise of a god
- A play about a warrior hero
- A play about a woman (women's part played by male actors)
- A play about ghosts
- A play of warlike dancing that resolves peacefully into thanksgiving

Noh plays are highly stylized, use mask, lavish costumes, mime, mask and ritualized conventions.



jester(s)

Professional fool in medieval courts.

See also *clowns, fool*

Jesuit drama

Plays on political and moral themes, written and performed by students at Jesuit Colleges 16th to 18th Century; had marked influence on secular drama.

jig

Short musical farce presented as afterpiece in Elizabethan drama.

See also *Elizabethan Drama*

juxtaposition

When dramatic action holds up side by side different, generally contrasting, ideas or characters; the power of juxtaposition lies in its capacity to allow an audience to draw conclusions, to explore dramatic irony; juxtaposition is frequently more than the sum of the individual parts; juxtaposition uses contrast and dislocation to provoke fresh understanding and dramatic impact.

kabuki

See *Japanese drama*

Kenyan drama

Kenya has developed strong community based drama and theatre for development – Ngugi wa Thi ong'o

See also *African drama*

kkoktu kaksi

Traditional, humorous Korean puppet theatre featuring animals and humans.

See also *Korean drama, puppetry*

Korean drama

An elaborate, sophisticated drama with long traditions and origins in ritual and religion.

Silla period - 57BC-935AD: featured

Kommu: masked sword dance about the death of a young warrior

Muaemu: dance without masks

Ch'oyongmu: grotesque masked dance drama

Koryo period- 918-1392AD featured mainly puppet plays, acrobatic dances, but not a fully featured developed drama tradition.

Choson period – 1392-1910

P'ansori: one man operetta accompanied on the *pug*, double headed drum.

Kwangdae – actor – used three elements:

Sori – singing

Aniri – narration and dialogue

Ballim – acting restricted to emotional expression of joy.

Korean masked drama had two major forms

Purakje – village festival plays

Sanda-togam-gük – court plays that later came to be performed in theatres, included dance, singing, music, mime and exchange of repartee; used elaborate and colourful masks made of dried gourds or paper which were traditionally burned at the end of each performance. Plays were collaboratively developed and transmitted by oral tradition.

Kkoktu kaksi - traditional humorous Korean puppet theatre featuring animal and human characters.

Hahoe mask dance drama - originally had ritual significance but in recent times has mainly entertainment focus. Features various

allegorical characters represented by masks not dissimilar to the *commedia dell'arte* use of stock characters and masks. Focused on class and social distinctions in humorous ways.

korero paki

Traditional Maori light hearted story.

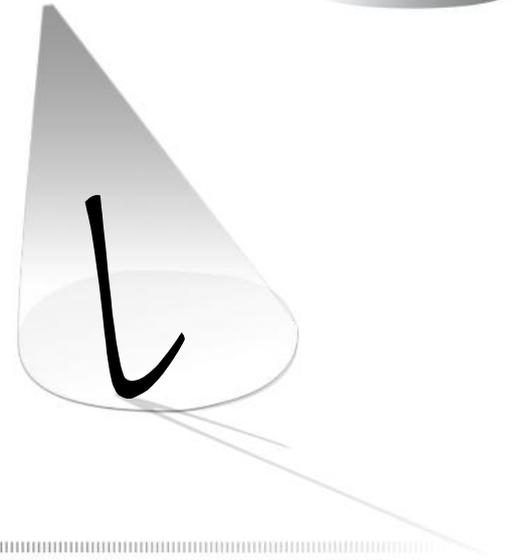
See also Maori drama, storytelling

kyogen

See Japanese drama

Kosky (Barrie Kosky)

Influential Australian born theatre and opera director. Eclectic in approach often borrowing from European Expressionism, Kosky works in a layered, excessive presentational style.



Laban

Dancer, choreographer and movement theoretician Rudolf Laban (1879-1953) developed a method and language for understanding, observing, describing and recording all forms of movement. This method is called the Laban Movement Analysis (LMA)

Laban theorized that all movement was defined by space (a continuum between direct/indirect), weight (a continuum between heavy/light), time (a continuum between quick/sustained) and flow or energy (a continuum between bound/free) and from these he developed eight effort actions which encompass all possibilities of human movement. Laban used the term *kinosphere* to describe the space around the performer, while *dynamosphere* is term to describe the "space in which our dynamic actions take place" or how are body moves through the *kinosphere* as defined by his effort actions.

Laban's Effort Actions

	Weight	Space	Time	Energy/ Flow
Punch	Heavy	Direct	Quick	Bound
Press	Heavy	Direct	Sustained	Bound
Slash	Heavy	Indirect	Quick	Bound
Wring	Heavy	Indirect	Sustained	Bound
Dab	Light	Direct	Quick	Free
Glide	Light	Direct	Sustained	Free
Flick	Light	Indirect	Quick	Free
Float	Light	Indirect	Sustained	Free

See also movement

language in drama

Drama is language rich. It uses language in heightened ways selectively to either create a sense of the world as it is (realistic and true to life) or the world as it could be (noble, high purposed and heroic).

Actors, directors, dramaturges, playwrights all work with language in crafting meaning as well as in communicating with each other and audiences.

Lecoq (Jacques Lecoq)

Jacques Lecoq (1921-1999) was a French acting teacher and theorist who developed a method of physical theatre training based around the principles of *le jeu* (playfulness), *complicité* (togetherness) and *disponibilité* (openness). Working with mask and improvisation to simplify and then amplify the physicality of the actor, Lecoq's work encourages actors to develop their own sense of play and discover new forms of creative expression.

LePage (Robert LePage)

Robert LePage (1957-) is a Canadian playwright, actor and director who founded Ex Machina, a multidisciplinary theatre company that utilises both performing arts and multimedia to discover and nurture new artistic forms. Working with everything from dance, opera, puppets, filmmaking and video art LePage's company aims to develop theatrical pieces that provide a place for communion between performers and audience.

levels

Creating various heights in the space through elevations or blocks on the stage or physically with the actors body to convey dramatic meaning. Movement up and down the vertical axis from low to high in space in which an actor moves.

Also refers to sound, the loudness or softness of an actor's voice and/or amplification.

lighting

LX

Use of artificial illumination to control mood, atmosphere and suggest location and time.

Stage lighting did not begin with electricity. Throughout the history of drama, there has been a series of transitions beginning with using natural light – sunlight, daylight and, in some cases, times of the day such as sunrise and sunset. As drama moved indoors, theatres used candles, oil lamps, gaslights and electricity. Each development impacted on how drama happened. For example, as more subtle lighting became available with electricity, the makeup used by actors changed and became subtler. Each change in lighting has resulted in changes in acting styles, scenery, costumes, makeup. Similarly, the nature of theatre spaces changed; e.g. the concept of a darkened auditorium is linked with the introduction of gas lighting in the 19th Century.

Current lighting technology enables sophisticated, subtle, atmospheric lighting used to great effect in creating dramatic action.

LX short for electrics; term used for stage lighting and electronic effects

See also dimmers, floodlights, stagecraft, son et lumiere, spotlights

lighting designer / lighting technician

Person/worker who sets up and controls the lighting for drama productions. Provides illumination, focus, mood and atmosphere through lighting technologies in a drama production.

Their jobs include:

rigging luminaires - hanging the lights above the performance space and focussing them to highlight certain areas as per the lighting design.

patching - plugging rigged lights into the lighting desk or dimmer racks

design - selection, modification, direction of light and angles; colour; intensity;

programming lighting boards; LX

limelight

An intense focus of light picking out one actor from the rest; origins of term came from early versions of follow spots; also used to indicate that a person is in the full focus of attention.

listening

Giving attention to sounds. Important in drama for the communication of the dramatic action to audiences.

literacy

Arts Literacy

Capacity to make and understand meaning usually through language but also through the concept of arts literacy which includes meaning-making through all the dimensions of the arts as well as through words.

little theatre

See community theatre

living newspaper

Documentary drama form, popularised during 1930s Depression, through the Federal Theatre Project (USA) though originated during the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. Presenting factual and political information, urging social action and reacting against naturalistic and realistic theatrical conventions in favour of direct *agit prop* and multi media approaches.

There are examples of contemporary Living Theatre projects on the Internet.

See also agit prop

low comedy acting

Physical rather than intellectual comedy; in Greek drama, *Old Comedy* is most often characterised as low comedy; low comedy typically features drunkenness, disputes and quarreling, infidelity, vulgarity, coarseness and ribaldry, gossip and character assassination, stock characters and slapstick and trickery.

See also acting styles, Classical Greek Theatre: Old Comedy, comedy

LX

Abbreviation for electrics/lighting in theatrical parlance.



magic if

Stanislavski

Technique for characterisation developed by Stanislavski based on actors asking: *what would I do if I were this character in this situation?*

make believe

Imagination

To pretend, imagine, form images and ideas in the mind.

See imagination

make up

Theatrical make-up

Cosmetics used by an actor on stage in the creation of a particular character; in recent times, there is a tendency to use less makeup in search of a more natural look.

See also masks

management skills and processes in drama and theatre

Drama is essentially a social activity that involves the management of performers, audiences, technologies, time and spaces according to the resources available.

stage management processes and project management, particularly in relation to meeting performance and production timelines, constructing sets, scheduling, working with the members of the production team.

ethical and legal management involves issues such as accepted codes of professional conduct and the rules and laws that relate to drama as arts practice, particularly with regards to drama production. Work and safety regulations, intellectual property and copyright, censorship law and regulations related to the use of language, images and subject matter and the importance of inclusive social and work practices.

front-of-house management include production management in sourcing and budgeting funds and materials to create a drama work, marketing to attract audiences, other front-of-house activities such as selling tickets, ushering audiences and safety procedures..

manager

focuses on the management of a performance event through the facilitation of management skills and processes.

Maori drama

Maori theatre

Drama of the indigenous Polynesian people of New Zealand.

See also New Zealand drama, Oceania drama, indigenous drama

marionettes

String puppets controlled from above by out of sight puppeteers.

See puppets

mark

Hitting the mark

Marking through a performance

Hitting the mark: when an actor moves to a pre-arranged place on the stage on given lines.

Marking through a performance: in rehearsal when an actor goes through the actions and lines but does not give a fully committed performance; most often used for technical rehearsals and to preserve the voice in opera rehearsals.

masks

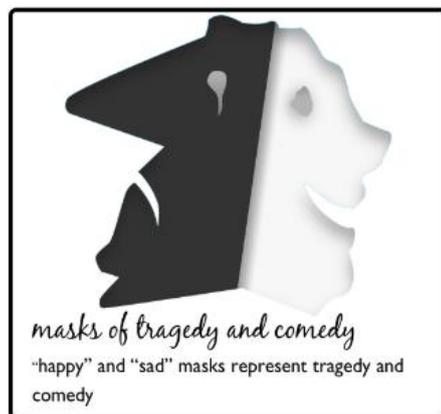
Representations of characters used to cover the face of an actor and to communicate age, gender and emotional states; masks are found in use across many cultures, times and places including Greek Theatre, *commedia dell'arte*, Noh Theatre, Chinese and Korean drama and in ritual.

Masks provide a way of changing perspective on dramatic action, providing audiences with a sense of distance from the action. Although generally in fixed expressions, masks allow audiences to read into the action a range of possible emotions and interpretations.

Masks are also used in carnival and disguise.

Makeup is an extension of mask.

See also Classical Greek drama, makeup, Noh theatre, Purakje



masks of tragedy and comedy

Traditional symbols of drama still frequently used. The so called "happy" and "sad" masks represent tragedy and comedy and are named for two of the muses: Thalia and Melpomene. In Greek mythology the muses were the nine daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne and were each identified with individual arts and sciences.

Calliope	(literally beautiful voice) muse of epic and heroic poetry
Melpomene	Muse of tragedy
Clio	Muse of history, inventor of historical poetry

Euterpe	Muse of Dionysian music; patroness of joy, pleasure and flute players
Erato	Muse of erotic poetry, represented by the lyre, and mime
Thalia	Muse of comedy and pastoral poetry; portrayed holding comic mask and shepherd's crook
Terpsichore	Muse of dancing, singing and dramatic chorus
Polyhymnia	Muse of lyric poetry, inventor of the lyre; representing harmony; presided over singing
Urania	Muse of Astronomy

masques

Originally a rustic and physical form of drama that developed from earlier mummer's plays; by the Renaissance the term had come to describe a form with elaborate staging, rapidly changing scenes, elaborately costumed and wiggled characters, music, dances, ornamented speech, pantomime, acrobats and clowns; this was also a courtly entertainment and there were occasions when professional actors were teamed with talented gentry.

Johnson and Inigo Jones are two names frequently attached to Elizabethan and Jacobean masques.

See also *anti masques*, *Elizabethan drama*, *Mummer's plays*

materials of drama

The fundamental materials of drama are the voice and body in a performance space.

matinee

Performance during afternoon; often (though not always) at reduced prices.

Medieval drama

Medieval theatre

Covers drama in the period of c975AD to c1550AD when religious drama was outlawed in many European countries. After the fall of the Roman Empire, drama was often repressed until it re-emerged through the inclusion of *tropes* dialogue inclusions in liturgical ceremonies. Concepts of this drama are obscure and its links to other forms of drama are almost exclusively through its use of dialogue. These *Quem queritis* dialogues of the Easter time prefigure the essentially religious nature of medieval theatre.

In additions to liturgical dramas, English medieval drama featured mystery plays (cycles), morality plays, pageants, miracle plays, passion plays and those based on the lives of saints. The mystery plays (staged by medieval guilds) covered the story from Creation to the Last Judgement. Morality such as *Everyman* used allegory to explore the struggle for a man's soul and a journey towards salvation. Rarely were there attributed authors and staging of these plays was often a civic responsibility shared amongst guilds and groups.

In European theatre similar influences and forms can be seen though in France there are many more surviving manuscripts and evidence. In Germany, *Fasnachtspiel* or Shrovetide dramas were significant forms and even today there are elements of drama in *Fasching* – pre-Lenten festivities – and at Oberammergau there has been an unbroken tradition of performing passion plays every ten years since 1633.

Major developments or shifts

The notable move in medieval drama was from the use of Latin to the vernacular or common language and also a recognition that drama was moving out of the control of the Church to secular interests.

Mansions: multiple settings for medieval drama placed around the walls of a church or churchyard which served as the playing space; e.g. *Heaven, Hell, the Sea of Galilee*; audience members moved with the action from mansion to mansion

Pageants: moveable stage or wagon on which a play scene was performed

Platea: general playing space

Tropes: verbal amplifications in liturgical ceremonies; introduced the idea of short dialogues and dramatic situation from which Medieval drama is said to have developed; the most extended of the known tropes was used at Easter and is based on the question **Quem queritis?** (Those on the way to the tomb of Christ are asked the question: where are you going?)

Some significant plays

Mystery plays or cycles: *Coventry, Newcastle, Norwich, York, Chester* cycles or fragments

Morality plays: *Everyman*

See also *Feast of Fools, Miracle plays, Morality plays, Mystery plays, Quem queritis*

meaning in drama

Meaning is what something signifies, the intended ideas that are communicated. Drama is a meaning making activity where the materials of body, voice and movement are used to communicate. Meanings are informed by contexts of societies, cultures and histories, and an understanding of how drama elements, materials, skills and processes are used.

Meisner (Sanford Meisner)

Meisner approach to acting

Sanford Meisner (1905-1997) developed a form of actor training – Meisner Technique – derived from Method acting and the Stanislavski tradition. Meisner believed that the seeds of the craft of acting is the reality of doing. His approach focused on acting that is rooted in the body of the actor responding authentically to the specific moment of the play. The Meisner technique is often described as 'living truthfully under imaginary circumstances'. Influenced other acting teachers such as David Mamet (see *Practical Aesthetics*).

melodrama

A form of drama originating in 19th Century Europe relying heavily on sensationalism and sentimentality. Closely related to the structure of tragedy, in melodrama there is a tendency to feature action more than motivation, stock characters and closed views of right and wrong.

Melodramatic acting styles display exaggeration, *bathos* rather than pathos and a larger than life quality.

Melodrama has elements of Romanticism – spectacular effects, intrigue, disguise, mistaken identity, sudden revelations – but uses prose rather than poetry and a focus on stock characters, the villain, the innocent maiden, etc.

Melodrama (as its name suggests) is distinctive in its use of music as a pointing and underpinning device: the "hurry" music to suggest rising tension, the use of chords to mark the entrance of the villain and motifs for other characters. This influence

continues into films particularly early silent movies.

See also *physical theatre*, *Grand Guignol*

memorising

The act of committing a text to memory so that an actor can deliver the story fully and accurately every performance. Almost always actors need to memorise their lines and moves in a play. They do so in a range of ways:

- learning the ideas and their interconnectedness the story of the lines;
- saying the lines aloud rather than in the head associating the line with the specific movements of the action;
- associating and remembering the feelings that the words and images create, not just the words; actioning the words (see *actioning*);
- seeing all of the lines in a scene as one whole with its beginning section, middle section, and concluding section and its dramatic progression;
- figuring out what the character is actually saying when he / she says what he/she says;
- using mnemonic devices to help remember lists, such as anagrams, rhymes, silly sentences, etc.;
- making a tape of the lines that can be listened to repeatedly.

metaphor

Figure of speech

A direct comparison – a figure of speech used in heightened language to evoke imaginative responses in audiences. e.g. “Harriet is a snake in the grass” is not a literal statement but an evocative comparison designed to create negative associations in the minds of audiences

See also *symbolism*

metaxis

Interplay between the fictitious and the actual; the duality of drama where participants imaginatively create a fictional role or situation but then behave as if the fiction is real.

Being “in the moment” and also simultaneously “being out of the moment” by analysing conscious metacognitive processes. Significant to processes of acting.

See also *acting*, *Diderot and paradox of the actor*, *playbuilding*, *process drama*

method acting

Stanislavski

The Method

System of acting derived from Stanislavski and popularised in USA by Group Theatre, Lee Strasberg, Stella Adler, Uta Hagan, Elia Kazan, Boleslavsky amongst others. There are various interpretations of method acting.

There is a focus on creating life-like realistic performances with actors drawing on their own emotions, memories and experiences. Based on the sense or emotional memory process, method acting focuses on actors fully immersing themselves in their characters in order to sense all of the experiences the character would sense.

Well suited to film and realistic acting, Method Acting has been highly popular and also highly criticised for over indulgent focus on internalised emotion and excess.

See also *Stanislavski*

Meyerhold

Meyerhold (1874-1940) was a highly influential theatrical innovator whose work began with the Moscow Art Theatre (alongside Nemirovich-Danchenko and Stanslavski). His work developed into a symbolist style of theatrical representation and Constructivism leaving behind realist drama styles.

Meyerhold developed a training system – *Biomechanics* – which used physically-focused training to forge connections between mind and body. This focus on actors’ psycho-physical instruments built strength, agility, coordination, flexibility, balance and endurance in service of communicating ideas. There was a focus on concentration, awareness of self and others, give and take, moment to moment life in a scene, relationships within space and own inner sense of movement.

See also *Stanislavski*

mime

Dumb show

Acting without words; using our physical resources to make dramatic texts.

There are several different historical styles and forms of mime

- primitive ritualistic mime - imitation of animal and natural life in ceremony
- epic style - unison movement as in Greek chorus
- slapstick and visual sight gags - *burla*, *lazzi*
- classical style - traditional white face: *pantomime blanche*, lyrical, formal mime style perfected by French mime Debureau in 19th century
- sentimental style - as used in Victorian melodrama
- cartoon style - exaggerated and caricatured effects

Configuration: using bodies to create objects and locations (sometimes the term *figuration* is used)

Focal point: in creating mime, we often create an imagined space; focal point involves communicating clearly to an audience, sense of place and space, where imagined objects are and directing an audience where to look

Raccourci: literally translated as foreshortening; refers to the distillation of movement, an economy of movement to essentials, focusing action into the least necessary movements; includes analysis of action, reduction to the most effective translation of the essentials to communicate ideas

Weight and resistance: effective mime is based on understanding that objects (real and imagined ones) have weight and that in handling them our bodies display resistance to this weight; natural forces (such as wind and water) also exert weight on bodies

Mime also uses elements of movement: shape, space, height, depth, energy, symbol.

Mime - as with all drama - relies on recognised principles of structure such as

- selection of most effective material
- juxtaposition and contrast
- accumulation and escalation for comic effect
- intensification of key actions or images
- pace, e.g. acceleration of activity for comic effect

Using narrative structures – linked episodes, exposition, development, climax and denouement

In some places mime is also called pantomime – not to be confused with the popular form or style of seaside and Christmas fare.

See also *physical theatre*

mimesis*acting*

Enactment through mimicry – the basis and foundation for acting but acting is something more than simple mimicry.

See also *acting*

Miracle plays*Saint's plays*

Ecclesiastical drama based on the lives of saints and the life of Christ.

See *Biblical drama, Medieval theatre, Mystery plays*

mise en scene

From the French for setting on stage, including all aspects of scenery, props, general physical presence of the production, overall setting, sense of place.

mission statement

A statement of purpose for a theatre company or for a particular piece of theatre that expresses why it is being created and what purpose it serves.

