

Tuesday 10/31/17

AOT

Types of Theatre and Isms

Movements

- ▶ Naturalism
- ▶ Expressionism
- ▶ Dadaism
- ▶ Surrealism
- ▶ Epic Theatre
- ▶ Theatre of Cruelty
- ▶ Existentialism
- ▶ Absurdism

Naturalism (1850s to early 1900s)

- ▶ Originated in France
 - ▶ Influenced by Darwin
- ▶ Emile Zola
- ▶ Tenets
 - ▶ Literature must become scientific
 - ▶ Dramatists should observe, record, and experiment with detachment
 - ▶ Reproduction of events with exactness



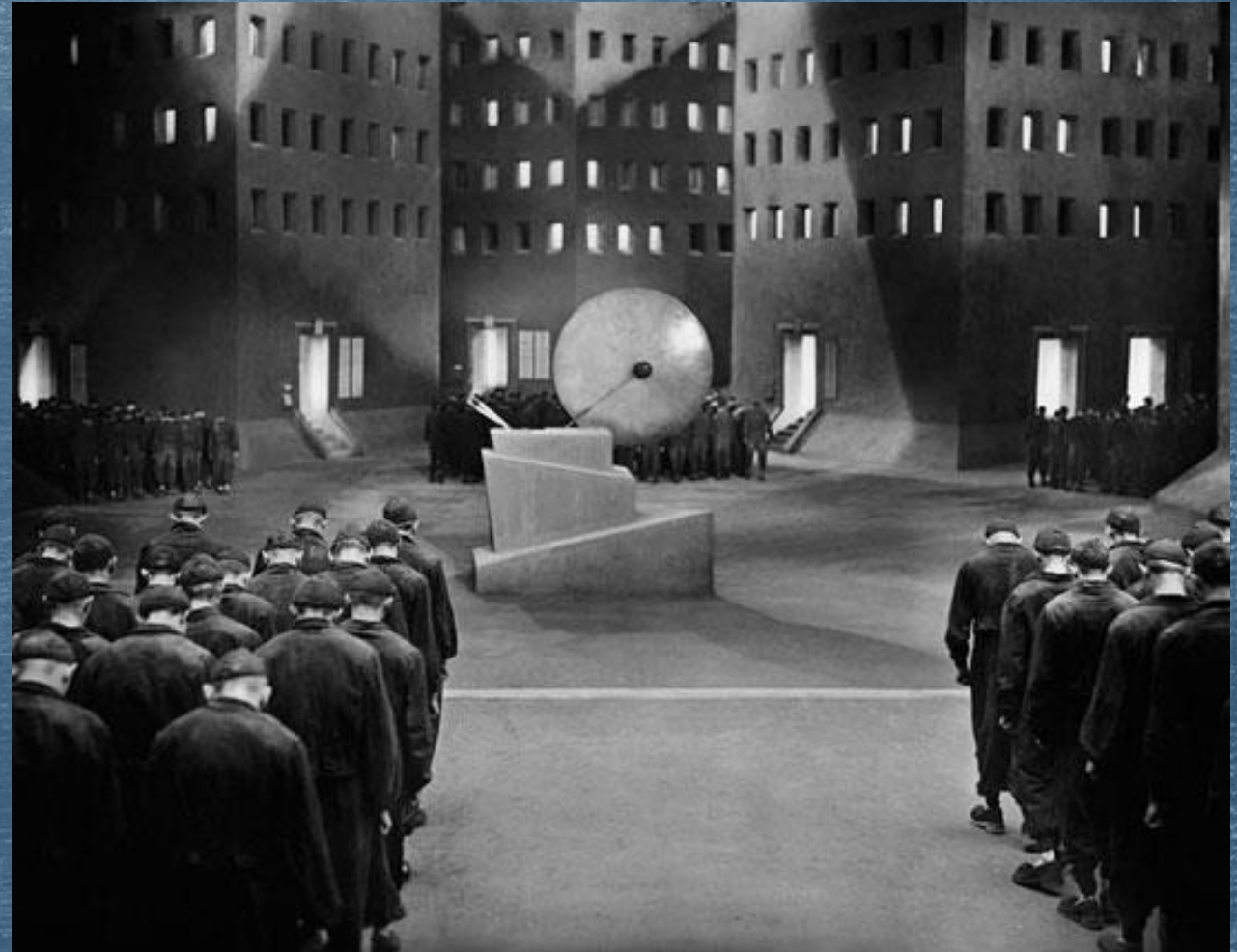
Expressionism (1910 – 1924)

