

## Three drama theorists

<b>Stanislavsky 1863 – 1938 Russian</b>	<b>Brecht 1898 – 1856 German</b>	<b>Artaud 1896 – 1948 French</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The theatre of realism – created from acting techniques</li> <li>• Characters built from within the actor so that a 'theatre of living experience' is created</li> <li>• Very high physical and mental concentration eg. Circles of attention – ie complete self discipline</li> <li>• Strong, wide range of verbal skills required: diction, projection, resonance and expressiveness of the voice to be used by actors</li> <li>• Being physically dexterous required: exercises, mime and dance used to make actors supple, graceful and strong.</li> <li>• The strongest human feeling is signalled by small, natural movements – therefore actors must have sophisticated control of their bodies.</li> <li>• Every physical movement has some reason for it or is caused by some effect.</li> <li>• Emotions of the character must be experienced by the actor; or a parallel experience must be recalled by the actor – this creates emotional empathy between the actor and the character.</li> <li>• Characters built from observation to learn about people and their behaviour required: watch, listen with real concentration.</li> <li>• Therefore research, from observation, physical and emotional required to build a character.</li> <li>• Analysis of a character's</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theatre of reform: theatre has the purpose of using drama to change the political and social Structure of our world.</li> <li>• Epic theatre: a story, usually historical, told on a large scale, over a long period.</li> <li>• Brecht's plays are striking theatrical propaganda – he compared his plays to scientific experiments; human behaviours are studied to show why they happened and how that behaviour could be improved.</li> <li>• Brecht set out to change people's minds.</li> <li>• Brecht wanted to show his audience what was wrong with society and then convince them to go out and change it.</li> <li>• The plays tell stories using techniques to remind the audience that they are observers, watching the events happening. The relationship of the actor and the audience is the exact opposite of what Artaud intended.</li> <li>• 'Alienation' was Brecht's intention to take away from a character or an event the things that make them familiar and understandable. The aim was to constantly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theatre of cruelty founded in 1927 by Artaud – called his theatre the Alfred Jarry Theatre, after Jarry's production of Ubi Roi, about the murder of the king of Poland. It was performed by actors as if they were puppets. The performance style involved wild caricature and extreme satire. The set was painted with bizarre illustrations of the inside and outside of a room with palm tree, a snake and a skeleton hanging from a gallows all visible – some characters were life sized puppets made of cane.</li> <li>• Artaud wanted to change the world by a direct assault on human emotions.</li> <li>• Artaud did not mean physical cruelty but an attack on the emotions designed to shock the audience and totally involve them in the drama.</li> <li>• Artaud set out to create a theatre of magic, beauty and power.</li> <li>• His productions were rejected in his lifetime, but have had a profound effect on theatre since.</li> <li>• Artaud felt the world was in desperate need of</li> </ul>

<p>motives and reasons for his or her behaviour underpin a character's actions required to find a characters drive or intentions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actors need to analyse themselves, their own actions, knowledge and experience to discover their own motives and super-objectives.</li> <li>• The 'what if' or 'magic if'. This technique is used to stimulate creativity, ie having developed all the skills above, the actor says 'what if I were this character in this situation? What would I do?</li> <li>• Actors with physical, vocal and emotional skills and total commitment to their characters using the 'magic if' become completely involved in the imaginative reality of the play. The situation on the stage becomes real for the actor; therefore it becomes real for the audience.</li> <li>• A part of the actor must always remain in control of their created character so that part of their consciousness remains separate, observing and directing the behaviour of the character. (In other words, reflect on what it is like to be in the shoes of another person)</li> </ul>	<p>surprise and challenge the audience, while reminding them that they were watching a story with a strong political point.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The magic world created by characters is to be broken in a number of ways, screen or notices with information or comments about the action or character. Sometimes there was a narrator; often there was a song. These techniques were to remind the audience that they were watching a play and that the play had a message.</li> <li>• The audience is aware of the characters as actors (visible lighting, partial set...)</li> <li>• Scenery was often changed in front of the audience.</li> <li>• Costumes could be whole, or a single item, or prop would be all that was used.</li> <li>• Lighting was often bright and white, despite the time of the scene.</li> <li>• Characters were strongly physicalised – at times in symbolic ways – eg stylised actions, from the formal Chinese theatre where crying is shown by moving the finger up and down in front of the eyes; robotic, mechanical, dreamlike and other non-realistic movements and voice; using opposite styles of acting such as a serious death scene in an outrageous comedy</li> </ul>	<p>change (NB he had lived through WW1 and the Depression was looming).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artaud's view of the world as being full of lies, aimlessness, meanness and hypocrisy echoes the philosophy of existentialism – that human beings must face up to the pointless absurdity of their lives and only then they will be free to take actions and make decisions which reflect the terrible reality of existence.</li> <li>• Artaud shared this pessimistic view, but believed it was possible to change that world through his theatre.</li> <li>• For Artaud, life = theatre and theatre = life ie they were mirrors of each other.</li> <li>• Artaud believed that if the world of theatre could be transformed by him, then the outside world would be altered.</li> <li>• Artaud watched Balinese dancers in 1931: the use of stylised movement, gesture, dance, music and costume had enormous emotional impact. It communicated feelings about the great human mysteries of creation, growth and death in ways words could not.</li> <li>• He therefore wanted strong physical theatre to be used to 'hypnotise the audience as a snake-charmer hypnotises a snake, putting them into</li> </ul>
--	--	---

	<p>style; perform with the awareness of being watched.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vocal work is very demanding; actors are encouraged to sing, chant, use mechanical and strange sounding voices, produce non-human sounds and speak in a range of dialects and class accents. Class distinctions and regional accents are carefully written into the language of the plays and are extensively used as part of the political and social messages.</li><li>• His plays use a mixture of naturalistic and unnatural style.</li></ul>	<p>a trance in which they could be shocked into confronting themselves, their way of life, and the meaning and mystery of all existence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Words were still important but only when totally necessary.</li><li>• He wanted theatre to assault the senses, to break through the desensitization of people.</li><li>• Artaud planned 'an assault on the senses' using light, music and sound – like rock concerts do.</li><li>• Actors were to use techniques to directly involve the audience in the action and emotion.</li><li>• Actors were to expose the lies, meaninglessness and hypocrisy of much of life.</li><li>• He saw theatre as a mirror for the audience to be reflected in.</li><li>• With the use of masks, ritual objects and traditional and striking costumes. Artaud hoped to remove his audience from their everyday.</li></ul>
--	--	--