See also *thesis statement*

monodrama

A complete play that is an extended solo drama.

monologues*soliloquies, monodrama*

Long solo speeches through which character is revealed or explored and dramatic action progressed; in monologue there is often no direct interaction with other characters. Monologues can be directed to the audience, another character or interior (voicing their inner thoughts).

See also *soliloquies, original solo performance*

mood

See *atmosphere, emotions, tone*

Morality plays

See *Medieval Theatre/Mystery plays*

motivation

Acting term used to articulate the conscious or subconscious reasons for a character's actions.

movement vocabulary

Students in drama work with movements of various kinds – facial expressions, gestures, whole body movements. Some movements relate to specific skills or situations – tap dancing, double take, etc.

A consistent approach to developing a movement vocabulary for students includes them understanding and using concepts of how bodies are shaped and how they move:

- Weight
- Space
- Time
- Effort/energy/flow

Weight can be considered on a sliding scale from heavy to light.

Heavy movements are closely connected to the ground, feel the full force of gravity and suggest seriousness, anger, determination or power. By contrast light movements are free from the ground, suggesting agility, nimbleness, gracefulness or delicacy and sensitivity.



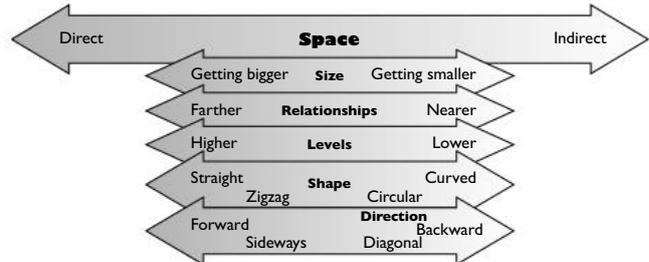
Space as a dimension of movement can be unpacked in several ways. Bodies can be stationary (non-locomotor) or moving through space (locomotor). When moving through space, movement can be on a continuum ranging from direct – towards a specific point and purpose – or indirect not following the straightest and shortest path. Movement through space can be at different levels – high/medium/low (and variations between these levels). The size of space used can vary from big to small. Relationships can be suggested by space: when bodies are located near to each other communicates a different dramatic meaning from when they are separated and apart.

(See proxemics)

When moving through space, the shape of movement can be varied from straight to curved, to circular to zigzag.

Finally, movement through space can be forward, backwards, sideways and diagonal – and variations of these ways of using space.

Time is an indication of how fast or slow the movement is.



Movements can range on a continuum from fast, quick or abrupt to slow, sustained or gradual. In thinking about how time is used in movement, an actor can vary from accelerating, getting faster to slowing down. The Italian musical term *accelerando* (often abbreviated *accel.*) is an indication to gradually increase the tempo. The other dimension of time is whether the movement is regular and repeating or natural and random.

The fourth dimension of movement is energy (sometimes referred to as effort or flow) which focuses on the qualities of



movement dynamics, ranging from bound energy to free energy. Bound energy is controlled and focused contrasting with free energy that is flowing and released, and can be thought of as letting the inside out and the outside in. Bound energy is precise, can be stopped at any moment, having rigid boundaries. Energy is not about how much movement there is but about its qualities.



These four dimensions of movement identified by Laban enable a more precise and detailed understanding of the movement vocabulary available to actor and director in drama.

See also *arts languages, Laban*

mugging

Pulling faces and over exaggerating in an effort to win laughs from an audience. Akin to gurning (making faces).

multidimensional characters

multi-dimensional characterisation

In Drama role and characters can be simple or multidimensional; multidimensional characters are complex and show well-developed understanding of physical, psychological and contextual aspects that change throughout the drama rather than being simple, narrowly focused and unchanging.

See also characterisation

multi-media art

Use of film, video, music and other analogue and digital art forms – in combination.

See hybrid arts

multiple set

More than one setting occupying the stage simultaneously.

See also set

Mummer's plays

English folk drama from 15th Century using broad humour, boasting, mock sword play; based on legend of St George; featured duels, a doctor, reviving the dead and often acknowledging the death and rebirth of the year, the vegetation myth.

European folk drama often marked and exotically costumed; underlying themes of death of old year and rebirth of the new year.

See also English drama, folk drama, masques

music hall

Popular 19th century Victorian entertainment made up of a succession of acts or items such as ballads, madrigals, magicians, popular songs, comics, slapstick and sight acts such as acrobats and dancers; the program and audience was controlled by the chairman who announced the acts and control the crowd with wit and humour; alcoholic beverages were served.

Music Hall was popular entertainment, often rowdy, raucous and social; it used melodrama and elements of popular entertainment such as magic, acrobatics, melodrama

See also music theatre/musical theatre, vaudeville

music theatre /musical theatre

Musical Opera Operetta Ballad opera

When music is fused with dramatic action to entertain or move an audience.

There are many different forms of music theatre and in recent years a crossing over of traditional borders.

Musicals are popular forms of stage entertainment that emerged from revue and burlesque shows; typically they use songs and dance as well as dramatic action to progress narrative; significant popular twentieth century form which developed sophistication and skill in drama, narrative and spectacle.

Opera is a form of drama in which all or most of the characters sing; music is the principal unifying element.

Operetta: light or comic opera; operetta is comic in style and

generally light-hearted entertainment; dialogue often spoken; romantic plots and action played out by romanticised characters.

Ballad Operas use popular and well-known songs interwoven into dramatic action.

See also cabaret, music hall, revue

Mystery plays

Miracle plays

Morality plays

Passion plays

Mystery plays are based on biblical stories or themes; as well as stories from the Old testament, they also focus on events connected with the birth, life, death and resurrection of Christ. When mystery plays were moved from inside the church to town squares, they developed into the cycle plays showing the story from creation to the last Judgement.

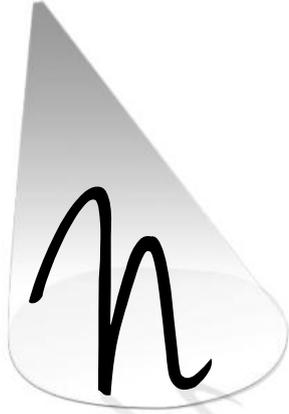
Morality plays are dramatized allegories such as *Everyman*, showing the battle for a man's soul being played out through personification of vices and virtues.

Miracle plays are dramatizations of stories of miracles and similar religious phenomena.

Passion plays are a German equivalent of English mystery plays though there is an emphasis on comic business and the use of devil masks and a focus on the events of Good Friday.

myth

Term that can be used to describe a range of tales and folk tales but is normally used for those stories that carry religious significance and collective or shared meaning for particular groups of people. Through myths, societies make sense of experiences such as creation, natural and unexplained phenomena and/or superior beings.



narration

Voice-over soundtrack of a narrative film or documentary, generally given by an actor or commentator who does not appear on screen. Sometimes in theatrical drama, narration is used to convey aspects of the drama not presented directly through dramatic action.

Linking dramatic action by storytelling.

Drama defines itself in action rather than through narration; compare the ways drama and prose fiction uses action, narration and authorial comment. They are linked yet distinctive forms of communication.

Narration is a limited external frame for drama, not a substitute. The limits of narration need to be clearly understood by students of drama; narration is not an adequate substitution for dramatic action.

Sometimes (as in *Verfremdungseffekt*) narration is used to give a sense of distance.

See also *storytelling*

narrative(s)

Story/stories

The art or process of telling a story.

linear narrative - has a beginning, middle and end, stories always begin at the beginning and end at the end.

non-linear narrative - a narrative in which plot points are shown to the audience out of chronological order. This includes plays that use flashback or flash forward, fragmenting time, but still giving audiences a sense of the journey that the characters are going on.

cyclical narrative - ends in the same way it began. Often used in absurd plays to convey a sense of helplessness, futility or inevitability.

episodic narrative - drama made up of a series of plots linked by character place and time. Each episode has a beginning middle and end.

fragmented narrative - where the unity and order (chronology) of a narrative is deliberately broken, rearranged or distorted e.g. through repetition of key moments, flashback/flash forward, etc.

See also *climactic structure, episodic structure*

naturalism (Naturalism)

A commitment to presenting drama as realistically as possible with a careful attention to detail; sometimes called "slice of life" (*tranche de vie*) drama, naturalism often explores how environment determines human nature. Closely related to

realism as a movement, naturalism rejected the artifice of tightly constructed plots and climaxes and used loosely episodic structures and concentrated on the sordid, the ugly, the lower class. By the beginning of the 20th century, naturalism had been absorbed into realism. Highly influential in development of psychologically based approaches to drama

Henri Becque (1837–1899) *The Vultures, The Women of Paris*,

Gerhart Hauptmann (1862-1946) *The Weavers*,

Maxim Gorki (1868-1936) *The Lower Depths*

See also *realism*

naturalistic style

To act in as realistic and natural a way as possible.

See also *Naturalism, realism*

Natyasastra

Written in Sanskrit between 500BC and 300AD by Bharatha, providing a comprehensive guide to the "Science of Theatre". Although not limited to drama and theatre, the *Natyasastra* provides advice on dramaturgy, including the origins of theatre, acting, costume, makeup, dance, music, play construction, audiences, rituals and architecture of theatres. Highly influential.

See also *Indian drama*

neoclassicism

Advocates a return to values and conventions of classical Greek drama and literature; ascribed importance to Aristotle's *Poetics*, unities. In practice neoclassicism had the power to be skillful and expressive but it was also for some playwrights and actors a rigid and formalised codification that stultified drama.

See also *Apollonian drama, Classical Greek drama, Classicism, French drama*

New Comedy

Major form of Greek drama (about 330-150BC); comedy of manners and the private lives of a leisured class; used stock characters that are seen also in Roman comedy and *commedia*; structure based on prologue and five acts with chorus used as entertaining interludes; generally thought to have no connection with the cult of Dionysus.

See also *Classical Greek Drama: Old Comedy*

New Zealand drama

New Zealand theatre

In common with many contemporary post-colonial societies, drama in New Zealand reflects the melding of indigenous traditions with European influences. In particular, the influence of dance dramas of the Maori people and European traditions (particularly the British) play a dominating role.

While developing a contemporary dramatic voice, there is also a sense of coming to terms with overshadowing influences of nearby neighbours such as Australia and the globalization of taste and iconography.

Nigerian drama

Nigeria has developed a vital indigenous drama, particularly since independence in 1960 and with affluence provided by oil revenues.

Traditional performance based on an oral tradition has played an important part in the development of modern drama: dance masquerades, music, festivals of storytelling have been included in an eclectic approach to drama.

Notable are the Yoruba traveling theatres which have proliferated since the first was established in 1945. They have provided a commercially-based popular theatre of vitality.

See also *African drama*

Noh plays (No plays)

Noh theatre

See *Japanese drama*

non-representational drama

Drama styles that move away from representing dramatic action realistically, accurately or true to life as it is experienced; presentational styles of drama.

See also *representational drama, presentational drama, abstraction*

noises off

Sound effects (SFX) produced live (i.e. not recorded) off stage.

nonverbal communication

Communication of meaning through the movement of the body without the use of verbal language.

See also *body language, communication, visual communication*

Northern European and Scandinavian Drama

The drama of Sweden, Norway and Denmark is linked not just by geographical closeness but also by shared politics and history and ebbing and flowing of political and language dominance. Medieval drama reflected many of the trends of other European places through the inclusion of liturgical *tropes* inserted in religious ceremonies. Drama of these countries reflected the cross currents of European influences such as neoclassicism, romanticism and eventually realism. Over time, the support for drama from the royal courts was important. This established a pattern of state support and subsidy that has been continued into the 20th century.

Experimentation and vigour, political and social commitment have been the hallmarks of Scandinavian drama; education has also played a role in the recent development of drama.

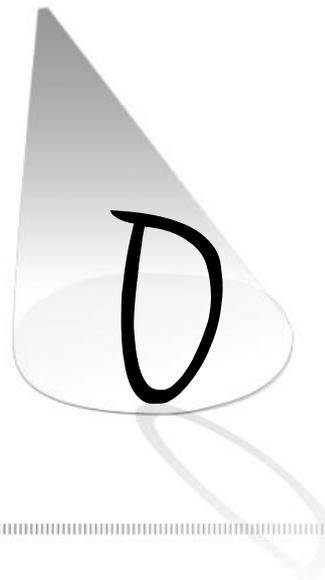
Two playwrights of significance in the development of Western European drama are:

Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906) had a profound influence on raising the status of drama in the 19th century and re-shaping it well into the 20th century. Norwegian by birth, Ibsen's commitment to realist drama sometimes obscures the breadth of his work. Early plays reflect Romanticism and neoclassical trends and he also wrote verse drama and comedies. In mid career, Ibsen's writing saw a move from verse to prose, to using contemporary settings and to focusing on social issues and the exploration of character within a realistic frame of reference. Influenced by Scribe and the wave of realist writing sweeping Europe, but developing it beyond these models, Ibsen wrote with subtlety and power that influenced generations of writers since. In these plays, Ibsen explored psychological conflict and characters caught in tension between the possible and guilt for the impossible. Often his plays are seen as driven by social issues, but they reach beyond the particular to touch the universal.

August Strindberg (1849-1912), Swedish playwright and artist, wrote plays of diversity and imagination exploring three key fields: psychological reality, history and dreams.

notes

The feedback given by the director and/or stage manager to the actors and crew after a rehearsal or performance



object play

Imaginative play with objects such as toys, puppets, dolls, masks.

See also *puppets*

objective

The goal to which dramatic action or character is headed in a particular scene or section of a scene; everything said or done contributes to the objective.

See *Stanislavski*

occupational health and safety

Working in drama is potentially dangerous in physical and psychological terms; students and teachers of drama have particular responsibilities for seeing that

- work practices are safe e.g. electrical equipment is handled with care and attention to avoiding accidents.
- emotional health, well being and stability are maintained; for example, many actors in training reach into their psychological and emotional reserves to explore characterisation and, as such, take risks; careful personal monitoring of these psychological explorations is the responsibility of both students and teachers.

occupations and careers in drama and theatre

- Actors
- Backstage/production managers
- Directors (Performing arts)
- Dramatists
- Dramaturges
- Lighting technicians
- Performers
- Producers
- Sound technicians
- Stage managers
- Stage set designers
- Stagehands
- Theatre managers
- Front of House staff
- Ushers

Oceania drama

Oceania loosely describes three main groupings: Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia; Oceania drama is characterised by music, dance, poetry and improvised comic skits in a context of festivals, life cycle rituals and feasts.

Melanesia: features performances in music, dance, clowning and dance mimes based on hunting generally from the perspectives of the prey; masks of wood, gourd or bark cloths;

often involve large groups or whole communities and a blurring of distinctions between audience and enactors. In modern drama, there are signs of a political theatre emerging from colonial limits.

Micronesia: a limited drama based on impersonation of creatures and birds, possession and decorative dances.

Polynesia: focus on music and dance with use of hands and arms in an elaborate gestural language (e.g. hula dancing); the dancer as storyteller rather than a taking on of roles; interludes of short, sometimes satiric, skits using improvised dialogue on pre-set themes; performances reaffirm social structure such as place in society. In Tahiti, a guild of performers, worshippers of Oro, god of fertility, used dance chant to enact serious myths; outlawed by Christian missionaries for explicit nature of dances and social practices. Influences of religion and missionaries can be seen in twentieth century drama, but there are signs of emerging political, social commentary and folk drama traditions.

off stage space

The spaces that are relevant to a story but are never actually seen on stage. For instance, in Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* many references are made to the Cherry Orchard on the estate, but no scenes that are written actually occur there. Not to be confused with backstage spaces.

Old Comedy

See *Classical Greek Drama*

opera

Drama that is entirely sung: elaborate, large in scale and (generally) traditional in form.

Aria- song, generally of moment of high drama.

Recitative- sung dialogue.

opera bouffe

Comic opera, light heartedly including many of the elements of low comedy such as stock characters, slapstick, comic action and business.

operetta

By contrast with opera, operetta is light hearted and comic; in operetta, songs and scenes of dialogue are interwoven with dance. Generally romantic in nature and almost inevitably resulting in a happy ending, operetta is a highly entertaining and popular form. It is often seen as the forerunner to the modern musical.

one-act plays

Short plays in one act.

oral communication

Communicating through the use of the voice, the making of sounds and the use of language.

See also *communication, voice/vocal dynamics*

oral tradition

Not all societies or cultures are based on written transmissions of key ideas, stories, myths and values; many use oral and spoken ways of passing on cultural identity; the importance of storytelling is paramount in these societies and cultures. Folk drama, rituals and stories often have to be transmitted from one generation to another using oral traditions.

original solo performance

A monodrama, conceived, written, developed, rehearsed and performed by one person. A complete play usually within a short performance time (sometimes specified in examinations) with exposition, developing dramatic tension, rising climax and denouement that provides a sense of a character journey, showing the character at a moment of crisis or turning point.

An original solo performance may be:

- a speech with another or imagined character (even though the other character does not physically appear on stage as it is a monodrama); it is important that the actor shows a clear sense of who the character is speaking to, where and what are the given circumstances of the situation, the relationships, what's at stake (tension) and how the character changes during the action (or else it becomes a flat and not rounded character)
- a soliloquy – an interior monologue which reveals to the audience the thoughts, emotions and experiences of the character; in a soliloquy the actor needs to reveal the workings of thought, the given circumstances of situation, relationships and the moments of personal insight and development

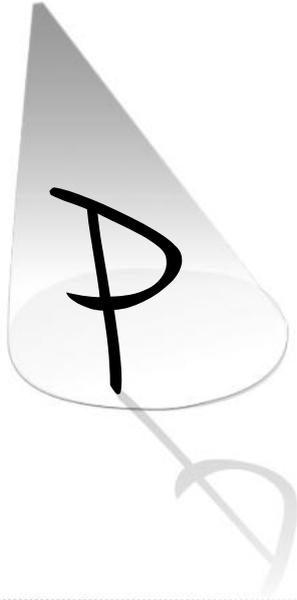
Original solo performances have dramatic action – enactment, role/character and application of dramatic form. They use the principles of story/narrative but are more than storytelling.

See also *monologue, soliloquy, storytelling*

outside in

Working from a physical start point to reveal character and emotion as opposed to a psychological start point. Meyerhold and Grotowski developed techniques that work in this way.

See also *inside out*



Pacific Islander theatre

See *Oceania drama*

pageants

Public entertainment, generally outdoors, depicting historical scenes. Often contains a procession with brightly coloured costumes.

pantomime

Traditional (usually) Christmas entertainment using extravagant effects to tell familiar fairy stories such as Cinderella; popular songs, well-known actors, topical jokes and the use of dance are some of the features. Traditional *pantos* use role reversals with the role of the Principle Boy being played by a girl and the Dame being played by a man. Pantomime uses many of the styles and jokes of vaudeville, music hall and spectacle. Pantomime also has long traditions in *commedia* and incorporated characters such as Harlequin and elements of mythology before being transformed into current formats.

In some parts of the world, pantomime is (confusingly) used to describe mime.

parody

Using the style markers and features of another playwright or style to imitate and mock the original.

Passion plays

See *Mystery plays*

pastiche

A patching together of songs, scenes, sketches and parodies to make a light hearted entertainment; sometimes used as a derogatory term in drama criticism to imply that a dramatic text is a collection of other people's best ideas and scenes.

pastoral

Drama idealising country life, e.g. parts of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*.

patent theatres

The two London theatres – Drury Lane and Covent Garden – granted Letters Patent or royal approval by Charles II in 1662 as part of the revival of theatre following the closure of theatres during the Commonwealth under Cromwell and the Puritans.

See also *Restoration drama*

patter

Running talk of comedians and music theatre. Stand up comics often use patter as too does the Chairman in a Victorian Music Hall.

performance

Broad term for presentations of artistic works to an audience. Performance includes drama and theatre and dramatic presentations of non dramatic materials such as Readers Theatre, Chamber Theatre. It also refers to a wide range of other ways of producing and presenting a show for an audience: music (opera, symphony, concerto, choral, etc.), dance (classical, modern, jazz, hiphop, folk, etc.), media (radio, talkback, games shows, films, etc.), writing (storytelling, autobiography, performance writing, etc.), circus (acrobatics, juggling, etc.), technology, indigenous performance and other aspects of life such as politics, legal trials and pleadings, oratory and rhetoric. Richard Schechner has outlined seven functions of performance:

- To entertain
- To make something that is beautiful
- To mark or change identity
- To make or foster community
- To heal
- To teach, persuade or convince
- To deal with the sacred and/or the demonic

See also *performers, Presentational drama, Representational drama*

performance art

Where elements of drama are used as the medium for the presentation of ideas by visual and other artists in the creation of an artistic artifact that has transience as opposed to the permanence of an artifact such as a painting or sculpture.

See also *hybrid arts, multimedia art*

performance studies

Performance Studies includes drama and theatre but also the whole extended field of aesthetic, social and everyday performance across a range of cultural and historical contexts including the performative dimensions of play, games, rituals, ceremonies, sport, politics, secularity and the law. Performance studies are interdisciplinary. Includes aspects of social anthropology, psychology, semiotics, the performing arts, anthropology, sociology, literary theory and other disciplines extending beyond the traditional limits of conservatory based training. Performance studies recognise that societies and cultures are often most fully expressive in their performances. The connection with drama and theatre is seen in its links with oral interpretation and the performative nature of language in other forms of aesthetic communication such as storytelling, movement and dance, social greetings, displays of emotion, jokes and everyday conversations.

