

Aesthetics and Semiotics in Theatre Performance

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Abstract : Structured in three chapters, the article attempts an X-ray of the theatrical aesthetics, correctly understood through the emotions generated in the intimate structure of the spectator that precedes the triggering of the viewer's perception and not through the superposition, unfortunately common, of the notion of aesthetics with the style in which a theater show is built. The first chapter contains a brief history of the appearance of the word aesthetic, the formulation of definitions for this new term, as well as its connections with the notions of semiotics, in particular with the perception of the message transmitted. Starting with Aristotle and Plato, and reaching Magritte, their interventions should not be interpreted in the sense that the two scientific concepts can merge into one discipline. The perception that is the object of everyone's analysis, the understanding of meaning, the decoding of the messages sent, and the triggering of feelings that culminate in pleasure, shaping the aesthetic vision, are some elements that keep semiotics and aesthetics distinct, even though they share many methods of analysis. The compositional processes of aesthetic representation and symbolic formation are analyzed in the second part of the paper from perspectives that include or do not include historical, cultural, social, and political processes. Aesthetics and the organization of its symbolic process are treated, taking into account expressive activity. The last part of the article explores the notion of aesthetics in applied theater, more specifically in the theater show. Taking the postmodern approach that aesthetics applies to the creation of an artifact and the reception of that artifact, the intervention of these elements in the theatrical system must be emphasized -that is, the analysis of the problems arising in the stages of the creation, presentation, and reception, by the public, of the theater performance. The aesthetic process is triggered involuntarily, simultaneously, or before the moment when people perceive the meaning of the messages transmitted by the work of art. The finding of this fact makes the mental process of aesthetics similar or related to that of semiotics. No matter how perceived individually, beauty, the mechanism of production can be reduced to two. The first step presents similarities to Peirce's model, but the process between signified and signified additionally stimulates the related memory of the evaluation of beauty, adding to the meanings related to the signification itself. Then, the second step, a process of comparison, is followed, in which one examines whether the object being looked at matches the accumulated memory of beauty. Therefore, even though aesthetics is derived from the conceptual part, the judgment of beauty and, more than that, moral judgment come to be so important to the social activities of human beings that it evolves as a visible process independent of other conceptual contents.

Keywords : aesthetics, semiotics, symbolic composition, subjective joints, signifying, signified

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