- ▶ Originated in Germany
- ▶ Tenets
 - ▶ Anthropomorphic
 - ▶ Truth in humanity's spiritual qualities
 - ▶ External reality can be changed to meld with human spirit
 - ▶ Promise of a utopia
 - ▶ Episodic structure
- ▶ Reaction to Realism/Naturalism
- ▶ *The Adding Machine, A Dream Play*



Expressionism (1910-1924)

- ▶ New artistic means
 - ▶ Distorted line, exaggerated shapes, odd coloring, mechanical movement
- ▶ World War I
 - ▶ Warnings of catastrophe
 - ▶ Reformation of society
- ▶ 1918 German revolution
- ▶ 1924
 - ▶ Disillusionment and disappointment



Dadaism (1916 – 1920)

- ▶ Originated in Switzerland
- ▶ Reaction to Realism and WWI
- ▶ Tenets
 - ▶ Art should mirror the madness of the world
 - ▶ Confront and antagonize the audience
 - ▶ Replace logic with calculated madness
- ▶ Simultaneous action
- ▶ “Chance” or “Sound”



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fkl92oV1kMc>

Surrealism (1924 – mid 1900s)

- ▶ Originated in France
- ▶ Developed from Dada
- ▶ Tenets
 - ▶ Subconscious is the highest plane of reality
 - ▶ Free from everyday logic
- ▶ Andre Breton
 - ▶ Pure psychic automatism to find the real process of thought



Epic Theatre (1924 – mid 1900s)

- ▶ Originated in Germany
- ▶ Erwin Piscator
 - ▶ Events in Europe and the need for social and political reforms
 - ▶ Modern staging
- ▶ Bertolt Brecht
 - ▶ Alienation effect
 - ▶ Audience can consciously think about the themes of the play
 - ▶ Direct audience interaction
 - ▶ Simple sets
 - ▶ Exposed mechanisms