See also *avant garde*

performers

People who present drama, dance, or music for an audience.

See also *occupations in drama and theatre, actor, comedian*

performing arts

Broad term for a related family of performance activities.

Includes:

- Acrobatics
- Audiences
- Auditioning
- Casting
- Characters
- Circuses
- Directing (Performing arts)
- Encores
- Freeze frames
- Improvisation
- Interludes
- Performances
- Performers
- Plots
- Producers (Performing arts)
- Production (Performing arts)
- Rehearsal
- Theatre
- Timing
- Comedy
- Radio
- Television

performing arts industries

Creative industries

Collective term for the employment and economic contributions made by the performing and other arts; a significant aspect of the rise of the Information Economy (linking technology and changing focus of society and employment) and Conceptual Age (the rise of significance of creativity, innovation and imagination).

performance preparation process

The act of warming up the body and voice, putting on make-up and costume and preparing mentally before a performance. Normally happens in the dressing room and/or green room.

The run crew and stage manager also have a series of tasks they must complete before a show depending on particular production needs.

See also warm up, centering

performance art

Mid Twentieth century reinterpretation of dramatic events; usually combinations of multi-media art forms.

See happenings.

performance spaces

See spaces of performance

period costume

Costumes based on a specific historical period relevant to the drama being performed.; designed to give a sense of specific time, place and context.

performing rights

License to perform material that is protected by copyright.

See also copyright, Intellectual Property (IP) Rights, royalties

physical approaches to preparing for performance and rehearsing

In contrast to intellectual, imaginative and cognitive approaches to rehearsal, physical approaches focus on actors finding the ways a character moves, uses facial expression and gesture, space and how characters interact (proxemics). It is important to note that in some theories of acting, these physical dimensions are psychophysical – in other words the external action is an indicator of an emotional or thought process and therefore the physical and what happens in the head of an actor are inextricably linked.

physical theatre

Mime, movement, gesture, movement based forms such as circus, slapstick, etc. shaped as dramatic texts.

Dramatic storytelling primarily through physical means (such as movement) rather than or combined with spoken text. Physical theatre is usually inter-disciplinary in form; challenges tradition and convention particularly in use of staging; encourages audience interaction, and is often devised rather than scripted.

See also circuses, clowning, Commedia dell'arte, melodrama, mime, slapstick

physical theatre approaches

Influential drama practices that have been used to shape drama. Often used in devised and improvised drama but also explored in text-based drama. Through a focus on physicalising symbolic movement as a way of making visible psychological and emotional states, these approaches provided a directly embodied drama experience. Important examples can be found in the work of Jacques Lecoq, Steven Berkoff, Mary Overlie, Anne Bogart (Viewpoints), Zen Zen Zo.

picaresque drama

Drama or narratives focused on a wandering roguish character involved in a succession of loosely-connected episodes.

Pinteresque drama

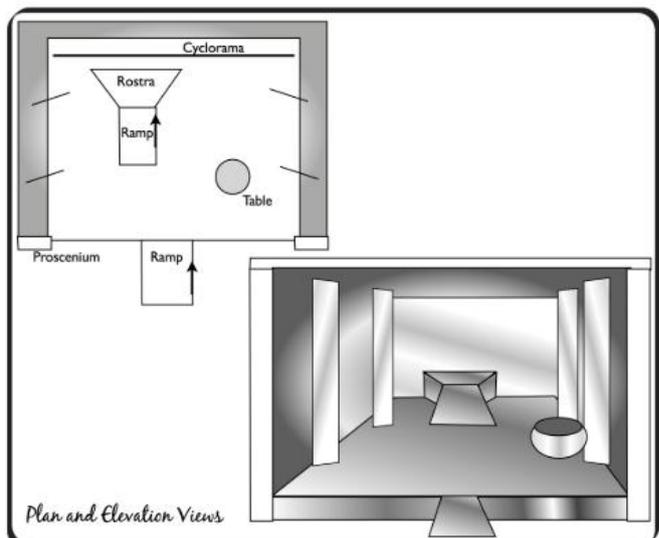
In the style of plays by Harold Pinter; oblique or repetitive dialogue interspersed with long pauses; menacing, loaded with implied meaning.

plan

floor plan

The stage design seen from above; drawn to scale.

See elevation



Plan and Elevation Views

play

Recreation

Learning through play (the *Play Way*).

A term for a drama performance.

Spontaneous activity and exploration taking many different forms

See also *finger plays, games*

playbuilding

Creation of new dramatic texts through improvisation, process drama and group devised drama. Collaborative original drama making.

See also *devised drama, dramatic play, improvisation, metaxis, play, process drama*

play reading

Where a play is performed for audiences though reading aloud rather than giving a memorised enacted rendition; usually, play readings have little movement, staging, lighting and costuming. The focus is on the vocal performance.

play script(s)

Printed version(s) of a stage play including the words to be spoken (dialogue) and also the technical and other directions (stage directions).

play within a play

A theatrical device or convention where within the action of the play, another play (or scene) is performed by the actors; notably in *Hamlet* there is a play within a play that depicts the murder of a former king, Hamlet's father, used to trap an admission of regicide from Hamlet's uncle, Claudius. The final act of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* features a play within a play.

playing space

Area on a stage, or performing space, where the dramatic action is performed.

See also *stage*

playmaking

Umbrella term for developing plays, often from improvisation but also including script interpretation and scripted drama. Often used for education purposes and youth theatre.

See also *drama learning, youth theatre*

plays

Dramatic texts in script and performance.

playwrights/playwrighting

sometimes spelt *playwrite* and *playwriting*

Literally means the person who "works with plays", whose work is to craft words and dramatic action. Playwrights provide written plans of the action and dialogue in a drama event. This may be written prior to a rehearsal or as a record of play building processes.

In some traditions of drama, there is a writer or team of writers who prepare a detailed script of action and dialogue; the playwright establishes themes explored, dramatic action and characterisation.

Other traditions rely less on the playwright and more on

the initiating and shaping role of the actors, directors or improvisation.

See also *dramatists, scriptwriting*

plot

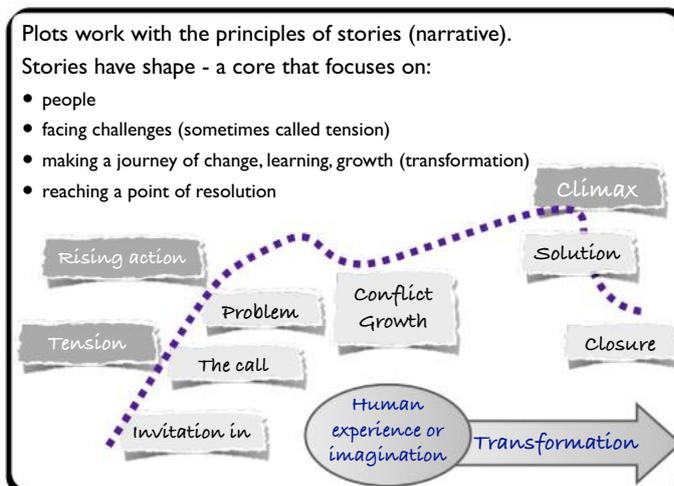
The events of a play. Arrangement of dramatic action to form a cohesive whole; in Aristotelian drama, structuring of a succession of inter-related scenes to manipulate dramatic impact and elicit responses from an audience. The concept of unity of action argues that each action or scene builds on previous ones and initiates those that follow rather than stand alone.

In traditional plots, there are a series of characters involved in dramatic action that is presented through exposition to pose a pattern of entanglement, rising tension, a series of crises leading to a climax and then a resolution.

Many plots have been simplistically expressed: e.g. *boy meets girl, boy loses girl, boy wins girl back*.

More complex plots unfold according to familiar formula.

Formula plots have all or most of the following elements chained together in cause and effect structures.



Initiating event Exposition	The protagonist of a play is introduced and we meet the situation. Other important characters particularly antagonist introduced and the back story is provided. The antagonist may be another character or it may be an obstacle to overcome (man vs man; man vs nature; man vs the Gods, etc)
Disturbance	The inciting event that upsets the protagonist's world and pushes her/him towards the dramatic action.
Point of attack Decision	The point where the protagonist makes a choice after the disturbance has pushed the protagonist to a moment of crisis. This decision defines what the play is about, the protagonist's ultimate goal or quest. It initiates the throughline of the play – the major thrust of the play. This is sometimes called the Major Dramatic Question – the question that propels the dramatic tension of the play.
Rising action through conflict, crises, complications	The protagonist now faces conflicts, crises and complications – obstacles to be overcome. there is a sense of rising tension

Dark moment of doubt, challenge	This is moment in a formula play where the protagonist faces a moment of failure and personal doubt; sometimes this is an external force opposing and sometimes this is a moment of personal doubt and crisis.
Enlightenment	This is the moment in a play when the protagonist recognises a moment of insight that will enable her/him to resolve the challenge and overcome personal doubts of the dark moment.
Climax	The point of greatest dramatic tension; the moment that the antagonist is defeated.
Denouement	The moment where the audience see the question resolved and understand the lessons learnt by the protagonist through the action

In recent times, other constructions of plots have been explored: non-linear, flashback, apparently random, overlapping and circular. Non formula plots tend to be more organic and episodic with less reliance on tight cause and effect; unpredictable.

A plot may also be a list of lighting or FX cues or the act of preparing these lists.

In traditional drama, particularly Aristotelian influenced drama, plots are a succession of causally linked scenes each (most frequently) with its own crisis or culminating conflict. Taken together, these parts of the drama build to a major climax. Each scene in the drama releases tension a little before building to the next scene.

See also *cause and effect, climactic structure, episodic structure*

political drama and theatre

protest drama and theatre

Where drama is used for political purposes such as proposing or changing points of view, criticising social conditions.

See also *agitprop theatre*

poor theatre

Term coined by Polish director Jerzy Grotowski to focus on the essentials of drama, to strip away the “extras” of traditional drama such as setting and costume.

portfolios

Collections of materials associated with a project e.g. images, sketches, notes, director’s briefings of actors, actor’s developmental notes, etc.

See *drama folios*

post modernism

Movement in the arts and drama – frequently avant-garde and experimental - that gives equal (or more) weighting of nonverbal codes, conventions and language with traditional verbal language approaches; post modernism is also built on a different dramatic action/audience relationship giving precedence to the interpretations and participation of audiences (as in reader response theories of literature) rather than the interpretation of playwrights, directors and actors.

Postmodernism challenges single interpretations – the concept of a Grand Narrative that provides one point of view or explanation. Meaning’s are individual and relative to the context of the person making the interpretation; there is no external set of values that determines meaning. As a consequence, Postmodernism is skeptical of institutions and established or

hegemonic ways of thinking and acting; agency and personal identity is valued over conformity and power structures are challenged.

See also *audience theory*

posture

Postures (Acting)

Positioning of a persons body when sitting or standing, which communicates mood, status and character.

Posture, particularly in the ways that actors hold or shape their spines, plays an important part in creating a character. For example, a character in a Chekhov play or a Restoration Comedy holds her/his body - and therefore moves - differently from a character in a contemporary Australian play. They sit in different ways. The contact they have with the ground is different (because their shoes are different and because of their posture). Therefore, for example, it is not possible to create most roles in Restoration comedy in bare feet or even in sneakers. Similarly, it is not possible to credibly sit as a character in a Chekhov play in a plastic school chair - the plastic school chair creates a different sense of spine or posture that is not appropriate to the truth of the role being created.

See also *alignment, gesture, human movement, non-verbal communication*

Practical Aesthetics

An approach to acting developed by David Mamet and William H. Macy as response to the Method, which they believed was a selfish way of acting. The technique was developed with the thought that anyone can act as long as they have bravery, will and common sense.

The technique breaks analysis into 4 steps:

1. What is the character literally doing in the scene? - knowing the given circumstances and why the playwright has written the scene
2. What does the character want the other character(s) to do? - knowing the subtext and discovering the desire of the character in the scene whether it is stated outright or subtly hinted at.
3. What is the essential nature of this? - What is the essential action of the character, which the actor will be pursuing in the scene. Examples of actions are beg for forgiveness, teach someone a lesson, get what’s rightfully mine, etc
4. The ‘As-if’ - similar to Stanislavski’s magic if, this step of the analysis is a tool where the actor imagines a situation in which they would play the action that they have found for the scene and uses this imagined event to understand physically the stakes of the scenes. Actions can’t be played fully unless the actor understands them physically, but the as-ifs are never brought on stage or performed.

pratfall

A humiliating action, generally used for comedic purposes. Sometimes a fall on to one’s buttocks is called a pratfall.

See also *comedy*

presentational drama

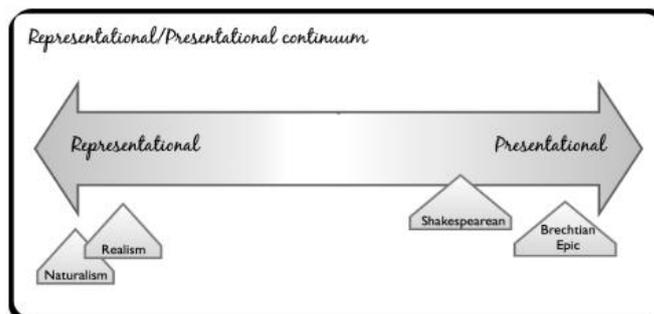
Style of dramatic performance in which actors speak directly to the audience through breaking realistic style conventions. Presentational drama is in contrast to representational drama in which actors seek to “represent” dramatic action through the convention of creating a world which the audience observe but are separate from.

In presentational styles, actors often speak directly to the audiences, breaking down conventions of realism/naturalism. They use commentary, Brechtian devices and seek to “present” their drama to an audience without any illusion.

In the 20th Century presentational approaches to performance have been highly influential.

Rather than seeing presentational drama as something separate from representational drama, it is important to see these two approaches as part of a continuum. Many successful plays move seamlessly between presentational and representational styles and modes. The table on the next page contrasts key elements of presentational representational approaches.

See also *Brechtian drama*



	Representational	Presentational
Acting	Actors represent real people as characters rather than as roles; they make dramatic action that is plausible, credible or typical of life as experienced; there may be a process of distillation or selection to heighten the dramatic meaning but truthfulness to human experience is maintained.	Actors present roles rather than characters (or characters that are also symbolic of position, status and politics); often movement and voice of actors are larger than life, symbolic or emblematic rather than a realistic representation or life.
Narrative	Events in plot could occur in everyday life; there is cause and effect that links what happens; each section builds on the next; there is a sense of setting the scene (exposition), rising tension, climax and denouement.	Events may or may not be taken from everyday life; plot is structured in a series of episodes; they may even be stand alone units; links are made through juxtaposition but are not necessarily linear or cause and effect sequences.
Characters	People you could meet in everyday life.	Characters who exist but could also have larger-than-life properties (e.g. a ghost, a vampire or the Devil) or exist in imagined contexts (e.g. a Fairy Queen, boys who can fly or animals who speak)
Scenery/ Costumes/ Properties	Realistic representations of place and what people wear and use (properties)	Suggestions or abstract representations of place and space (e.g. unit sets, open stage, expressionism, constructivism); costumes and properties can be emblematic or symbolic rather than representational (e.g. a seat for a king made from a toilet pedestal).
Time/Place	Time and place is real observing the unity of time and place; time may also be compressed or selective; sometimes flashbacks or flash forwards are used; place is limited to physical spaces, most often a limited sense of place; the place seems to be real and can be visited or seen.	Time is manipulated, distorted or manufactured; long periods of times can be contracted or expanded; place can be imagined, abstract, limitless.
Dialogue	A version of everyday speech - though often distilled and selected rather than a simple recording or documentary; dialect and accent can be used.	Heightened language such as verse, song, use of unusual dialect, speech patterns.
Audience/ actor relationships	Audiences are rarely acknowledged by actors in role; action is seen as if audience members are looking through an invisible fourth wall; audience members are invited into the world of the drama through processes of identification but also with aesthetic distance;	Actors often acknowledge the audience, inviting direct participation in the action (taking a personal, social or political position rather than being dispassionately distanced from the action); audience members engage directly with the world of the drama and work more immediately with processes of identification.

preview

Performances of a play before the official opening night.

problem plays

Term coined for plays with didactic purpose focused on resolution of social or moral issue; some of the plays of Shakespeare and George Bernard Shaw are described as problem plays.

process drama

Term coined by John O'Toole, Cecily O'Neill and others to describe contemporary dramatic explorations – most often in an educational setting – based on extended connected improvisations and structured through a sense of theatre and drama structures and traditions.

Initiated through a powerful pre-text process drama, like improvisation, creates a “dramatic elsewhere”, a fictional world but one that is inhabited for insights, interpretations and understanding of participants rather than audiences.

Process drama:

- Shares a commitment to imagined dramatic action
- Works without a written script (yet is based on a powerful pre-text)
- Uses improvisation but is more than isolated, improvised scenes
- Is shaped around key dramatic episodes that are composed and rehearsed as well as improvised
- Has episodic but structured organisation
- Takes place over time through a series of connected drama exploration
- Involves the whole class group
- Blurs distinctions between audience and participant/actor
- Is not undertaken for outside audience
- Has the teacher or leader function within the experience as playwright and participant
- Uses changing perspectives and shifting points of view to stimulate understanding for participants
- Moves inside and outside dramatic action
- Uses and connects with theatre elements and frames
- Works from both inside the drama and outside the drama structures and traditions
- Uses non-linear sense of plot and role, distancing, reflection

Key strategies include:

- Role taking and building
- Teacher in role/TiR
- Mantle of the expert
- Connecting with theatre frames and contexts

Some theatrical frames used in process drama:

Pre-text: the source or impulse for process drama; a reason for drama, a text before the event; initiating the drama; process drama proceeds without a written script but a text that is always “generated in action” which may be recalled, repeated, re-initiated, re-explored, enriched

Theatre structures: Drama and theatre texts share a range of shaping structures and conventions

- Ambivalence
- Anticipation
- Archetypes
- Concealment and disclosure
- Identification and projection
- Illusion
- Irony
- Madness

- Paradox
- The particular and the universal
- Play within a play
- Tension

See also *playbuilding*

processes (drama)

A process is a series of connected actions that work together, an established or systematic procedure, approach, method or practice. Key drama processes are improvising and interpreting scripted drama. Other drama processes involve acting, collaborating, directing, rehearsing, playwriting, dramaturgy, designing, stage management and front-of-house. New drama work is created by: actors, directors, stage managers and designers (costume, scenography (staging and set), sound and lighting) interacting collaboratively.

producer(s)

Person who arranges and manages the financial aspects of a production; in other times, particularly in Britain, the term producer was synonymous with director

production

theatrical production

A piece of theatre when considered in terms of its overall making and staging.

Overall term used for the creation and performance of a play. Production includes the work of actors, directors, dramaturges, scenographers and the production team in realising a drama production within particular performance spaces. It also includes the design and construction of costumes, makeup, props, sound, lighting, scenography and performance spaces communicate meaning in drama.

production concept

A unifying thematic idea that holds together a production. It may be an idea of a symbol that conveys overall tone, mood, atmosphere. For example, a production of Ibsen's *A Doll's House* is staged in an enlarged version of a child's doll house or a production of *Hamlet* is staged in a Lunatic Asylum.

program programme

A list of all the people who have worked on a show and any information relating to a production compiled for the benefit of the audience. Sometimes known as a playbill.

programming

The job of selecting plays to be performed in a season, usually done by a theatre company's Artistic Director(s) in consultation with the Board of Directors.

projection (voice)

Performing so that voice can be heard by audience and gesture seen and understood. Projection may also be used to include more than simply the loudness of the voice but also the use of the skills of characterisation so that the performance is communicated to an audience.

projection (technical)

Also can be used to describe using light to project an image onto a cyclorama, screen or set.

prologue

An introductory scene or speech that sets the mode, outlines the thesis or argument of a dramatic text; in Greek tragedy, the prologue was the dramatic action before the entrance of the chorus.

promenade staging

A style where there is no seating and the audience move to follow the action in the space with the actors.

promoting

Publicising drama for the purpose of attracting audiences.

See *Publicity*

prompt

prompting

To provide words to or assist an actor who has forgotten lines.

prompt book

The stage manager's copy of the script in which are included descriptions of cues, blocking, etc. as well as lines of dialogue and stage directions; used by the stage manager to control (or 'call') the performance. Also, naturally enough, used to provide prompts to actors who have dined (forgotten their lines).

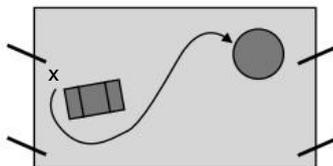
There is no exact science of notating a prompt book though there are some broadly used and understood symbols and approaches.

