

## Introduction

**Theatre of the Absurd** came about as a reaction to World War II. It took the basis of existential philosophy and combined it with dramatic elements to create a style of theatre which presented a world which can not be logically explained, life is in one word, ABSURD!

The original or dictionary meaning of absurd is 'Out of harmony'. But the word has a different meaning when it is used in the [theatre](#) of the absurd

The **Theatre of the Absurd** is a designation for particular plays of absurdist fiction, written by a number of primarily European playwrights in the late 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, as well as to the style of theatre which has evolved from their work. Their work expressed the belief that, in a godless universe, human existence has no meaning or purpose and therefore all communication breaks down. Logical construction and argument gives way to irrational and illogical speech and to its ultimate conclusion, silence.

**N.A.Scott** defines it, "Man yearns for some measure of happiness in an orderly, a rational and a reasonably predictable world; when he finds misery in a disorderly, an irrational and an unpredictable world, he's oppressed by the absurdity of the disparity between the universe as he wishes it to be and as he sees it."(qtd. in Eliopoulos 40)

Martin Esslin opines--- 'a good play must have a cleverly constructed story, these have no story or plot to speak of : if a good play is judged by subtlety of characterization and motivation, these are often without recognizable characters and present the audience with almost mechanical puppets; if a good play has to have a fully explained theme, which is neatly exposed and finally solved, these

often have neither a beginning nor an end; if a good play is to hold the mirror upto nature and portray the manners and mannerisms of the age in finely observed sketches, these seem often to be reflections of dreams and nightmares' if a good play relies on witty repartee and pointed dialogues, these often consist of incoherent babblings'.

Playwrights commonly associated with the Theatre of the Absurd include Samuel Beckett, Eugène Ionesco, Jean Genet, Harold Pinter, Tom Stoppard, Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Fernando Arrabal, and Edward Albee

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