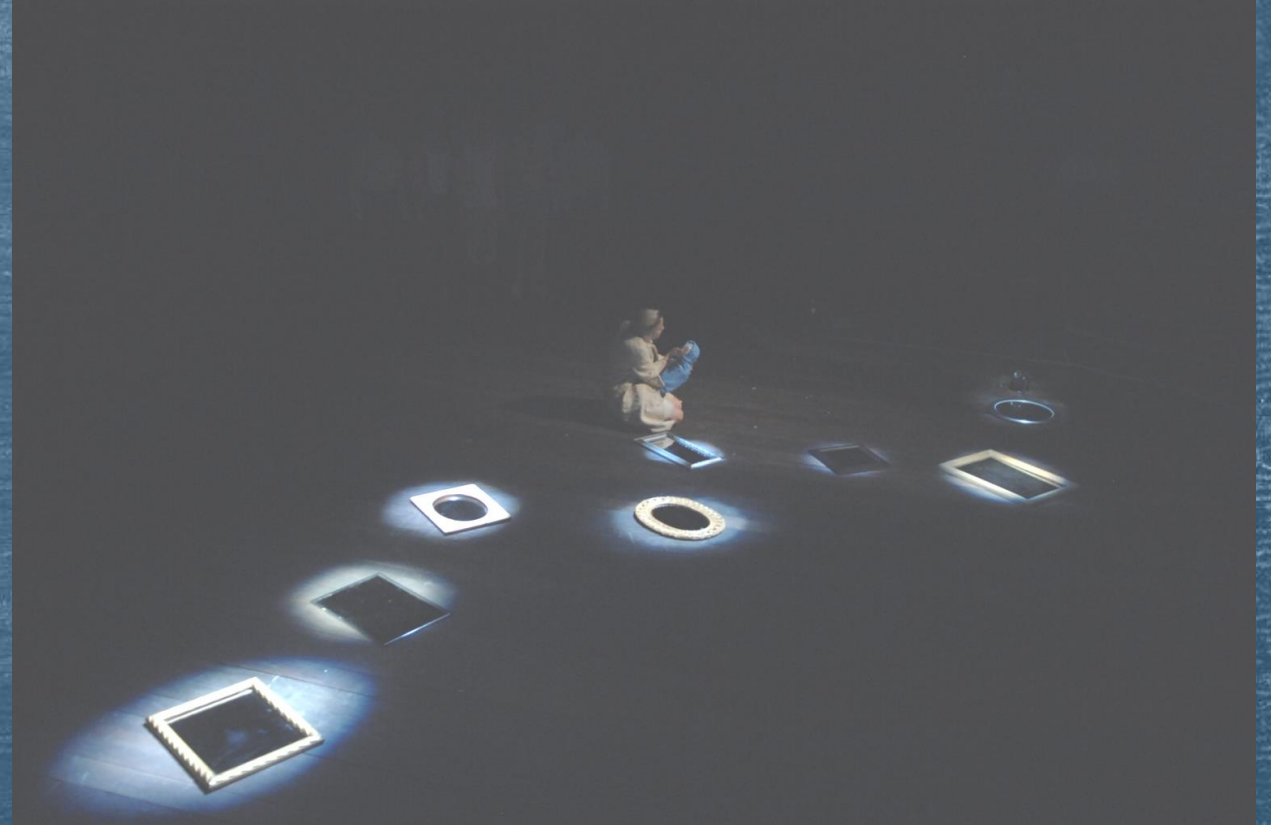
Epic Theatre (1924 – mid 1900s)

► Tenets

- Sweeping plots
- Many locations
- Large casts
- Political themes

► Plays

- *Mother Courage and Her Children, The Caucasian Chalk Circle*



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oN38m_07Mhk

Theatre of Cruelty (1931 – 1945)

- ▶ Originated in France
- ▶ Antonin Artaud
- ▶ Tenets
 - ▶ Theatre was created to drain abscesses
 - ▶ Senses should be disturbed and challenged
 - ▶ Abrupt staging
 - ▶ Purge the audience morally and spiritually



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPjvsd-9DC0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PflbwlGcWso>

Existentialism (1940s – 1960s)

- ▶ French Origin, WWII
- ▶ Tenets
 - ▶ “Condemned to be free”
 - ▶ Deny the existence of God
 - ▶ Fixed standards of conduct
 - ▶ Verifiable moral codes
 - ▶ Politically engaged
 - ▶ Choices must be made
- ▶ Jean-Paul Sarte
 - ▶ *No Exit*



Existentialism (1940s – 1960s)

► Staging

- Plays were traditional dramatic form
- Dramatic action had cause and effect
- Assumption that the world is irrational



Absurdism (1940s – 1960s)

- ▶ French Origin, post WWII
- ▶ Tenets
 - ▶ Humans face cold, hostile universe
 - ▶ Philosophical arguments
 - ▶ Detailed analyses of unimportant things
 - ▶ Action filled moments that have no resolution
 - ▶ Plots are circular
 - ▶ Laughter is the only coping tool for pain



Absurdism (1940s – 1960s)

- ▶ Fatalist Absurdism
 - ▶ Trapped in an irrational universe where communication is impossible
- ▶ Hilarious Absurdism
 - ▶ Insanity of life in a comical way
- ▶ Samuel Beckett
 - ▶ *Waiting for Godot*
- ▶ Eugene Ionesco
 - ▶ *Rhinoceros*
- ▶ Kafkaesque
 - ▶ surreal distortion and impending danger



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJi7vu_QDus