See also *stage manager*

Commonly used prompt book approaches

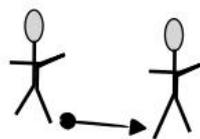
Floor plans with moves indicated

x crosses in front of sofa to table UL (Upstage Left)



Symbols for moves

Cross - move to another player



Cross above - move upstage of another player

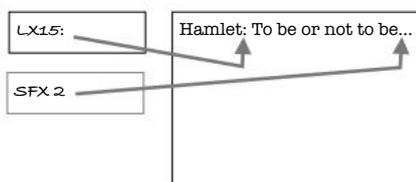


Cross below - move downstage of another player



Abbreviations

LX Lighting cue
SFX Sound cues



prompt corner

Prompt, PS and OP

In proscenium arch theatres the place where the prompt sits; in Britain, the prompt sits stage left, called *Prompt Side (PS)* and the other side of the acting space is called *Opposite Prompt (OP)*; in European theatres the prompt is often placed in a small semi-circular dome downstage centre.

properties/props

Stage props

Props, short for stage properties, are the things that are used by actors in drama.

Hand props are carried on-stage or handled by actors, e.g. fans, letters, glasses, etc.

Set or scene props are those that establish a setting, e.g. furniture, paintings, rugs, etc.

See also *stage props*

proscenium arch

proscenium theatres

Theatres where the audience view the action as though through a picture frame; the acting space is separated from the audience; in representational drama the proscenium arch is sometimes referred to as the "fourth wall"

prose

prose drama

Prose is writing or speech in continuous form where there is no breaking for the structure of poetry.

Prose drama is a non verse drama traditionally featuring characters of lower class and realistic speech.

protagonist

The first or leading character in a drama.

See also *Classical Greek drama*

protocol

Accepted codes of practice in theatre and drama; e.g. signing-in, the half-hour call, focus and silence backstage during performance, etc.

proxemics

Drawn from research on social behaviours, the study of spatial distances between individuals. In drama, proxemics is the varying degrees of personal and social space of characters in dramatic action indicating relationships, status, culture, environment and behaviour. The non verbal communication through positioning of characters through blocking/staging in the acting space can also be extended to include use of space in the audience.

See also *emotional space, social space, blocking/staging*

psychology in drama and theatre

Psychology is the scientific study of human behaviour, cognition and emotional states. As drama springs from human experience, it is an enactment of human psychology. The study of drama involves understanding psychology. Working in drama also involves the interpersonal and intra-personal aspects of human psychology. Aspects of psychology are evident in drama through, for example, concentration, exploration of emotions; use of creativity and imagination; working in teams and problem-solving.

Psychology as an emerging understanding of human behaviour was a key contributing factor to the rise of realism.

Psychological approaches to rehearsing involve actors and directors exploring the psychological understandings of human behaviour to understand the emotions and emotional journeys of characters which in turn inform movement and vocal choices the actor makes – the psychophysical signs of a character's experience. These approaches might include exploring emotional memory, focus and concentration exercises and/or collaborative workshopping using emotional stimuli.

psychophysical action

The actions of a character that reflect inner psychological impulses and driving forces.

See *Stanislavski*

publicity

promoting

Act of exposing a dramatic production to the public in order to attract an audience, thus ensuring revenue. Publicity includes posters, advertisements on television, radio and printed media, pamphlets; information is often also sent to schools. A publicist is often employed by production companies.

Punch and Judy

Puppet show presented in a collapsible booth (originally with striped canvas coverings). Was probably introduced to England from mainland Europe in the 17th Century.

Punch remains on stage the entire time and is controlled by the manipulator's right hand, while the left hand provides a series of characters including Punch's wife, Judy.

The puppeteer of Punch and Judy shows is known as The Professor.

See also *Commedia dell'arte*

puppetry

Puppet plays

Puppet theatres

Drama expressed through manipulation of inanimate objects; some common forms of puppetry include:

marionettes – three dimensional puppets supported and manipulated on strings

shadow puppets – where (often detailed) two dimensional images are projected onto a screen; popular form in south east Asian drama particularly the *Wayang Kulit* in Java

hand puppets – three dimensional puppets operated by hands inside them

rod puppets – three dimensional puppets manipulated by rods
banraku/bunraku – three dimensional puppets manipulated by three visible, but black clad, puppeteers

black theatre – manipulation of specially marked objects within black/ultra violet light

water puppetry – Vietnamese puppetry form where puppets perform on a stage of water manipulated under water on bamboo poles

See also *Banraku/Bunraku, Kkoktu kaksu, marionettes, Punch and Judy, shadow puppets*

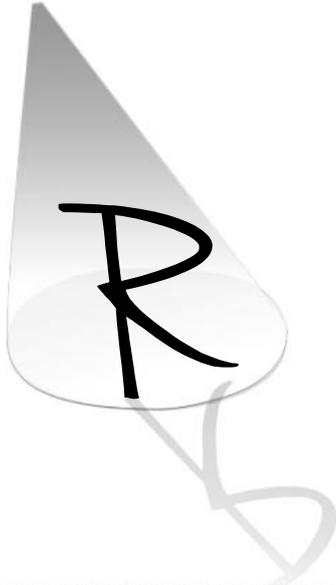
purakje

See *Korean drama, masked drama*



quem quaeritis

The *Quem queritis* dialogues of the Easter ritual in Medieval church prefigure the essentially religious nature of medieval theatre. They are based on the question **Quem queritis?** (Those on the way to the tomb of Christ are asked the question: where are you going?)



radio drama

Audio drama
Radio plays

Once popular drama form based on sound; has often been experimental, exploring and breaking the bounds of traditional drama forms.

radio scripts

Scripts written for performance on radio. Often include sound effects and music to be used in the drama.

raked stage

Where the playing space slopes upwards from front to back (hence the coining of the terms *down stage* and *upstage*); generally found in some older proscenium arch theatres and designed to improve the sightlines for audiences.

readers theatre

Staged reading

A performance where the dramatic script is read aloud rather than memorized; costumes and simple settings may or may not be used; focus and limited movement feature strongly; although the play has been rehearsed the actors are familiar with their lines but there is no attempt to pretend that they are not reading.

See also chamber theatre

realise

Performing drama brings it to 'life' and makes it 'real'.

Perceiving, discerning, understanding something: e.g. a character realises that she has been tricked

realism (Realism)

Realistic acting

An attempt to represent everyday life and people through drama; attention is given to detail in characterisation – physical and psychological – dialogue, costuming and setting. It grew from *naturalism* in drama and reflected a social climate focused on rejecting romantic ideals and focusing on the world as it is; this is paralleled in political moves, an interest in the influence of the environment on personality and the growing science of psychology.

Realist plays are tightly constructed (*piece bien faite*) with a

strong movement to a climax and denouement; scenes are casually linked, with action and character motivated and justified by environment and heredity; verse and drama are abandoned as too are the use of asides and soliloquies; dialogue approximated real speech- though heightened and compressed. In short, the aim of realism in drama is to truthfully present a picture of everyday life.

Realism is also a cultural movement that began in the mid Nineteenth century. The movement towards realism is associated with the realist school of fiction, writers such as Zola and Scribe, and had a powerful influence on Ibsen who, in turn, influenced Chekhov and Shaw and many American and other writers of the 20th century. Realism encouraged a new approach to acting through the work of Stanislavski, Michael Chekhov, Boleslavsky and the Method school of acting.

See also Naturalism, Representational drama

re-contextualised drama/re-interpreted drama

Taking a drama text, image, or idea from one context and placed in another, creating change or different meaning or meanings, e.g. re-interpreting *Romeo and Juliet* in a modern setting with cars, guns, televisions, etc.

reflection in and on drama

Drama Portfolios

Reflection is a process of considering carefully what has happened, previous actions, events or decisions and consequences particularly focusing on future actions and/or decisions. Reflection is a key element in drama; actors reflect on aspects of their rehearsal and performance to improve them; directors, designers and other creatives reflect on their choices and decisions.

There are (at least) three aspects of reflection:

- reflection **in** action – considering issues and responses as something is happening such as adjusting a performance according to the audience responses
- reflection **on** action – after the event looking back on what has happened e.g. director's notes to an actor after a performance
- reflection **for** action – using reflection for future action such as the next time a play is performed

See also drama folios

rehearsal

rehearsing

Process of systematic improvement through repetition and developing understanding of the text, characterisation and interpretation of drama. Through exploration and repetition actors, directors and technical crews work on dramatic text in preparation for performance. Different strategies and approaches to rehearsing and directing include use of planning, improvisation, systematic rehearsal, shaping and pacing and the combination of physical and psychological approaches to rehearsing

Rehearsals often encourage the development and extension of dramatic texts; improvisation can be used effectively during rehearsals to assist actors to develop characterisation and understanding of sub-text and contexts. The modern concept of rehearsing developed in the company of the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen in the later part of the 19th Century.

Top and tail rehearsal: during technical rehearsals when actors are asked to just perform the beginning and end of a scene or the parts that link to changes in lighting, sound and staging.

systematic rehearsal/systematic, corrective rehearsal processes: approaches to rehearsal that work consistently and progressively through interpreting a text – director and actors working collaboratively; each rehearsal provides for an incremental improvement and addressing of understanding or issues facing the team.

See also *dress rehearsal, technical rehearsal*

rehearsal blacks

Neutral costuming (usually, though not always, black in colour) designed for rehearsing; not specific period costume but suggestive of any period or style; sometimes used in workshop performances.

rehearsal report

The Stage Manager's report on the rehearsal for the whole company. Includes any issues that impact on running of the show: lighting, set, props, costume.

relationships

The ways in which two or more characters in drama are connected. Emotional, physical, family, sexual or other associations or connections between characters in drama that affect the depth, quality and the dynamics of connection between characters in drama.

See also *characterisation*

religious drama

Drama with religious themes focusing on people's beliefs and opinions about the nature, existence and worship of a deity or deities.

See also *ecclesiastical drama*

Renaissance drama and theatre

During the Renaissance, a period in European history from 14th to 16th Centuries, there was a religious and cultural move from the medieval period and a focusing on classical culture of Rome and Greece, beginnings of modern science and a turning out through geographical exploration. Drama saw a re-valuing of classical themes. In response to the architectural books of Vitruvius, drama looked again to temporary open air theatres in courtyards before moving to architecturally-designed indoor theatres of substance. The other theme of the times was the development of perspective scenery representations. The surge of interest in Italy resonated throughout Europe. The spirit of the Renaissance is infused through Shakespearean and Elizabethan drama.

representation

The communication of a character, place, idea, image or dramatic action by some other form or combination of visual and aural expression. Representations are based on shared social values and beliefs and rely on the shared languages of the arts. For example, a play set in the 18th Century is represented (re-presented) to a contemporary audience through actors taking on roles, costumes, sets, sound; what we are seeing is not the same experience as someone in that time period but a modern version that has been re-presented to us.

representational acting

Style of drama where actors seek to portray reality – experience as it is generally understood to have occurred.

See also *Chekhovian drama, Presentational drama, Realism*

responding to drama

One of the purposes of drama is to engage audiences and to promote responses. There are a range of responses such as *cartharis* - an emotional purging through the vicarious experience of someone else's experience - or laughter and entertainment. Sometimes these are not separate responses.

To respond, it is necessary to engage, to apply aesthetic understanding, to reflect (in the moment and after the event) and to make personal interpretations and informed judgments. Informed judgments rely on explicit critical frameworks that acknowledge subjective responses while also recognising a need for objective analysis and judgment.

See also *aesthetic understanding, audience, criticism and critics, reviewing drama*

Restoration drama and theatre

Refers to drama after the Restoration of the Monarchy in England (1660) and refers to a re-flourishing of theatre after the Puritan suppression of drama under the Commonwealth of Oliver Cromwell. The focus was on two threads:

- *Comedy of Manners* – an indecorous, witty challenging of moralists. Wycherley (1640-1716) *The Country Wife*, Congreve (1670-1729) *The Way of the World*
- *Neoclassical Tragedy* – formal verse drama based on classical models and subject matter with a bent towards satire, wit and conservative values, e.g. Dryden (1611-1700)

Restoration drama is generally characterised as a theatre of the court and the wealthy.

Eighteenth century drama was largely influenced by Restoration drama and included the "laughing comedies" of Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774) *She Stoops to Conquer* and Sheridan (1751-1816) *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal*.

Innovation in the theatre was led by actor manager David Garrick (1717-1779) who shaped changes in lighting, playwrighting, acting styles, theatre management and the training of actors.

Stylistic markers of this drama:

- The use of emblematic names – such as Mrs. Loveit, Lady Wishfort, Sir Fopling Flutter – and stock characters – the fop, gossip, elderly lecher, cuckold, etc.
- Witty dialogue featuring word play, puns, innuendo.
- Use of satire and social comment – though often diluted into entertaining situation and dramatic action.
- Performances included a variety of items including music, singing, dance interludes as well as full length plays – an entertainment package in which drama was one element of a social gathering and exchange.

Many key innovations included:

- Indoor purpose-built theatres with proscenium arch with two or three doors on each side, balconies.
- Footlights and the use of chandeliers of candles hung over the stage.
- Elaborate painted scenery, often engineered with shutters, flying machinery, etc.
- Women appearing as actors for the first time in English drama.

The power of drama as a social force was further recognised during this time with the introduction of the Licensing Act of 1737 which introduced censorship of drama by the Lord Chamberlain – as a system that was to last in England until the 1960s.

See also *English Drama/English Theatre, Comedy of manners*

revenge tragedies

Drama based on retribution, avenging wrongs derived from the Roman playwright Seneca and influential in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama (e.g. Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*); Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is an example of revenge tragedy (though interestingly, it also challenges many of the conventions of this form).

See also *Elizabethan drama*

review

Reviewing drama

Published comment on a performance; a critic's response to and description of the features of a performance.

A review may be, but is not always, a considered critical and aesthetic response to the drama presented.

See also *arts criticism, criticism*

revue

Collection of short linked dramatic fragments and skits.

See also *cabaret, skits*

rhetoric

Art and science of composing with words; the skill of orators; systematic use of words; particularly influenced classical and neoclassical, renaissance and Elizabethan playwrights and drama e.g. the use of repetition, accumulation, patterning based on repetition of three, five or seven.

rhetorical question

A question asked where the answer is obvious but is asked for emphasis and effect; frequently used in drama.

rhetorical devices in drama and theatre

Skills of voice and language to communicate and persuade.

See also *apostrophe (rhetorical devices), dialogue, flash forward, flashback, structure (rhetorical devices)*

rhyme

versification

Repetition of identical or closely similar sounds for emphasis, a sense of structure and impact.

See also *rhythm*

rigging

(Noun) System of ropes, cables or chains used in theatre to support and/or control lighting, sets.

(Verb) Systematically attaching and focusing lighting above the performance and auditorium spaces according to the lighting design; note occupational health and safety rules apply to rigging in theatres.

rising action

Action following the exposition leading up to the climax.

See *plot*

ritual

social customs

Established, prescribed conventional procedures, practices or codes; originally religious in nature but there are many examples of rituals in non-religious settings e.g. the habitual speeches that are made at farewells or graduations, ceremonies such as

ship-launching; there is also the dimension of the personal ritual, habitual or compulsive behaviours.

There is widespread speculation that drama developed from rituals – religious and secular – in early societies. Whether a clear cause and effect relationship between ritual and drama can be made is speculation. Elements of folk drama have clear relationships to ritual, as do some of the practices of many forms of drama. Ritual shares elements of drama, most notably enactment.

Elements of ritual drama include transformation, animal impersonation; the hobby horse in *Mummer's Plays*, animal chorus in Greek drama such as *The Birds* (414BC) and *The Frogs* (405BC).

Interest in the sociology of drama, the uses of drama in primitive and emerging societies and a search for the re-vitalising forces in drama has seen a twentieth century resurgence in ritual as a dramatic force.

Shaman: derived from ritual practice, the witch-doctor, medicine man, sorcerer, magician, cunning one; working through magic, dance, music and drama, with healing intent.

See also *ceremonies, symbolism*

role

Acting

The term that covers all aspects of creation, interpretation and sustaining of a character in dramatic action.

Some distinguish between:

Role taking – enactment of a situation in pre-determined ways, using types, stereotypes or external features

Role creating – spontaneous, imaginative responses to given circumstances that have unique qualities or characterisation.

In role, participants use hierarchy based on:

Dramatic playing – being oneself in a dramatic or make believe situation

Mantle of the expert – being oneself in a role but looking through particular given points of view

Roleplaying – participating through using attitudes, stereotypes or given and pre-determined points of view

Characterising – exploring the individual and the particular, clearly differentiated from being oneself and one's own personality

There is a clear move from a role with a sense of self to a character with a sense of otherness.

See also *character, stereotype, stock character*

role drama

Drama based on roleplaying; drama activities with the teacher in role leading the drama.

See also *process drama, teacher in role*

role play

Simulations, problem solving activities using role.

role playing

Acting out characteristics of type rather than character e.g. using the generalised stereotype or type role makers of, say, a nurse or policeman/woman as opposed to exploring the personality and psychology of a particular character who is a nurse or policeman/woman.

role reversal

Challenging character development by playing against expectation e.g. a stock character of the spinster aunt who enters riding a motor bike is clearly playing against our expectation of the stereotype

role scoring

See character profile, character scoring, given circumstances

Roman drama and theatre

Ludi Romani were festivals dating back to 6th Century BC but drama doesn't rate a mention until 240BC when comedy and tragedy were added, though they were very much influenced by Greek drama.

Actors showed great skill in gesture and rhetorical delivery; masks were worn in tragedy and comedy but not in mime.

The poet Horace (65-08BC) in *Ars Poetica* (24-20BC) stated that drama should both entertain and instruct – a concept that continues to influence drama.

Other entertainments included circus, gladiatorial contests, animal fights, even staged sea battles in specially flooded theatres. Large, permanent outdoor theatre structures seating thousands were built across the Roman empire.

- *Fabula atellana*: second century BC farces from Atella, based on stock characters and situations, forerunner for *commedia*
- *Fabula palliata*: translated from the Greek New Comedies
- *Fabula praetexta*: original Roman plays based on legend or historical events
- *Fabula togata*: Roman comedies popular from 150-50BC and based on realistic scenes and characters from the middle and lower classes
- *Pantomimus* masked performer in dumb shows, making stylised movements and gestures to musical accompaniment

Playwrights and plays

- Plautus (245-184BC) popular comic writer: *Amphitryon*, *The Rope*, *The Menaechmi*; robust farces featuring knockabout comedy and influenced by Greek New Comedy.
- Terence (c. 185-159BC): *The Eunuch*; comedies emphasizing character and language.
- Seneca (4BC-65AD) writer of tragedies that may have never been performed but which had a major influence on Renaissance drama; five act structure, forensic (argument) speeches, moral interests, scenes of horror and violence, use of theatrical conventions and single-minded heroes.

romantic comedy

Light hearted comedies based on characters falling in and out of love, jealousy and trickery.

Romanticism

Style emphasizing florid staging and exaggerated and larger-than-life characters involved in extreme situations; akin to romanticism in art and literature; as a style, it is often seen as reaction to rule-driven classicism and a contrast to realism.

Romanticism in drama is timeless but most often associated with early 19th century drama with loosely constructed plots centering on noble romantic heroes, idealized heroines, tragic love expressed through emotional and poetic excess, large casts and settings of painterly illusion. Mérimée (1803-1870) typified romantic drama as:

Curtain rises. Smile, suffer, weep, kill. He is killed. She is dead. Finis.

While there are links to melodrama – use of spectacular effects, intrigue, disguise, mistaken identity, sudden revelations – romanticism in drama is highly poetic and rich in characterisation.

In Romanticism form and content are often subordinated to freedom of expression, imagination and the assertion of individualism.

Edmund Rostrand (1868-1918) *Cyrano de Bergerac*

Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906) *Brand*, *Peer Gynt*

Romantics

A poetic and philosophical movement of the Enlightenment that emphasised human experience over scientific objectivity and logic; focused on instinct, intuition, emotion, subjectivity and nature.

rough theatre

A term coined by Peter Brook in *The Empty Space* to describe an essential element in all creativity – a sense of imperfection or incompleteness; in other words, the emphasis in rough theatre is on achieving the truth in the moment and not on elaborate or complicated effects, sets or devices.

See also Brook (Peter Brook)

royalties (royalty payment)

Fees paid to playwrights; can be a set fee or percentage of box office receipts; royalties are an acknowledgement of the intellectual property rights of playwrights and creators of drama.

See also *copyright*

run through

Rehearsal without interruption.

See also *rehearsal*

Russian Drama

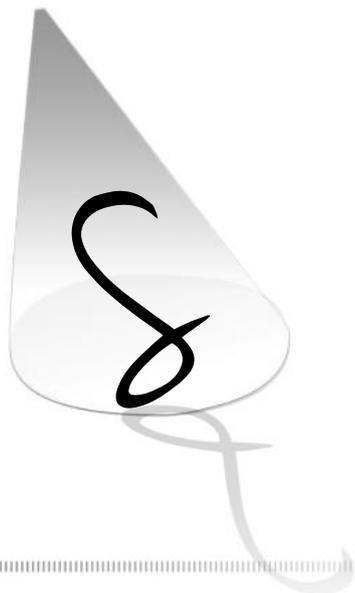
Drama of the Soviet Union

Was a relatively late development with the first recorded theatre company being established by Fyodor Volkov (c1729-1763). Activity centered on St Petersburg but also with a number of popular touring companies.

