

PERFORMANCE, AUDIENCE, & CRITIC

Chapter 2

THEATRE'S GOAL

Arouse The Desired
Audience Response

- The ephemerality of performance means a missed line or action is forever lost to the spectator.
- The audience is offered one interpretation, chosen by the director.
- Different director=different interpretation

THEATRE VS. THEATER (FILM)

- Fewer performance times to choose from
- Tickets in advance
- Reserved seating
- Programs
- Mood music in advance
- Intermission(s)
- More performance times to choose from
- Tickets available at door
- Open seating
- No programs
- Commercials in advance
- No intermissions

HOW DOES ONE WATCH A PERFORMANCE?

- There are NO rules about how to experience a theatrical performance.
- Helps if one is willing to devote attention and concentration to the performance.
- Spectators must be willing to use imagination, to be open to suggestion.
- Seating area, stage design, facility size, may affect audience concentration.

WHO IS THE AUDIENCE?

- Broadway: upper middle class to upper class
- Community: tends to be white, middle class, middle age, and better educated.

Can any theatre serve all the interests in a community?

Should funding for minority specific productions go to mainstream theaters to encourage such productions? OR

Should such funding go ONLY to minority specific theaters?

THE CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

- “Everyone’s a critic!”
- Is typically a three stage process:
 - First the experience
 - Then the analysis
 - Finally, the communication of the analysis.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL CRITIC

- A recognized critic should have theatre-going experience
- Need to understand what is required for a production in order to evaluate each of the contributing arts
- Need to be aware of the audience for whom they are writing/communicating

Critic must be concerned with 3 Basic Problems

- UNDERSTANDING – What were the playwright, director, etc. trying to accomplish? Might the critic read the play first? Why?
- EFFECTIVENESS - How well did they accomplish what they set out to do?
- ULTIMATE WORTH – How valuable was the experience? Is there a standard to measure against?

QUALITIES NEEDED BY A CRITIC

- Sensitivity to feelings emotions, ideas
- Acquaintance [as much as possible] with all the different periods and types of theatre
- Willingness to explore plays and production processes
- Tolerance of **innovation**

Qualities cont.

- Awareness of his/her own prejudices/biases and values
- Ability to articulate clearly in expressing judgments and the bases for those
- Courteous demeanor
- Avoidance of dogmatism