Serf theatres were established by wealthy landowners selecting and training serfs as performers; in 1797 there were 17 *serf theatres* in Moscow. As with much of Russian life – particularly court life – drama was influenced by French neo-classical models. 19th Century Russian theatre was characterised by censorship and control of ideas. The development of a distinctively Russian identity in drama came with the trend towards realism that shaped much of serious drama in the 19th century. Playwrights such as Turgenev (1818-1883), Chekhov (1860-1904), Gorki (1868-1936) and the development of the Moscow Arts Theatre under Stanislavski and Nimirovich-Danchenko significantly shaped Russian drama into this century. The focus of their work was a reaction against artificial styles of acting and the need to find approaches that were appropriate to the emerging realist playwrights.

Post 1917 Revolution Russian drama built on these traditions but also showed a tendency to ossify into a propagandist social realist mould that limited development.

See also *Chekhovian drama*, *Neo-classicism*, *Realism*



safety

Emotional and psychological safety

The wellbeing of actors and drama/theatre team members as they work in drama; in particular, recognition of the fictional nature of drama and the capacity to step in and out of the drama

Physical safety

all aspects of physical safety

See Health and occupational safety

saint's plays

See Miracle plays

Samoan theatre

See Oceania drama

sanda togam guk

See Korean drama

Sanskrit drama

Classical ancient Indian drama that is difficult to date though reflects a living tradition lasting at least until the 10th Century. Most significant source of information is the *Natyasastra* by Bharata which was an authoritative account of principles of Sanskrit drama that stands alongside Aristotle's *Poetics* in Western traditions. Sanskrit drama focused on sacred material; was performed by a priestly caste (class or group in society) on consecrated ground; required specialised dance, drama music and recitation skills and knowledge to perform it; had both educative and entertainment purpose.

See Indian drama, Natyasastra

satire

Use of irony, sarcasm and ridicule to expose or criticise folly or vice.

scene

act

Divisions of dramatic texts into sections.

In traditional drama, dramatic action was divided into a succession of inter-related scenes, and further shaped into sections called acts. In Aristotelian drama, the action of a play

was divided into five acts. Although these divisions have been applied to plays, it is not always possible to set such formal and formulaic limits to drama; frequently the structure of drama is more organic and less schematic.

Some directors and actors also further divide scenes into beats, naturally occurring sections which make a whole statement or point and which contribute to the overall impact of the scene.

See also act, plot

scenery

Setting of the dramatic action; may be simple or can be highly elaborate.

screen drama

Drama written and produced to be presented on a film or television screen or via Internet and other multi-media.

See also screenplays

screenplay

Scripts written for film and television.

See also screenwriter

screenwriter

Person who writes play scripts for films and television. For person who writes other scripts for films, television and radio use Scriptwriter.

See also film script, screenplay, scriptwriter, television script

scenographer scenography

Overall responsibility for designing and developing the physical and sensory environment and layout of a performance space for a drama event. Includes Stage design, digital set design, scenery/flats/entrances/exits/fixtures/furniture, combining of lighting, set, costume design and other elements to produce overall effects for the audience.

Design of the whole performance environment to create a sense of time/place/context/emotion. It incorporates the possibilities offered by contemporary technologies which can use audio-visual, film, digital, special effects, sound and light and sometimes smell (e.g. the smell of baked bread to suggest a close family home) as part of the design.

scrim

Open-mesh gauze curtain that can appear either translucent or opaque depending on the source of lighting; if the lighting is from behind the curtain, the scrim appears translucent; if from the front, the scrim appears opaque.

script

Means whereby a dramatic text is recorded or blueprinted for future performance.

There are a range of conventions used in setting out scripts:

- Use of italicised text to indicate stage directions
- Implying dramatic action through dialogue
- Sub-textual and contextual cues
- Abbreviation of detailed dramatic action and interpretation

See also acting edition

scripted drama

As opposed to devised drama, self-devised drama, scripted drama begins with an existing script (even though this may sometimes be developed further in production).

self-devised drama

Drama that is developed through improvisation and group interaction and shaped through playbuilding; group processes are significant in the development of self-devised drama, though it can be used to describe pieces developed by and for performance by a solo actor.

See also *group devised dramas, playbuilding, process drama*

semiotics of drama and theatre

Semiotics – a term derived from the study of linguistics – describe the study of signs or symbols as a form of communication about the world and self.

Semiotics in drama and theatre is the close analysis and study of signs or signals of drama and theatre as a language with its own grammar, syntax and structure; these signs include (but are not limited to):

- *Frames of reference*: titles, generic descriptions of the drama, prior knowledge about the content or contexts, prologues, title sequences, overtures, epilogues; the places in which the drama occurs and general ambience and pre-disposition to the drama
- *Actors*: personality of the actor beyond the dramatic text; casting choices; delivery of text and sub-text; use of facial expression, gesture, posture, movement; make-up, costume, mask
- *Visual systems*: use of space and sense of place; colour; properties; lighting; contrast; mood
- *Text*: denotative meanings of words; connotative meanings of words; structure of text, rhythm, pacing; sub-text; contrast, juxtapositioning, distancing, etc
- *Characterisation*: reference points – allusions – to other texts; style and use of forms
- *Aural systems*: use of verbal sounds, music, non-music sounds

Semiotics has been – and continues to be – an influential approach to studying drama through analytical processes.

Semiotics works through the objective description of observable processes, to come to a better understanding of the process of communication; it has proven to be a highly complex approach and one that captures part, but not all, of the interactions implicit and explicit in a dramatic text in performance.

sense memory

See *emotional memory*

set

Setting

The surroundings in which dramatic action takes place; sets give a sense of place and time and provide context for the unfolding of dramatic action. Some sets are representational and seek to show a particular place or time; in some drama there may be a succession of representational sets.

Many other sets are non-representational in style and form, seeking to show, for example, many places in succession such as an open stage production of Shakespeare; or an abstract idea or state of mind; these sets are usually based on an open space where stock units are used to suggest place and time.

Improvised or found sets: not all sets are designed or purpose-built for the stage. Some drama is presented in found spaces or existing places; e.g. a play about Frankenstein's children is presented in a disused workshop in a prison.

There are now also opportunities for new technologies such as projections, special effects and smell to be employed in set designs to engage an audience.

set designers

stage set designers

People responsible for designing and overseeing the construction of a set.

SFX

Sound Effects

Abbreviation for sound effects; recorded sounds used in a drama.

shadow plays

Shadow puppetry

Shadow puppets are cut-out figures which are held between a source of light and a translucent screen or scrim. Originating in Asia where it continues to be popular, shadow puppetry was also a fashionable entertainment in Paris during the 19th century, especially in the famous nightclub district of Montmartre.

The concept of casting shadows on scrims is also used in theatre particularly in expressionist drama.

Shadow puppets and shadow plays: ancient form of storytelling using flat cutout articulated figures (shadow puppets) which are held between a source of light and a translucent screen.

See also *puppets, wayang kulit*

Shakespearean drama

Performance of the plays of Shakespeare.

See *Elizabethan drama, verse drama*

signing in

A quick and efficient way for the stage manager to keep track of the actors in a show. A sheet is prepared which the actor signs as they enter the theatre, in the event that someone is missing the SM can see quickly who it is and track them down or arrange for someone else to perform their role.

similarity

State of two things being alike.

See also *contrast, Principles of Design*

simulations

Roleplay situations and problem solving activities; focus in on the issue, problem or situation rather than on exploring dramatic form or characterisation.

See also *roleplay*

situation

The set of circumstances of dramatic action, the who, what, where, why and what's at stake.

See also *human situation*

situation comedy

sitcom

Popular form of television drama, although it originated on radio.

Sitcoms are defined by recurring characters in a common environment. Each episode of the *sitcom* has a stand-alone plot along with some recurring jokes and plot arcs. Sometimes shares similar form as *soap opera*, a "braided" (interwoven) narrative form.

skills

Capacity or ability to do something effectively usually as a result of experience and training.

In drama there are specific skills such as using voice and movement. Also developed in drama are a range of interpersonal skills in communication, empathy and emotional intelligence (EQ) as well as life skills such as time management, goal-setting, persistence and perseverance. Supporting learning in drama are skills in finding and using information as well as communicating through information and communication technologies (ICT).

Interpersonal and general skills	Collaboration and team work Applying principles of design
Technical skills	Voice – dynamic variation in loudness/softness; pace of speaking; use of pause; pitch appropriate to role, character and dramatic action Movement – dynamic variation in posture, facial expression, movement using weight, space, time and energy appropriate to role, character and dramatic action

skit

Short comic scene, generally in revue.

slapstick

Literally clapping device or wooden paddle made from piece of wood hinged to another and capable of making a loud slapping or cracking sound when stuck against an object or actor. Used most often in commedia to add impact to comic business and lazzi.

Slapstick has also come to mean roisterous, physical and acrobatic comic business.

See also comedy, physical theatre

slow burn

Comic facial business used to show seething anger or displeasure.

soap operas

Radio or television drama that deals with the daily (often melodramatic) lives of a group of characters. Soap opera has an extended narrative form with several threads interwoven, sometimes referred to as a “braided” narrative form.

The name soap operas comes from the sponsoring of these radio serials in the 1930s by soap companies.

social capital

See capital, cultural capital, economic capital

social customs

Human behaviour

Drama springs from human experience. As such it draws on the traditions, ceremonies, rituals, festivals and symbolism of human societies.

See also tradition, ceremony, costume, festival, ritual, role playing, symbolism, social role

sociocultural values

The ways that we make and respond to drama are shaped by social customs, beliefs, values, and language. Socio cultural values shape perceptions and responses of audiences; the choices made by actors, directors, designers, and members of collaborative drama and theatre teams; and the contexts within which drama and theatre happen. They impact on the identification and evaluation of implicit assumptions, beliefs and values in drama texts, productions, and their interpretation in particular performance events, spaces and technologies.

See also values

soliloquy

Solo speech using the convention of the character revealing his or her thoughts aloud; powerful and moving form of drama.

See also aside, monologue, original solo performance, speech

son et lumiere

Lighting

Literally translated from the French is a “sound and light” show; the term describes a particular style of performance where elaborate lighting and sound effects are used to tell the dramatic story though frequently there are no actors physically present; son et lumiere is generally performed in the open air and based around an historic building – impressionistic use of sound, voices, music and lighting.

See also sound effects, visual effects

sound designer/sound technician

Person responsible for developing and preparing the sound effects and soundscape for a production.

soundscape

A series of related sounds communicating a sense of place or dramatic action; akin to a landscape but for the ears rather than the eyes. Soundscapes can be made using SFXs or actors with their bodies and voices.

South African drama and theatre

Has (not surprisingly) two major traditions of drama; those derived from pre-colonial tribal structures and those from European models. In African tribal structures there are examples of enactment, dance, song and storytelling: the Xhosa *intsomi*, the Zulu *inganekwane*. In contemporary South Africa, there are oral poetry forms such as *sefela* which build on elements of traditional enactment.

While European models of drama played a dominant role until the end of apartheid as a political system, South African drama also developed a political dimension that played a significant role in changing not just a nation but also the face of theatre itself.

See also African drama

South American drama and theatre

As with African drama, the South American continent has several different traditions of drama (collected for convenience under this one heading). Recurrent themes include

- Some cultures with well developed indigenous drama traditions
- The influence of European missionaries and colonisation
- A search for identity through drama as nations emerge from colonial rule

- Drama as a political force
- Censorship and suppression of drama in a number of countries

Argentina – as early as 1610 Jesuit missionaries had introduced drama and although for the next centuries there was a dominance of Spanish and French neo-classical models, there was considerable support for drama. An important element was introduced in 1884 with the inclusion of circus as an embodiment of the pioneering spirit of the pampas; this was a continuing feature in popular drama during the ensuing century. In the 20th century drama had a thriving tradition of experimentation and political edge using a multiplicity of styles, themes and techniques.

In addition, there continue to be elements of ritual drama in Indian communities, Creole circus, street theatre festivals and carnivals, both secular and religious.

loa - short theatrical piece with music; of sacred nature but also including high praise of local level officials and events.

Brazil – drama developed uniquely and independently of other South American traditions but showed similar patterns of dominating external influences. However, the early Jesuit missionaries were able to incorporate indigenous elements into their drama. Successive waves of populating groups brought with their own, mainly European, influences. French realists mid 19th Century focused on social questions and competed with commedia, entertaining musical revues. This dual development of populist and serious drama characterised much of the developments in the 20th century. Brazil has a diverse and active drama.

Paso – comic interludes of low life characters and urban settings

Sainete – similar to *paso* with music

Sainete criollo – authentic language presentations of customs, typical character figures and political satire

Sainete guachesis – cowboys of the pampas

Sainete urbano – popular character types in urban settings

Chile – in addition to the trends in other South American countries, drama in Chile is noted for the *costumbrista*: a capturing of customs, styles, characters and local identities of particular regions or areas. Chile presents a particular variation on developing drama in the face of political and social instability, economic development, diversity of cultures and a search for personal and cultural identity.

Peru – by contrast with many of the South American nations, Peru was a civilisation that had a developed indigenous traditions of drama with comedies and tragedies as well as tarquis, ritual festivals set to music. However, as with many others, Peru also developed a drama transposed from European traditions that became transformed in their new setting.

spaces of performance

Drama is essentially an interaction between participants who are performers and participants who are audience. The space of performance is a term that can be used in a number of different ways:

- The physical space - the performance space, the theatre space itself, its architecture and the relationships between audience and performers as well as the design of particular productions

- The social, cultural and economic “space” of the audience and performers; the attitudes and values they bring to the drama
- The fictional or emotional space created between participants – between actors and audience

Various forms and styles and historical periods of drama dynamically shape performance spaces in different ways.

See *also stages*

spatial awareness

The ability or capacity of a person to react to the objects and space around them. Important for actors to move specifically and efficiently in the space without injuring themselves or other people. Also important for adapting to new sets and theatre spaces quickly if a production is touring.

Spanish drama and theatre

Reflects two traditions – the religious and secular. Religious drama is typified by the *autosacramentales* and secular drama by the comedias. Autosacramentales combined features of morality and mystery plays and were performed during the feast days of Corpus Christi.

The drama of the Golden Age of Spanish Theatre (1550-1650) matched the period of Spain as a great political and military force. The influence of the Spanish court and royal patronage played a significant role in the development of drama. Lope de Vega (1562-1610) contributed some 2000 highly popular plays in a range of styles. Pedro Calderón de la Barca (1600-1681) described *el gran teatro del mundo* (the awesome theatre of the world) but on his death, the golden age began to decline and by 1651 the *corrales* or public theatres were closed. By 1765 *autosacramentales* were banned under the influence of a neoclassicist push, however comedias de magia were not. By 1830, the influence of romanticism carried Spanish drama away from neoclassicism into a more European style. Influences of realism infiltrated practice in the form of *alta comedia*.

The Twentieth Century has seen a drama moving between the extremes of conservatism and the avant-garde. Notably the poetic tragedies of Federico Garcia Lorca (1899 – 1936) dominate the dramatic landscape.

Alta comedia: later 19th century form that presented contemporary Spanish society in a realistic manner;

Comedia de capa y espada: cloak and sword comedy based on disguises, duels and deceptions

Comedia de figurón: grotesques and ridiculous characters (*figurón*) often representing vice

Comedia de magia: magic shows

Comedia heroicas: marches, scenes, complex plots in telling tales of heroes

Comedia de santo: scenes from the life of a saint.

Corrales de comedias: public theatres set in courtyards between houses; no seats in the pit (*patio*), rows of benches along the sides (*gradas*) and boxes (*apostentos*) rooms of houses; the stage had no proscenium arch or curtain; the entertainment was continuous and varied; performed in the afternoon.

Entremés: one act plays

Zarzuela: musical comedy of one to three acts, stylised allegory alternating aria (songs) and recitative (sung dialogue).

special effects

Extraordinary visual and aural effects in a performance, film or television achieved by technical means to create an illusion of action; usually achieved by digital or optical means, though occasionally still achieved by mechanical means.

speeches

Talks given to an audience; also used for sections of play scripts particularly longer monologues or set pieces.

See *monologue, original solo performance, soliloquy*

spine of a scene

The through line of a scene; the sense of direction or purpose.

See also *Stanislavski*

spontaneous improvisation

Improvisation with little or no previous preparation in response to a provided stimulus, character, relationship and/or situation.

spotlight

Strong beam of light, focused on a small area, especially on a solo performer.

See *lighting*

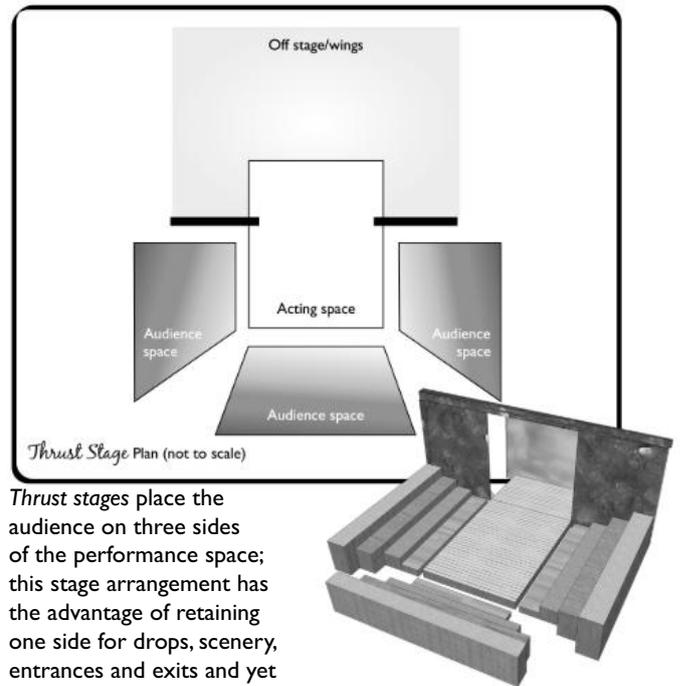
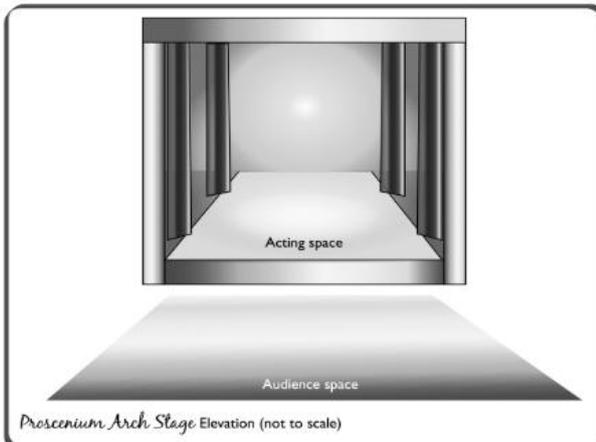
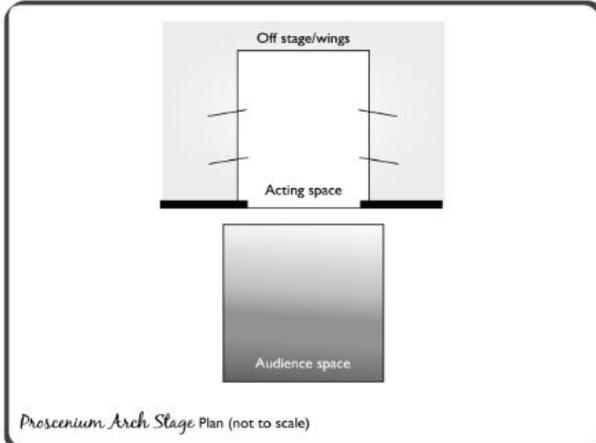
stage

and the relationship of audiences to acting space

The acting/playing space.

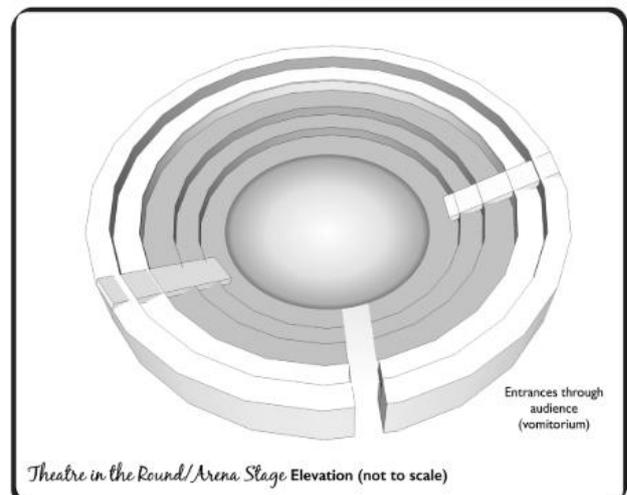
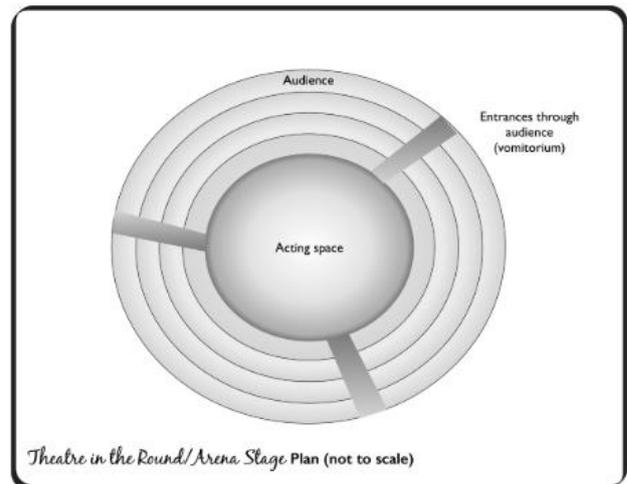
Over time there have been many different relationships between the playing space and the audience space; in recent times there is no commitment to any particular dominant relationship.

Proscenium arch stages position the audience so that they view the action through a picture frame; the acting space is separated from the audience space. In realistic/representational drama on proscenium arch stages, there is sometimes the illusion of looking through into a scene through a missing "fourth wall".

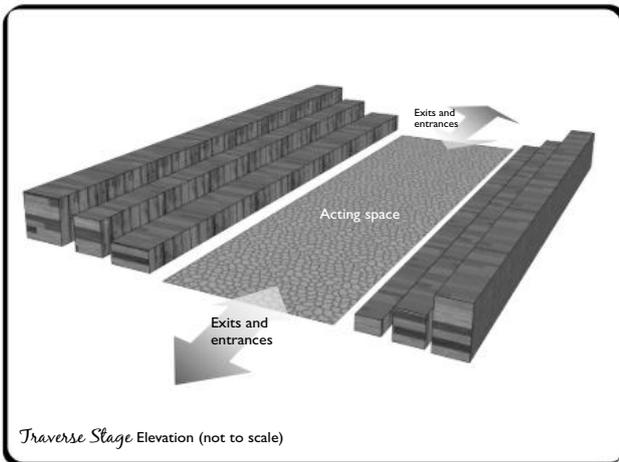


Thrust stages place the audience on three sides of the performance space; this stage arrangement has the advantage of retaining one side for drops, scenery, entrances and exits and yet provides a sense of intimacy and connection for an audience. Elizabethan stages such as the conjectural Globe are examples of thrust stages; the Octagon Theatre at the University of Western Australia is a modern example.

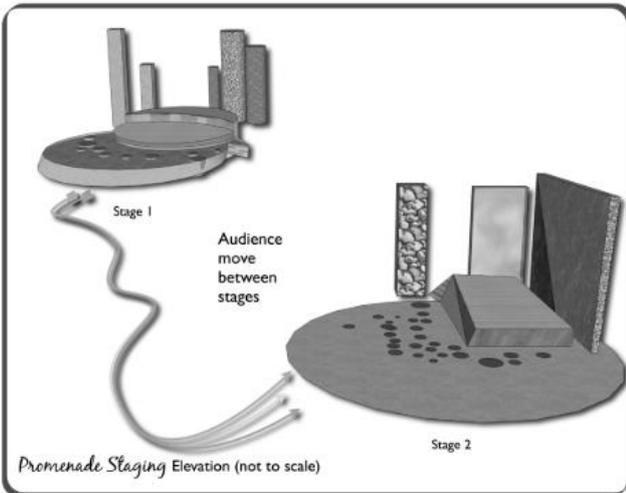
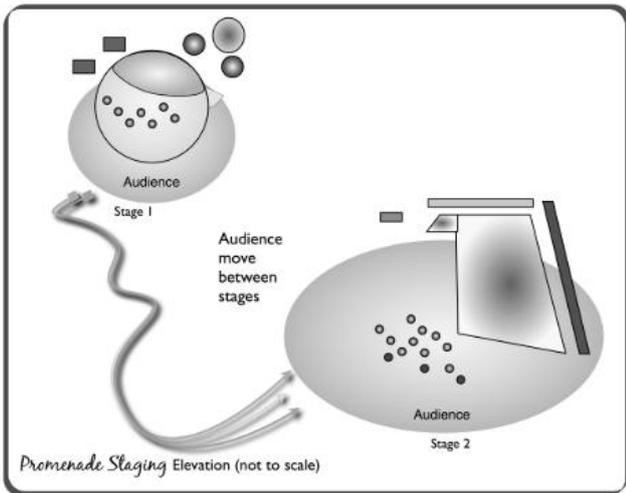
Arena staging - Theatre in the Round - places the performance space in the middle with audience around.



Traverse staging places the action on a strip or bridge that runs between two audience sections facing each other.



Promenade staging is where the audience following the action from performance space to performance space and do not have a particular fixed relationship. This is a recently revived form but has deep historical antecedents with the wagons and stages of medieval theatre in churches, churchyards or village squares.



See also acting space, apron, boards, found spaces, prompt, stage curtains, stage geography, stage rigging, theatre spaces

stagecraft

The technical and management aspects of drama in production

- Set design and construction
- Costume design and construction
- Property design and construction
- Lighting design and operation
- Stage management

Occupational health and safety considerations as well as the aesthetic are of paramount importance.

See also costume, lighting, props, sets, sound effects, stage rigging

stage directions

Notes included in a script outlining suggested moves for actors, dramatic action, effects, lighting, etc.

While some follow stage directions as written by the playwright, there is a need to recognise their limitations and to find the movement that arises naturally in particular circumstances and interpretations.

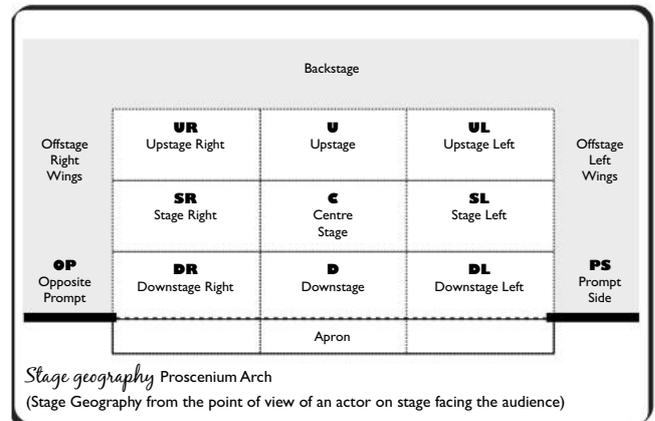
See also blocking, drama scripts

stage geography

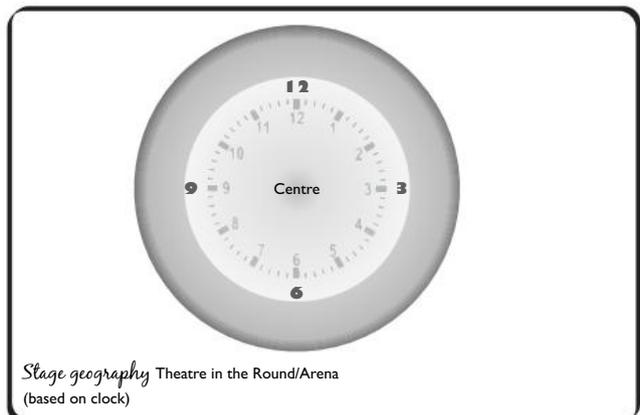
Shorthand ways of providing actors and directors with suggested placement on the stage.

The most frequently used stage geography is based on dividing the stage (generally a proscenium arch stage) into 9 sections:

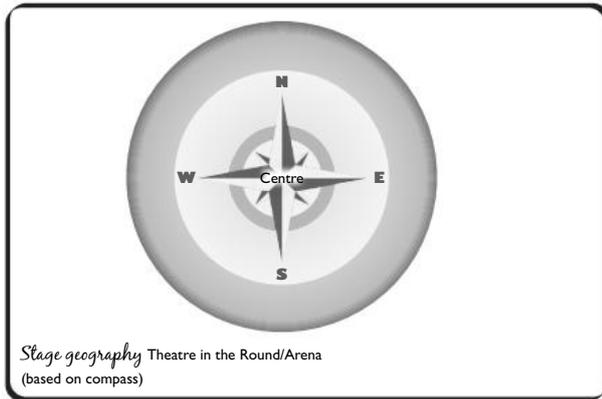
- UR Upstage Right; U Upsatge; UL Upstage Left
- SR Stage Right; C Centre Stage; .SR Stage Left
- DR Downstage Right; D Downstage; DL Downstage Left
- Note that in this form of stage geography, the terms are based on an actor facing the audience; stage right is the actor's right as they look towards the audience, Not the audience's right.



Another approach to stage geography, sometimes used for theatre in the round, is to use the sections of a clock



or the points of a compass to indicate location.



Entrances to arena stages are commonly known as the vomitorium (plural vomitoria) or the “vom”.

In essence there can be many ways of describing the theatrical space, but whatever code is used depends on its effectiveness for shared understanding and use.

stage manager(s)

SM

Stage management

Person responsible for the overseeing of behind the scenes elements of drama in performance and production; the SM's role includes managing the process of auditions; scheduling rehearsals, keeping the production/prompt book, managing props, “calling the show” in performance (cuing the actors, lights, sound FX and scenery changes). Liaises with the production team about the management of props, furniture and effects during a drama production.

stage rigging

Setting up of the lighting and scenery for a production

stagehands

Run crew

Workers employed backstage to move sets and set pieces between scenes. They also clean the stage after performances.

stage lighting

See lighting, rigging

Stanislavski

Stanislavski Method

Stanislavsk System

Stanislavski (1863-1938) proposed an influential systematic approach to acting which reacted against a style characterised by declamation, shouting, use of elaborate, highly codified and structured gesture, and contrived, stylised and overtly artificial approaches. Closely tied to the development of realism and naturalism, the Stanislavski approach emerged in a time when representational approaches were dominant.

Stanislavski's approach to acting is systematic and thorough, requiring actors to be reflective of their own practice, to be organised and to enter into physical and imaginative exploration of the “magic if”. It is based on naturally displaying character, emotion and motivation through personalising – actors using their own personality and experience – and through responding to the given circumstances of the dramatic texts. Concentration, focus and the dynamic creation of belief in an audience are

significant aspects of the actor's work. The actor's purpose is to truthfully communicate the emotional and physical life of the character in a particular dramatic situation. The tools the actor uses are observations, imagination and the sense, body, voice and whole being. Dramatic action is governed by a sense of rhythm and understanding units of a scene or play (beats) while still maintaining a sense of the whole play (throughline).

The Moscow Arts Theatre, and subsequent Russian drama was shaped by Stanislavski. The Actor's Studio in New York popularised Stanislavski's approach – or at least their understanding of it. In a century where popular drama in film and television has been dominated by realism, the importance of Stanislavski's approach cannot be under valued.

Some key terms in Stanislavski's approach (as translated) are:

Actions – verbs used to describe what the character wants in the scene (see *actioning*).

Affective memory – also called sense memory, emotion memory recall of sensory response and association of it with a character's emotional state, physical action or idea: e.g. an actor remembering a personal loss as a stimulus for creating a character in a moment of loss.

Given circumstances: the clues in what the character says – or in what is said about the character – stage directions, physical clues and cues, subtext

Magic if: the key question asked by an actor in preparing their role: what would I, the actor, do if I were the character in this particular dramatic situation?

Throughline or *spine*: the consistent thread or line that connects all the elements of a character in a dramatic scene; the sum of the parts of a character of dramatic text.

Objective: the goal to which dramatic action or character is headed in a particular scene or section of a scene; everything said or done contributes to the objective.

Superobjective: the “life goal” of a character or ultimate overall impact of a dramatic text.

Other specific Stanislavskian approaches include:

- *active analysis* a dynamic process of interpreting character and action as it unfolds in a scene or section of a play
- *identifying beats/bits in a scene or section* identifying the units of a scene as an aid to identifying specific objectives and translating them into actions
- *before time activities* the imagined life and times of a character before the action of a play
- *character germ* the driving force within a character, the key to super-objective
- *inner monologue* as a character acts or as a scene unfolds the inner thoughts of the character
- *psychophysical action* the actions of a character that reflect inner psychological impulses and driving forces
- *improvisation within given circumstances and character* using the stimulus of the circumstances provided in a play as the stimulus for imagined improvisations in parallel or similar situations that provide additional insights into the life of character and dramatic action.

Stanislavski required actors to be physically fit and free; to develop powers of imagination and concentration; to believe in the characters in the stage situation; to work from conscious techniques to free subconscious reactions; to prepare mentally and physically for the roles they take on; to train their memory; to stimulate their emotional memories; to react to given stage circumstances as if real - but in controlled and repeatable ways; to discover the ruling driving force of the role; to have a series

of objectives or actions in each unit or beat of performance, leading to realising the overall objective (super objective) of the play; to develop empathy; to communicate fully to an audience; to use make up, set, costume, lighting and effects to serve the purpose of the characterisation.

See also *Method acting*

star

star quality

Expression used to describe actors of great popularity and success; a quality that makes an actor stand out from contemporaries, a special quality. The 'X' factor, the indescribable special characteristics that distinguishes some performers from others.

status

Social standing of a particular person or group of people.

Improvisational drama and rehearsal processes often focus on aspects of status as a means of exploring dramatic tension and developing characterisation.

status games/activities

One interpretation of drama is based on a reading of all characters as an exploration of different status; each scene or situation is based on characters of differing status and their subsequent relationships. Rehearsal and exploration of the characters and relationships in a dramatic text is undertaken through exercises, activities and games based on relative status.

stereotype

type

A character based on the assumption that all members of a particular race, cultural or social group, belief clan or class, behave in typical ways e.g. a character based on an accent or use of jargon words. Needs to be distinguished from *archetype*, a shared image from collective unconscious, a repeated type of person and typical pattern in narratives and life.

See also *archetype, stock characters*

stillness

Not moving or making a sound. In drama rather than indicating absence of movement, effective stillness implies dramatic tension, anticipation, implied action waiting to happen.

stock characters

Roles that represent particular personality types, e.g. the greedy glutton, the choleric; stock characters appear throughout the histories of drama and theatre, usually in comedies; *commedia dell'arte* uses stock characters such as the wily servant, the greedy master, etc.

See also *Commedia dell'arte*

stock company

In 18th and 19th centuries, a permanent troupe of actors performing in repertory; the term *summer stock* is used in America to describe a troupe set up for a season.

stooge

Foil to a comic, introducing or "feeding" jokes and acting as a butt for jokes and gags.

story

See *narrative*

storyboard

A series of drawings that show a sequence of events, movements of actors, etc. in a drama scene or play.

storydrama

Form of drama that uses a story or picture book and drama as a source for exploring the issues, themes, characters of the story. The focus is on exploring the story itself rather than as a subject for adaptation or elaboration as an independent dramatic text. Participants use drama to experiment with role within the imagined world of the story. Story drama uses teacher in role to engage participants in the story and its implications; there is a genuine dramatic encounter and the generation of a new dramatic text through the structure of story.

storytelling

Act of communicating narrative to an audience. The stories told are most often fictional, although in some cultures the act of storytelling is a means of passing on cultural and family histories. Storytelling uses elements of drama and occasionally role and enactment but can be more simple ways of sharing meaning. Drama beginnings lie in storytelling, ritual celebration leading to re-enactment.

See also *narration, narrative*

storytelling enactment

Acting out a story as it is being told. Not to be confused with simple storytelling.

story structures

Organisation of the parts of a story.

See also *narrative, climactic structure, episodic structure*

straight man (woman)

Actor working as a foil to a comic or comedian, setting up jokes and gags.

Strasberg (Lee Strasberg)

Lee Strasberg (1901-1982) was an American actor, director and acting teacher, who is considered the father of Method acting in America. After studying Stanislavski's writing, Strasberg focused on teaching his actors great discipline and the psychology of interpretation. Strasberg's technique encourages actors to recall the circumstances surrounding deeply emotional moments they have experienced in order to access the emotional resources that are inside them, that then can be used for their art. This method has been criticised for being emotionally manipulative, but some practitioners of it, such as James Dean, Marlon Brando and Marilyn Monroe became famous for their detailed and deep performances.

street theatre

Open air performances literally in the streets; two traditions: entertainment or political.

See also *busking*

striking the set

At the end of the run of a play or when a play is transferring from one stage to another, the set is taken down and packed away; a set may be struck between acts in plays where there is more than one set.

structure of drama

Framework, scaffold or organisation of dramatic action; there are many different ways of structuring dramatic action:

- Contrast and juxtaposition
- Chronological ordering of events
- Non-chronological ordering – flashback, flash forward, manipulated time sequences
- Shifts in point-of-view

Sometimes drama structures are deliberately ignored.

See also *Aristotelian drama*, *Brechtian drama*, *climactic structure*, *episodic structure*, *plot*

student devised drama

See *group devised drama*

style

Distinctive identifying elements of dramatic texts. There are three dimensions of style: historical, performance and personal style.

- Personal style – the distinctive use of voice, gesture, body, posture that can be identified with a particular actor or director.
- Historical style – particular distinctive style markers of language, subject-matter, themes, approaches to characterisation and dramatic action can be linked to particular times and contexts e.g. the use of emblematic names for characters are a style feature or marker for Jacobean and Restoration drama
- Performance style – ways of approaching dramatic texts – two major performance styles are representational and presentational styles

Style can be applied to performances, direction, dramatic texts, forms and conventions.

The style charts on the following pages give an overview of examples of markers of different styles for some identified historical periods or forms.

The concept of style can be difficult to pin down. In simple terms, a style is the distinctive characteristics of something, the ways something is done that distinguishes it from another similar activity.

These ways of categorising style are difficult to state in definitive ways (and, some people are wary of over simplistic labeling of styles). But these ways of organising how we think of style can be useful provided they are used with deep understanding and not used superficially.

All drama has some sense of style whether it fits a neat categorisation or not.

Personal style

Each individual actors has a persona style. Compare different ways that a role such as Hamlet has been played.

One way of looking at personal style is to consider the different approaches to acting.

Classical or heroic	Presentational style striving for controlled, restrained, larger-than-life impact; movements are sweeping, rhythmic, stylised; voices show vocal variety and dramatic intensity and can be declamatory and distinctive
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Romantic	Emotionally intense; presentational style requiring flexibility in voice and movement; actors often have to fence, dance, sing, play musical instruments as well
Realistic/ Naturalistic	Representational; presenting truthful and credible portrayals of character and dramatic action.
High Comedy	Sophisticated and witty presentational style; includes drawing room comedy; requires flexible use of voice, facial expression, posture, gesture and movement; needs effective comic timing and accurate setting up and delivery of comic lines.
Low Comedy	Slapstick, horseplay, pratfalls, clowning, exaggerated voice and movement, gesture and facial expression.
Epic	Presentational style calling for detachment (aesthetic distance) that comments socially, politically or morally on the role.
Nonrealistic	Presentational style requiring actors to move in non-human ways (e.g. as robots or animals)

Historical styles

Historical styles reflect how drama was written and performed in specific times and places.

Another way of organising historical styles is to think about different approaches to playwrighting.

Classical	Plays of Ancient Greece or Rome with rigidly followed form and standards, unity, sense of proportion, moral purpose.
Neoclassical	From Renaissance until contemporary times; written following the patterns of Classical drama; a revival of Classical approaches
Realistic	Showing life as it is; developed in mid 19th Century and dominant 20th Century approach particularly in film; often showed clear sense of cause and effect and structure - e.g. the well-made play (<i>pièce bien faite</i>) developed by Scribe.
Naturalistic	An extreme form of realism, imitating real life very closely; focusing on realistic or psychological explanations for what characters and dramatic action.
Symbolic	Using symbolic concepts and language to communicate ideas
Expressionist	Subjective point of view presented and as a result a distorted, personalised vision; there is often social purpose.
Epic	Didactic, episodic, analytical, socially and politically focused drama.
Absurdist	Focusing on chaotic, meaningless and existential view point through extreme exaggeration, surrealism, symbolism, exploration of radical, exceptional language, characters and situations.

Performance styles

In broad terms, all styles of drama fit on a continuum between representational and presentational drama.

Within that broad spectrum there are a range of performance styles.

Formalist	A neutral staging or levels, steps, ramps, screens, columns and other stock items that suggest a range of places	Symbolist	Selective use of symbolic detail (e.g. a dead tree to represent a blighted heath)
Romantic	Used in 19th Century Proscenium Arch theatres with elaborate settings using wing-drop-borders and detailed painted backdrops	Expressionist	Subjective experience presented through distorted setting
Realist	Selectively realistic settings supporting an illusion of place and time; can be further refined to represent selective essential detail that maintains illusion of reality	Theatrical	No attempt at disguising the illusion of the theatrical experience; lights may be visible; stage hands may move set pieces in full view of the audience; some props may be imagined and mimed while others may be realistically present.
Naturalist	Strictly realist, emphasising actual physical reality (e.g. running water, fireplaces with burning coals, food cooking smells, etc.)	Epic	Use of alienating or distancing staging devices such as signs, projections, technical devices, songs, etc
Impressionist	Heightened sense of place through selection of detail and atmospheric effects; can include distortions, dream effects (e.g. projections of trees to suggest a remembered time and place).	Multi media	incorporating images, projections, sounds, audio-visual material to create setting and sense of time and place.

See also *Presentational drama*, *Representational drama*

style markers (historical)

Some important historical styles are summarised in the following tables.

Style Markers	Classical Greek Comedy	Commedia dell-arte Approx. 1550-1650
Sorts of characters	Caricatures, stock characters, allegorical figures such as animals or insects; perhaps a well-known figure being mocked or satirised	One dimensional stock characters, stereotypes or types; inflexible; immediately recognisable to audience e.g. Pantelone, Capitano, Dottore, Arlecchino, Brighella, etc.
Objectives or values of characters	Usually a single objective expressed simply e.g. money, food, sex; most characters value a sense of humour	Each character has one dominating objective e.g. Pantelone as an old miser, wants money
What characters say	Mostly what they mean	Improvised and witty lines (sometimes localised) built on known scenario; wit and improvisation important
How characters speak	Clear sentence structure; vocal variety; may be a mixture of prose and poetry	Vocal dexterity; capacity to improvise prose and to recall poems and songs (sometimes varied for local circumstances)
How characters move	With exaggerated use of walk, posture, movement and gesture; extensive physical involvement; use of physical humour and slapstick	Physical humour; acrobatic; energetic; forceful; whole body movements
Energy levels	High energy levels expressed through contrasting use of frenetic pace and caricatured posing	Fast-paced, glib; directed by a sense of fun
Technical markers	Masks/half masks; exaggerated props	Masks and half masks; stock props; slapsticks; burla (known jokes); gags; Lazzi (known routines)
Physical skills needed by actors	Singing, dancing and other physical movements such as somersaults and acrobatics; comic timing essential; slapstick; pratfalls	Physical comedy; acrobatics; juggling; singing; dancing
Representative playwright(s)	Aristophanes	As an improvised drama form (based on lazzi and scenarios), there are no known playwrights
Representative plays	<i>The Frogs</i> , <i>The Birds</i> , <i>The Clouds</i>	A number of recorded scenarios and lazzi are available

Style Markers	Elizabethan Drama Approx. 1570-1620	French Neoclassical Comedy Approx. 1630-1670
Sorts of characters	Immensely varied - representational and presentational; mostly truthful to human nature; complex in personality' believable	Characters from all levels of society; exploration of humanity including weakness; linked to commedia types but beginning to be more grounded in real life
Objectives or values of characters	Often complex objectives - reflecting a range of Renaissance values and society; often expressed as a need to fulfil a character's destiny though that destiny might be self chosen or ordained	Manners and social customs; high minded ideals such as honour, loyalty, treachery, authority, etc.
What characters say	Mostly lofty and wide ranging in rhetoric; noble and high minded on themes of love, death, honour, ambition, jealousy, etc.	Often satirised society; used gossip and social observation along with wit
How characters speak	Most often in verse - iambic pentameter; prose used occasionally in drama; direct address to audiences through aside and soliloquy; range of tone, volume and variety	Vocal variety; Alexandrine couplets; complexity of inflection and high seriousness
How characters move	Use of fluid, physical action suited to open thrust staging; action suited to emotion and language	Elevated posture; focus on hand gestures; leading from the head; at rest, a flexing back with weight and posture; codified social movements such as bowing, greeting, use of fans, etc.
Energy levels	Varied: slower and more deliberate and measured for tragedy; faster paced for comedy which was also light, rhythmic and assured	High energy; fast paced; frequent interactions through dialogue; precision
Technical markers	Elaborate costumes but from contemporary life not necessarily true to period; hand props such as purses, hats, foils, swords, daggers	Elaborate costuming, wigs, and hand props such as fans, snuff boxes, handkerchiefs, letters, canes, etc.
Physical skills needed by actors	Vocal dexterity with ability to use verse; period court dancing; physical skills such as fencing, singing, ability to project voices from thrust stages to audiences who might be roisterous and noisy	Vocal dexterity; dancing; singing; formality; playing musical instruments of period
Representative playwright(s)	Shakespeare	Molière
Representative plays	<i>Macbeth</i> , <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> <i>Othello</i> , <i>Julius Caesar</i> , <i>As You Like It</i> , <i>Twelfth Night</i> , <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	<i>Tartuffe</i> , <i>The Misanthrope</i> , <i>The Imaginary Invalid</i> , <i>The Doctor in Spite of Himself</i>

Style Markers	Restoration Comedy 1660-18th Century	Brechtian Epic Style 20th Century
Sorts of characters	Leisured classes and court with serving class as comic relief	Character type and use of presentational role; character as didactic example; character in context of own time or our time
Objectives or values of characters	To amuse, entertain or display wit; to reflect society and its intrigues; sexuality	To teach the audience a lesson; to arouse or shock; to distance audience from emotional identification (<i>Verfrumdungseffekt</i>)
What characters say	By indirect and witty inference; gossip; character assassination; intrigue	Present arguments and make audience think
How characters speak	With wit, precision, clarity and a sense of style	Use distancing devices such as songs, combinations of everyday colloquial speech and heightened theatrical language
How characters move	With precision; leading with hands and wrists, ankles and toes; formality of movement; socially aware	Mixture of techniques; physicality and incorporating aspects such as acrobatics, mime and, in some cases, Oriental/Asian gesture and techniques
Energy levels	High energy levels expressed through social interactions contrasted with poised use of pose and posture and positioning	Varied in response to intentions of text
Technical markers	Elaborate scenography; representational through illusion, perspective images; proscenium arch	Use of technology such as slides, film etc. use of mask; incorporation of live music; visible scene manipulations
Physical skills needed by actors	Graceful movement; clarity of enunciation and projection in response to wit of text and codified gesture of dramatic action	Direct address of the audience; understanding of distancing; physicality; vocal flexibility; use of devices such as masks
Representative playwright(s)	Sheridan	Brecht
Representative plays	<i>School for Scandal</i> , <i>The Rivals</i>	<i>Threepenny Opera</i> , <i>Mother Courage</i> , <i>Caucasian Chalk Circle</i>

Style Markers	Absurdism Approx. 1950-1970?	American Musical 20th Century 1940-?
Sorts of characters	Characters faced with moral dilemmas of an existential kind - senselessness of human existence	All types and stereotypes ranging across all classes; most often young romantic lovers, heroes and easily-typed villains; also, notable roles for character actors
Objectives or values of characters	Familiar daily rituals; searching for meaning in life	Simply stated goals: boy meets girl; boy loses girl; boy regains girl; changing social status or overcoming odds
What characters say	Distorted versions of reality; words used with apparent logic but on closer examination revealed to be with little or no meaning	In dialogue, focus on simple statements In lyrics often highly poetic and beautiful
How characters speak	A distorted version of colloquial language; direct assault of the audience; play and humour arising from incongruities of language	Dialogue with an appearance of reality interspersed with sung dialogue and song lyrics that comment on and/or carry forward the dramatic action
How characters move	Mixture of realistic movements and ritualistic or presentational movements; physicality and timing are paramount	Able to move from representational style of moving and acting to a presentational style in singing and dancing; flexibility, agility, stamina - 'the triple threat'
Energy levels	High energy levels despite appearance of entropy or inertia	Between two extremes - high paced and happy, contrasted with lyrical and relaxed seriousness
Technical markers	Use of symbolism and emblem; breaking the conventions of realism	Sophisticated use of scenery, costumes and props
Physical skills needed by actors	Understanding of timing, slapstick, comedy, burlesque, vaudeville	Strong singing and musicianship allied with dancing and acting - 'the triple threat'
Representative playwright(s)	Ionesco Pinter	Rodgers and Hammerstein, Rodgers and Hart Lerner and Loewe, Bernstein, Sondheim
Representative plays	<i>The Bald Prima Donna, The Birthday Party</i>	<i>Oklahoma, The Sound of Music, Annie, West Side Story, Newsies, Next to Normal, Once</i>

stylisation

Deliberate simplification of elements of drama for particular dramatic impact or effect; e.g. an arrangement of different sized flats and lighting may be used to suggest a city skyline rather than using a realistic (photographic or near photographic representation) or representational picture of one.

stylised gesture

Gesture made in a artificial or mannered style. Non-realistic.

See also *gestures*

sub-text

The thoughts, emotions and reactions implied but not necessarily stated in dialogue and/or dramatic action; sub-text is inferred by writers, interpreted by actors and directors and understood by perceptive audiences; sub text is akin to connotation in literature.

There is a clear connection between text, sub-text and context.

sub-plot

Subsidiary action that is used in the design of plot to provide variety and additional interest or to underscore or draw a contrast with the major plot.

superobjective

The "life goal" of a character or ultimate overall impact of a dramatic text.

See *Stanislavski*

superstitions in theatre

As a profession – perhaps reflecting their gypsy-like natures and lifestyles – actors are often characterised as being superstitious; some of the more colourful and well-known superstitions include:

- Quoting or even mentioning the title of Macbeth in a theatre is considered bad luck, hence the expression the "Scottish play" is heard in theatres
- Whistling in the dressing room
- Using a bible or real flowers on stage
- Rehearsing the curtain call before the dress rehearsal
- Wishing an actor "good luck" – explaining the use of the term "break a leg" or "chookas" as a code for good luck.

surrealist drama

20th Century movement that influenced drama by focusing on transcending the realistic, incorporating the dreamlike, sythesising the conscious and the unconscious, the rational and the subjective. Chance, absurdism, artistic exploration and freedom are the hallmarks of surreal dramatic texts.

See also *absurdism, alienation, Futurism*

suspense

Device used to arouse and sustain interest in audiences; in drama usually developed through foreshadowing and use of dramatic irony.

See also *dramatic tension*

suspension of disbelief

Poet, critic and generally under-recognised playwright Samuel Taylor Coleridge coined the expression willing suspension of disbelief for the process whereby audiences consciously choose to ignore the reality of what is physically present-actors, theatres, costumes, sets, etc – and accept that they are experiencing something imaginatively with the power of a real experience. Despite the evidence of the senses – these are actors taking on roles and pretending to be what they are not in places that are quite obviously not the locations of the dramatic action – despite all this, audiences still consciously choose to believe that the dramatic experience has the appearance and

power of a real experience.

As Hamlet says of the players on seeing an actor so “in character” that they are moved to physical tears – “what is he to Hecuba or Hecuba to him?” or to put it in other words, “what is the power of the actor that enables her or him to overcome our natural disbelief and convince us of the genuineness of the experience communicated”

sustainable drama practice

Process and methods of drama performance and production that take account of the use and disposal of resources so that they are not depleted or cause permanent or lasting damage to people or the environment.

sustain

sustained movement, sustained voice

Where the amount of force is constant throughout resulting in continuous controlled smooth movement or sound.

Suzuki

Influential Japanese actor and director whose approach brings together classical Greek and Japanese performance styles of Noh and Kabuki. His actor training methods demand an extreme level of body control and physical exertion.

symbol

When an object or event is used to stand for or represent an emotion or thematic idea; symbols extend, expand or add to meaning

symbolic and technical codes and conventions

The study of semiotics has developed organised systematic approaches to describing shared ways of understanding how drama (and other forms of communication such as Media Arts) communicate meaning.

Anstey and Bull (2012) identify five semiotic systems: Linguistic, Visual, Audio, Gestural and Spatial.

Linguistic	
Vocabulary	type, choice
Structure	form, style
voice	personal and subjective impersonal and objective

Visual	
Colour	placement, saturation, tone, media, opacity, transparency
Texture	tactile memory
Line	quality, type, actual or implied, angles
Shape	visual outline
Form/ juxtaposition	boundaries and relationships
Point of view	Artist or viewer
Framing	cropping, close-up, medium or long shot
Focus	sharp or soft
Lighting	soft, bright, subdued, dull, spotlighting and direction

Editing	speed/pace, transitions, storytelling, parallel cutting, inserts
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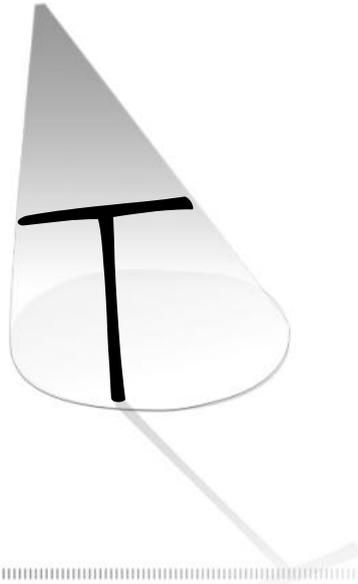
Audio/voice	
Volume and audibility	loudness, softness
Pitch	High or soft or variations
Pace	fast, slow, phrasing, use of silence
Use of voice	modulation, articulation, timbre, intonation (pitch), stress projection (audibility), dynamics
Use of music and other sound	Choices, relationships of music and sound to dramatic action

Spatial	
Position in space	left - right / top - bottom / centre - margin/ foreground (close) - background (far)
Movement in space	weight, space, time and energy
Orientation	angle high - low - eyeline / front - back / straight - skewed
Framing	selection and focus

Gestural	
Body contact	type, position of contact, touch
Proximity	space between objects and between people
Orientation/body position	how bodies relate to other bodies
Appearance	face and body shape, hair style, complexion/colouring, clothing, jewellery/accessories, make up, props
Head nods	angle, tilt and number
Facial expression	eyebrows, eyes, shape and position of mouth, nostrils
Kinesics	movements of head, arms, hands, legs, feet
Posture	the ways a person stands, sits, lays
Gaze and eye movement	where and how gaze is directed

symbolist theatre

Where allegory and symbol are consciously used to add to the dramatic impact; key playwrights include Maeterlinck, Ibsen, Strindberg, WB Yeats, Chekhov; e.g. the chopping down of the cherry orchard in Chekhov's play of that name could symbolise many aspects of the dramatic situation such as destruction of an outmoded past, an unproductive useless class of people, lost innocence, etc.



T.I.E.

Theatre-in Education

Drama that is especially produced for performance in schools; the themes of T.I.E. are generally linked to school curricula, use participation and processes, such as entering into role, as part of the dramatic action.

See also youth theatre

tableau (plural tableaux)

See Freeze frames

table work

Rehearsal process of actors reading the play while seated around a table; focus on characters, situation, dramatic action, motivations and meaning. Scenographer and designers share ideas for the production.

teacher in role

TiR

Where the teacher or leader takes on role(s) during the drama exploration; through taking this participatory role, the teacher extends dramatic action, controls and shapes it as a playwright would; the distance between the teacher as director is narrowed and the focus on the teacher as direct participant in the drama explored is heightened.

See also process drama, drama learning

technical aspects of production

stagecraft

Lighting, sound, design, construction and stage management of drama in presentation or performance.

As technologies change so too do the technical aspects of drama in performance; the balanced integration of technical aspects and effects is an aesthetic consideration and significant part of the decision-making processes of those involved in drama; of themselves technical aspects do not make dramatic texts or performances but enhance them; the definition of theatre as “bare boards and passion” underlines that the central core of drama lies not so much in the technical but in the nature of the dramatic experience itself.

See also stagecraft

technical rehearsal/tech rehearsals/tech

Rehearsals that focus on getting all the technical aspects of a show organised and performance ready. During tech actors are asked to only do the parts of each scene that require a tech element so that the run crew can practise and perfect their jobs - this is known as topping and tailing – running only the sections of a scene or section that require the technical.

technique

A technique is a skillful or efficient way of completing a particular task, a skill, capacity or ability in a particular field.

Drama techniques include ways of using voice and movement to create role and dramatic action; also techniques in lighting, sound, set building and painting, costume making, make-up.

technology (drama and theatre)

While the fundamental materials of drama are bodies – voices, facial expressions and movement – and a dedicated space, the history of drama and theatre has shown a capacity to use a variety of technologies – tools – to tell stories. In the Classical Greek Theatre, the shape and design of the performance space was designed to enhance large audiences in the thousands all hearing the performance; while details are sketchy the Greeks also used a *deus ex machina* (literally translated as the god from the machine), some sort of device used at the end of a play where the gods were lowered into the action to add their commentary. Theatre and drama have changed with each advance and incorporation of technologies: e.g. consider how the introduction of electricity in theatres provided opportunities that supported the rise of realism.

In contemporary theatre a wide range of audio, audio-visual and staging technologies are used. Theatre is making use of emerging technologies such as integrating multimedia with live performance. These technologies shape and enhance the aesthetic experience of drama but there needs to be a focus on how technologies add value to the dramatic meaning rather than on the technology for its own sake.

television drama

Drama specifically created for performance on television or video

See also sitcoms, soap operas

television scripts

Scripts of television drama.

tension

Dramatic tension

Conflict

Sense of strain, excitement, anticipation or suspense used to animate and sustain interest and forward movement in drama. Obstacle for a character to overcome. A sense of ‘what’s at stake’ in a particular dramatic situation. Tension and dramatic tension are sometimes used interchangeably with *conflict* but the concept is more than simple arguments or differences of opinion.

There are a range of ways that create dramatic tensions that advance creation of dramatic meaning:

<i>The tension of the task</i>	the obstacles that a character faces – the challenge of specific situations: person vs person; person vs society; person vs environment; person vs the gods
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<i>The tension of relationships</i>	interpersonal conflicts and differences; contrasting objectives; person vs person; person vs society; person vs self/psychological identity. Shown through dialogue between characters, subtext (the unspoken undercurrents within the relationships) and through snippets of internal monologue when used.
<i>The tension of surprise</i>	the element of the unexpected introduced into the drama to maintain audience interest; e.g. An unexpected plot complication; new information about a character or situation revealed; humour juxtaposed with darker materials; unpredictable behaviour from characters
<i>The tension of mystery</i>	suspense; unanswered questions; rising anticipation;

See also *dramatic tension, suspense*

text

The substance of a completed dramatic action – the totality of words and sounds, movements and gestures, contexts and technical elements

A text may also be a script – dramatic action blueprinted or recorded for future recreation.

See also *dramatic text, script*

text interpretation

When an actor uses a pre-existing dramatic text or script and provides his or her own rendering of that text.

See also *script interpretation*

text-based approaches

Drama that works from a text written by a playwright through exploring and interpreting ideas and themes, solving practical problems of directing and staging including placing the text in contexts through dramaturgy.

theatre

Art form of dramatic performance.

Also a building, room or other setting where drama, plays and other performances take place.

As noted earlier, theatre is a part of the wider category of drama.

Rather than seeing the overlaps and interconnections, some commentators see theatre and drama as binary opposites.

Theatre	Drama
Stage	Classroom, Playing Area
Scenery	Environment, Setting
Actors	Students, Participants, Teacher
Director	Teacher, Leader, Facilitator
Play Script	Story, Material, Idea
Rehearse	Practice, Work On, Experiment With, Explore
Perform	Share, Show, Play, Dramatize, Improvise
Audience	Observers, Peers
Critique	Assess, Discuss, Reflect
PRODUCT	PROCESS

While helpful in identifying specific aspects of drama and theatre, this separation is based on outdated thinking.

See also *drama conventions, dramatic action, Elements of Drama, playmaking, stage, theatre genres*

theatrecraft

Term used collectively for technical and technological aspects of theatre.

theatre companies

Organisations and businesses which organise and stage theatrical productions for commercial gain.

Theatre of Cruelty

Theory of theatre outlined by Antonin Artaud in *Theatre and its Double (Le Théâtre et son Double)* which stated that actors and audiences should be shocked into awareness of the ruthlessness and savagery of existence by showing character in extreme situations and through using extreme theatrical devices; an influential force on development of drama in the twentieth century.

theatre for development

theatre for social change

Drama addressing social, cultural or political issues and seeking reform and change. Popular form in Africa and developing nations.

theatre for young people

Drama presented for young audiences most often by adult actors- as distinguished from youth theatre, drama by young people.

See also *T.I.E.*

theatre in the round

Arena staging/Centre staging/Circle staging

Central staging where the audience surround the acting space; sometimes called arena staging.

See also *stages*

Theatre of the Oppressed

T.O.

Brazilian director Augusto Boal (1931-2009) developed a method of forum theatre for, about and by the oppressed, who act as “spect-actors” (rather than spectators) to examine and change the existence in which they live, through drama.

Boal’s key practices:

Forum theatre: see earlier entry

Image theatre: where the “spect-actors” are asked to sculpt their bodies and other participants’ bodies to create images (tableux) representing particular situations, emotions or ideas. Boal encouraged the images to be created spontaneously so as to articulate raw emotions and ideas.

Invisible theatre: where a rehearsed play is performed in a public space without the public knowing that they are seeing a performance. This form was used to focus on social themes and to incite debate within society

Legislative theatre: similar to forum theatre except the theme of the drama is based on local government.

Newspaper theatre: see Living Newspaper entry.

See also *audience participation, Forum theatre*

theatre spaces

See *Stages, Spaces of Performance*

theatre shaping structures and features

Drama and theatre texts share a range of shaping structures and conventions.

Ambivalence - uncertainty, contrasting points of view, no clear moral standpoint but the exploration of alternatives; drama often provides a dialectic counterpointing, refusing to make a clear-cut moral standpoint, inviting audiences to savour both the good and bad, the approved and the disapproved.

Anticipation - expectation, suspense

Archetypes - using known and universal characters that audiences and actors can identify with and through; see the universal and the particular

Concealment and disclosure - often drama plots are hinged around dramatic situations based on disguises and dissembling; things are often not what they appear; through a sense of dramatic irony, audiences, often have a clearer perspective on who or what is true

Identification and projection - see earlier section on identification; actors and audiences imaginatively project themselves into the dramatic situations or characters, enjoying the opportunity to explore emotions or ideas while in the safety of fiction

Illusion - see concealment and disclosure

Irony - dramatic action and dialogue is often based on the distance between what is said and what is meant; frequently-used structuring device in drama

Juxtaposition – see earlier entry

Madness - within the disguise of madness, characters often are able to say and do the unthinkable; drama often presents situations that are shaped by madness or the illusion of madness: the greatest truth seems to come from those who are least equipped to say it

Paradox - apparent contradiction, a puzzle that makes audiences question what they expect

The particular and the universal - through the dramatic situation of a particular character, audiences are moved to understand the universal, the truths that apply to all people in all times

Play within a play – see earlier entry

Tension – see earlier entry

theatrical vision

A written statement explaining the ideas and reasons behind mounting a production of a play or developing a new piece of theatre. Usually written by the director as a guideline for the process and to explain to the rest of the production team and audience what the purpose of the production is.

theme

What a play means as opposed to what happens (plot); concepts or ideas as opposed to the subject matter or content.

thesis statement

A succinct statement of the idea or concept of a dramatic text. Sometimes seen as akin to *agon*, the debate in Greek drama, the term is used in Brechtian drama to articulate the key concept or argument of the dramatic text. A thesis statement provides the driving force, a way of checking that the integrity of the dramatic action is in focus.

See also *Brechtian drama, fable*

theoretical approaches to drama and drama

Drama and theatre exist as practice, what people do. In developing practice over the history of drama and theatre there have been many attempts to provide an underpinning theory of what drama is and how it works.

See also *Aristotle, Stanislavsky, Brecht*

Thespis

Greek playwright from 6th century who is traditionally considered as a founder of acting by being first to separate an actor from the chorus.

throughline

spine

The consistent thread or line that connects all the elements of a character in a dramatic scene; the sum of the parts of a character of dramatic text.

See *plot, Stanislavski*

thrust stage

Where the audience surround the acting space on three sides; it has the advantage of retaining one side for drops (painted backcloths and scene pieces), scenery, entrances and exits and yet provides a sense of intimacy for an audience; Elizabethan stages such as the conjectured Globe are examples of Thrust stages; the Octagon Theatre at the University of WA is a modern example.

See *stages*

time in drama

One of the key elements that is manipulated when drama is made. There are a range of possible ways of using time:

Real time – the time for a dramatic action to unfold is the time it would take in life; although audiences recognise that this is an enactment and that it involves a group of actors in the artifice of theatre, they also have a sense of time unfolding in a way they recognise it in their own lives. This approach observes unity of time.

Selected time – where the makers of the drama select portions of time and string them together; through juxtaposition and arrangement, there are sections; often this use of time is so skilful that audiences perceive the dramatic action as having completeness although it is not real time.

Manipulated time – often makers of drama will manipulate time to strengthen plot or dramatic irony; for example, there may be the use of flashback - a scene from past time that is juxtaposed with the time of the dramatic action; by contrast there may be the use of flash forward; sometimes two time zones are played in parallel.

timing

Varying the speed and delivery of lines and dramatic action to gain the most effective dramatic impact or comic effect.

See also *comic timing*

tone (voice)

Modulation of the voice to express various emotions. Tone can be changed to alter intention and therefore how an audience interprets a word or phrase (makes meaning).

Also overall atmosphere or mood of a scene, act or play created by the set, costumes, sound, acting and style.

tradition

All the conventions, dramatic devices and texts handed from the past. Everyone working in drama draws on rich tradition that includes and reflects what has been done and experienced. However, no one works passively in an inherited tradition; of necessity she or he modifies, shifts and dynamically adds to the tradition. There is an inescapable sense of the past that must be related to the present and will be part of any dramatic future.

Inherited forms or styles used without scrutiny lose sharpness and become clichés of empty “period pieces”. But without a sense of the past tradition, there is innovation without depth. Each generation invents and re-invents itself through the Arts and drama, through a mix of tradition and innovation.

Over time there develop accepted ways of doing things in drama that take on the status of agreed rules or traditions e.g. on a proscenium arch stage, always turn downstage

See also conventions

tragedy

In classical drama, a play centred on tracing the downfall of a noble protagonist and designed to arouse in audiences a purging of terror, fear and pity.

The term derives from the Greek word *tragoedia*, “goat song”, the song of the goat being led to the sacrifice in the dithyramb to Dionysus.

The term tragedy has evolved across the centuries and in the 20th century can also be used to include the downfall of common men and women.

See also Aristotelian drama, catharsis, revenge tragedies

tragi-comedy

Combining the elements of comedy and tragedy – of high seriousness and consequence with a redeeming vision of the world, where everything turns out well in the end despite the seriousness of the situation.

tragic flaw

The error of judgement (*harmatia*) that initiates tragedy.

See also Classical Greek drama

tragic hero

In Classical greek drama, the protagonist who came from noble birth or was a person of high standing who made a decision that leads to conflict or misfortune. This decision is a reflection of poor judgment or a character flaw (*hubris* or *harmatia*). Ultimately, however, a tragic hero recognises the error and takes responsibility for its consequences.

transformation scene

Sudden spectacular change of scenery, common in English pantomime.

transformation

transforming

At one level all drama is an act of transformation; actors transform themselves; performance spaces are imaginatively transformed; drama transforms audiences changing them, moving them.

Transforming also explores dramatic action through using known forms and conventions, e.g. using a quiz show format to explore the Vietnam War.

Transformation scenes use the magic and illusion of stagecraft to present audiences with a breathtaking change of scene.

transitions

change overs

The time after scenes in a play where the set, props and actors change or move to create the next scene

trap

Opening cut in stage floor, a trap door, through which actors may make appearances and disappearances.

traverse theatres

traverse stages

Where the action takes place in a strip or bridge that runs between two facing audience sections.

See also stages

trilogy

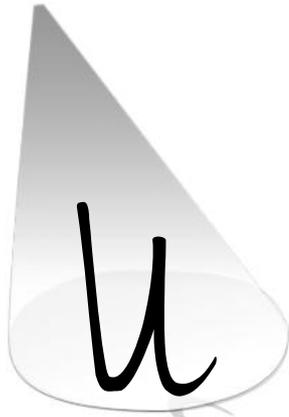
A group of three tragedies which, with a satyr-play, made up a traditional set of plays in an Athenian drama festival.

Can also refer to any three plays grouped together as one overall work, e.g. Torch Song Trilogy is a collection of three plays by Harvey Fierstein.

See also Classical Greek drama

trust exercises

Used in training actors and in developing characterisation; part of the Theatre Games repertoire. Trust exercises focus students on the co-operative nature of drama, the need for collaborative empathy and trust.



understudy

An actor who also learns the roles of major characters so that, in the event of illness or other accident, he/she may step into the role and the play continues.

unison speaking

Where two or more actors speak a speech at the same time.

See choral speaking

unities

unities of time, place and action

The three principles of dramatic structure.

Unity of time: action in drama takes place in “real” or actual elapsed time; in some traditions, unity of time means that dramatic action takes place within 24 hours.

Unity of place: action takes place in one location.

Unity of action: drama is focused through one plot with no subsidiary plots or sub-plots.

See also Aristotelian drama

universal themes

When drama reaches beyond particular characters or events and deals with commonly-shared emotions and situations; when drama is faithful to fundamental truths of human behaviour.

upstage

The section of a proscenium arch or thrust playing space furthest from the audience

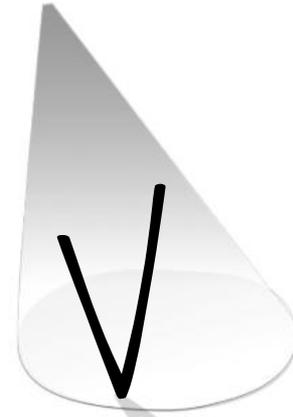
See Stage geography

upstaging

Used to indicate a form of attention-seeking by actors, where they draw focus away from the main action and to themselves; originated from the practice of actors in proscenium arch theatres placing themselves upstage of other actors forcing them to turn their backs to the audience; generally considered an undesirable practice.

ushers

Front of house staff in theatres who check tickets and guide audience members to their allocated seats and have safety responsibility for the audience.



values

The principles and standards of a society or culture.

See drama values.

vaudeville

Popular entertainment including singing, dancing and comic acts; sometimes called a variety show. UK usage: music hall, a comical play with songs and dances.

vegetation myth

Recurring theme in drama and literature: the vegetation myth sees drama in images of *growth, maturity, decline, decay, death, rebirth* as a continuing cycle

verbatim theatre

Is a form of documentary theatre created when playwrights and performers use interviews and direct quotes to create a performance e.g. the play *Aftershocks* by Paul Brown, which tells the story of the 1989 Newcastle earthquake and the aftermath.

See also documentary drama

verse drama

Is based on use of line of regular rhythm and metre and, occasionally, using rhyme. The many subtle variations of verse and poetry are used to give a sense of heightened language, formality and shape to drama.

Blank verse: unrhymed verse

Juliet in speaking to Romeo uses poetic imagery shaped into blank verse:

*Thou knowst the mask of night is on my face
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek
For that which thou hast heard me speak tonight*

Iambic pentameter

Most commonly used verse line, capable of sounding like natural speech rhythm and yet also communicating a heightened and formalised sense. As a form it is malleable, open to variety and individuality of expression.

In iambic pentameter lines there are five feet each of a light followed by a stressed syllable.

*But soft what light from yonder window breaks?
It is the East, and Juliet is the sun!*

In iambic pentameter, there is also usually a break or pause in the line – called a **caesura**. Not every line of iambic

pentameter has this poise but it is often used to give a shape to the meaning.

But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?

It is the East, and Juliet is the sun!

Alexandrine: a line of six iambic feet; popular amongst French playwrights of the classical period.

In verse, lines can be:

End stopped: where the end of a line occurs with the end of a phrase, clause or sense of meaning

Run-on: showing *enjambement* – literally “a striding over”, where the sense meaning carries across the end of a line and into the next.

*Gallop apace, you fiery footed steeds,
Towards Phoebus' lodging! Such a wagoner
As Phaeton would whip you to the West
And bring in cloudy night immediately*

The major standard English verse units (called feet) are used with great subtlety and variety in verse drama

Iambic a light followed by a stressed syllable

Anapestic two light syllables followed by a stressed syllable

Trochaic a stressed syllable followed by a light syllable

Dactylic a stressed syllable followed by two light syllables

Spondaic two successive syllables with approximately equal stresses

Pyrrhic two successive syllables with approximately equal light stresses

Metric lines are named according to the number of feet in them:

Monometer: one foot

Dimeter: two feet

Trimeter: three feet

Tetrameter: four feet

Pentameter: five feet

Hexameter: six feet

Heptameter: seven feet

Octameter: eight feet

Rhyme can be

End rhyme: where the sounds at the end of the lines match

Hermia: I frown upon him, yet he loves me still

Helena: Oh that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill

Internal rhyme: (assonance) where there is repetition of sounds within a line

O fleet sweet swallow

Rhyme can also be described as:

Feminine: involving more than one syllable:

abated-translated; garrison-comparison

Masculine: rhyme based on one syllable

fair-air; see-me

There is also **para rhyme** an incomplete or imperfect rhyme:

lads/lids; groaned/ground

See also conceits, figures of speech

versification

The art of writing verses

See also verse drama

Victorian Drama

Notable for technical innovation but is tended to be dismissed for its approach and content. During the reign of Queen Victoria which covered most of the 19th century, English drama showed the ascendancy of actors and managers and the lowering of the status and importance of playwrights. There was a move to entertainments and popular theatre forms such as music hall and a preference for melodrama, domestic tragedy and sentimental comedy.

viewpoints (Overlie/Bogart)

A method of analysing, examining and creating movement pieces and staging for theatre and dance. Originally developed by the choreographer Mary Overlie in the 1970s for dance. Anne Bogart and Tina Landau adapted the work for actors and directors to use in the 1980s.

Bogart identifies the basic viewpoints as

- tempo
- duration
- repetition
- kinesthetic response
- gesture
- shape
- topography
- spacial relationship
- architecture

which when analysed and used in staging and performing create character and story.

Bogart has also defined 3 vocal viewpoints - pitch, dynamic and timbre.

viewpoints (interpretive filters for making and responding to drama)

In responding to drama and as the basis for making drama, there are a range of different sometimes overlapping points of view:

- there can be questions about meanings and interpretations as artists and audiences;
- contexts of societies, cultures and histories can be a starting point;
- there can be a focus on elements, materials, skills and processes, forms and styles, and content or subject-matter
- moving deeper there can be questions about philosophies and ideologies, critical theories, institutions, scientific knowledge and psychology.

virtual theatre

Drama and theatre presented in a virtual medium such as in cyberspace, on the Internet, in digital form where there is no physical presence of actors.

visual elements

The formal Visual Elements are: line, shape, colour, form (2D, 3D and 4D), texture, value, space, time.

voice dynamics (vocal dynamics)

voice

Variation of vocal dimensions for communicating meaning and context in the creation of character and dramatic action:

- Loudness/softness (projection and audibility)
- Clarity, articulation and phrasing
- Emphasis, inflection and intensity
- Fluency
- Pace, rate, tempo, cadence
- Use of pause, phrasing
- Pitch and range
- Rhythm

- Tone, resonance and timbre
- Dynamics and modulation
- (where appropriate) dialect

As instruments voices are capable of flexibility and variety. They provide a significant tool for actors. They also need the support of good posture and breathing. They can also be damaged unless well-managed, need warm-up and the development of stamina. Much more than technique, effective voice dynamics involves the use language, interpretation of texts, characters, action and songs, how to colour words, how to shape phrases, and how to tell a story through drama.



warm up

warm down (cool down)

When the bodies of participants in drama are physically prepared; warm-ups may also attend to the cognitive, social and psychological as well as physiological needs for participants to prepare themselves to meet the fictional exploratory worlds of drama; the term is also used to include a range of focus, voice, movement and concentration exercises. Warm ups focus on posture and body alignment; movement control and for characterisation and dramatic action; breath control techniques for voice production, characterisation and dramatic action; and, vocal clarity and flexibility.

Warm down describes the process of stretching and relaxing following a performance or drama activity.

web series

Drama created specifically to be presented online. Can be episodic or stand alone stories.

well-made play

Tightly-crafted dramatic text using a balanced design characterised by a beginning/middle/end; highly structured, with careful plotting of action and resolution of major characters. The term was coined by French playwright Eugene Scribe (*piece bien faite*) in the 19th century and was a powerful shaping force for most realistic drama. Neatness was all and plot was crafted using a range of devices to support rising dramatic tension, clearly motivated characterisation and an obligatory revelation scene where the various threads were logically drawn together.

wig

Covering for the head made from human, animal or synthetic hair. Used in the theatre in collaboration with costume to show character.

See also costume, disguise

willing suspension of disbelief

Phrase coined by Samuel Taylor Coleridge to describe the conscious acceptance of the illusion or unreality of drama by audiences; although it is clearly an actor on a performance space, members of audiences suspend or hold at bay their scepticism or sense of reality in favour of believing the imagined dramatic action.

See also suspension of disbelief

Wilson, Robert

Born in 1941, Wilson has become one of America's leading avant guard theatre directors working prolifically in both America and Europe. Known for his austere style, extreme manipulation of space and time, emphasis on very slow movement and minimal use of language, Wilson develops and directs work that values image rather than plot.

wings

Off stage space – derived from proscenium arch spaces where it was used to describe the space where the actors could wait out of sight of the audience.

writing in drama

There are a range of ways that actors, directors and designers write to communicate their ideas when working in drama that are distinctive from forms of playwrighting/playwriting/scripting/etc. Most writing undertaken by drama and theatre team members is process focused: Making visible the transitory, the ephemeral, the intangible for future use. In working in drama, there is a need to: brain storm ideas and concepts; make notes; highlight scripts; make reminders, lists, plan and schedule. The purpose of immediate, purposeful and practical.

Lists	<p>a number of connected items or names written or printed consecutively, typically one below the other (sometimes as dot points)</p> <p>a set of items considered as being in the same category</p> <p>a set of items having a particular order of priority</p>
Tables	a set of facts or figures systematically displayed in columns
Graphic organisers	<p>use visual symbols to express economically knowledge, concepts, thoughts, or ideas, and the relationships between them</p> <p>Includes knowledge maps, concept maps, diagrams (e.g. Venn diagrams), charts, storyboards, word webs, flow charts, cause-and-effect diagrams</p>
Paragraphs	succinct unit of communication that gives one main idea and all the examples or the smaller ideas that explain and support it. The main idea is given in the topic sentence usually the first sentence of the paragraph
Timelines	a graphic way of describing events in chronological order
Annotated Diagrams	<p>A diagram is a simplified drawing/ illustration that shows the appearance, structure, or workings of something; a schematic representation of ideas</p> <p>an annotated diagram accurately and succinctly labels the drawing/illustration</p>

There are many ways of writing - the form of writing is shaped by purpose. The different ways we write reflect shifts in purpose and audience.

There is no one way of writing in drama but many and we judge the effectiveness of our writing by whether it communicates for the intended purpose to the intended audience.

Writing in drama examinations

Drama examinations have particular writing expectations. Most importantly writing in an examination is a way of showing your knowledge and understanding of drama in performance. You need to answer the questions asked, support your answers with reference to texts, skills, processes, knowledge and understanding. You need to accurately use specific drama and theatre terminology. Writing in drama examinations is a particular genre or type of writing with its own style markers and requirements.

Short answer formats require the use of lists, summaries, annotated sketches and diagrams, tables, graphic organisers. Answers need to be succinct, directly answer the questions asked without elaborate or excessive words

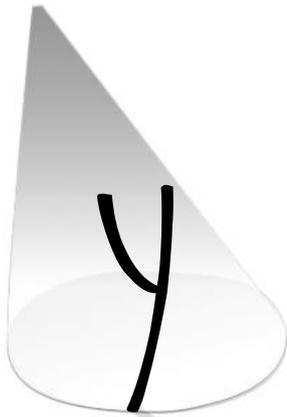
Extended answer formats require something more than the traditional examination essay – though they include some aspects of effective writing such effective use of paragraph structure where each paragraph focuses on one main idea through a topic sentence that is followed by supporting evidence and argument; clear opening statement that focuses on the question asked (without simply re-stating it); logical construction of an argument that builds from point to point; clear conclusion that does more than simply summarise. Extended answer formats also include the use of annotated diagrams, charts, tables, lists, dot points, graphic organisers, timelines, etc.

Writing critically about drama – as critic and commentator – involves processes of writing to describe, analyse, interpret and evaluate. *Describing* focuses on what is seen, heard and observed.

Analysing is a process of identifying parts of the whole; it includes categorising observations, ordering them, comparing and contrasting them.

Interpreting drama critically involves bringing into play the personal and subjective elements of responding; it involves making associations with other drama events, memories, human experience; inferring; reasoning deductively and inductively; questioning and speculating.

Evaluating is the process of making informed judgments about drama: taking account of context, theoretical frames, personal preferences as the basis of making a judgment.

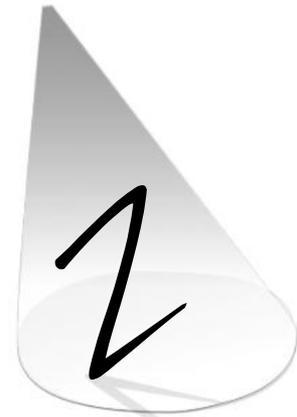


youth theatre

Drama made by young people as distinguished from theatre for young people.

The term youth theatre is also used to describe group-devised drama

See also group devised drama, playbuilding



Zairean drama

French speaking country; Zaire developed amateur drama that was largely conventional in form and European in influence. As the country moved towards independence, drama played a role as political propaganda. Since independence drama has been supported but also subjected to censorship. Touring companies have played an important role.

See also African drama

Zambian drama

Zambia had a rich traditional drama with dances, dance dramas and ritual plays being performed in seasonal and religious festivals and rites of passage such as the *Makishi* masquerade and the *nachisunga* ceremony. With colonisation traditional drama was transformed with the addition of new masks, elaborating of comic and satiric plots and an emphasis on entertainment. As part of the move to independence, drama played a significant political role through youth groups, universities and community-based theatres in working class areas

Chikwakwa Theatre has developed a tradition of touring drama in English and Zambian languages, workshops and plays for children.

See also African drama

zeitgeist

Spirit of the time; general cultural trend that characterises a particular time or place.

Zen Zen Zo

Founded in 1992 this Brisbane based physical theatre company creates and performs visual theatre works inspired by ancient Asian theatre traditions and European physical theatre techniques in an effort to inspire a visceral reaction in their audiences. They also offer physical training courses for actors focusing on Suzuki and Butoh methodologies.

See also physical theatre

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