

FEATURES OF THEATRE AS AN ART FORM : MAIN GENRES, STYLES , FORMS , DIRECTIONS

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This article examines theatre as an evolving art form, analyzing its genres, styles, forms, and contemporary directions. From classical performances to modern experimental and digital theatre, theatre has continuously adapted to social, political, and technological changes. The study explores major genres such as tragedy, comedy, and musical theatre, alongside styles like realism, expressionism, and absurdism. It also examines various theatrical forms, including classical, immersive, and online performances, highlighting their impact on audience engagement. A key focus is George Bernard Shaw's contributions, whose integration of realism, satire, and intellectual critique influenced modern theatre movements such as epic theatre and political drama. The study also highlights emerging trends, including technological innovations and interdisciplinary collaborations, emphasizing theatre's continued significance as a medium for artistic expression and social critique.

Keywords: theatre, performing arts, genres, styles, forms, tragedy, comedy, drama, realism, expressionism, absurdism, immersive theatre, digital theatre, experimental theatre, modern trends, theatrical evolution.

ОСОБЕННОСТИ ТЕАТРА КАК ВИДА ИСКУССТВА: ОСНОВНЫЕ ЖАНРЫ, СТИЛИ, ФОРМЫ, НАПРАВЛЕНИЯ

В данной статье исследуется театр как вид искусства, акцентируя внимание на его ключевых особенностях, включая жанры, стили, формы и современные направления. Театр, являясь одним из древнейших и наиболее динамичных видов художественного самовыражения, прошел путь от древнегреческих и римских постановок до современных экспериментальных и цифровых представлений. В статье рассматриваются основные жанры, такие как трагедия, комедия и мюзикл, а также различные театральные стили, включая реализм, экспрессионизм и театр абсурда. Кроме того, анализируются различные формы театра, такие как классический, уличный, иммерсивный и онлайн-театр. В статье также освещаются новые направления развития театра, включая технологические инновации, глобализацию и междисциплинарное сотрудничество. Анализ этих аспектов позволяет получить целостное представление об эволюции театра и его значимости в современном мире.

Ключевые слова: театр, исполнительское искусство, жанры, стили, формы, трагедия, комедия, драма, реализм, экспрессионизм, театр абсурда, иммерсивный театр, цифровой театр, экспериментальный театр, современные тенденции, эволюция театра.

TEATRNING SAN'AT SHAKLI SIFATIDA XUSUSIYATLARI: ASOSIY JANRLAR, USLUBLAR, SHAKLLAR, YO'NALISHLAR

Ushbu ilmiy maqola teatrni san'at turi sifatida o'rganib, uning asosiy xususiyatlariga – janrlar, uslublari, shakllari va zamonaviy yo'nalishlarga e'tibor qaratadi. Teatr eng qadimgi va eng dinamik san'at shakllaridan biri bo'lib, qadimgi yunon va rim spektakllaridan zamonaviy eksperimental hamda raqamli teatrga qadar rivojlanib kelgan. Tadqiqotda tragediya, komediya va musiqiy teatr kabi asosiy janrlar, shuningdek, realizm, ekspressionizm va absurd teatri kabi turli uslublari tahlil qilinadi. Bundan tashqari, klassik, ko'cha, immersiv va onlayn teatr kabi turli teatr shakllari ham ko'rib chiqiladi. Maqolada shuningdek, texnologik innovatsiyalar, globalashuv va fanlararo hamkorlik kabi zamonaviy teatrning rivojlanish yo'nalishlari ham yoritib beriladi. Ushbu jihatlarni tahlil qilish orqali teatrning taraqqiyoti va uning zamonaviy madaniyatdagi ahamiyati chuqurroq tushuniladi.

Kalit soʻzlar: teatr, ijro sanʼati, janrlar, uslublar, shakllar, tragediya, komediya, drama, realizm, ekspressionizm, absurd teatri, immersiv teatr, raqamli teatr, eksperimental teatr, zamonaviy tendensiyalar, teatr evolyutsiyasi.

Introduction. Theatre is one of the oldest and most influential art forms, serving as a powerful medium for storytelling, cultural expression, and social commentary. Unlike static art forms such as painting or sculpture, theatre is dynamic and interactive, bringing stories to life through live performances. It combines multiple artistic disciplines, including literature, music, dance, and visual arts, making it a uniquely immersive and collaborative experience. Beyond entertainment, theatre challenges societal norms, provokes thought, and inspires change, evolving continuously to reflect historical, political, and technological transformations.

The origins of theatre date back to ancient civilizations, where it played a vital role in religious rituals, political discourse, and community celebrations. In ancient Greece, theatre flourished in the 5th century BCE, with playwrights like Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides shaping the foundations of tragedy and comedy. These performances were staged in large amphitheaters and explored profound themes of fate, morality, and human nature. Roman theatre adapted Greek influences but expanded them with grand spectacles and elaborate stagecraft. During the Middle Ages, theatre became closely tied to the Church, with morality plays and mystery plays serving as tools for religious instruction. The Renaissance revived classical traditions, bringing forth dramatists such as William Shakespeare, who transformed theatre through his masterful storytelling, complex characters, and poetic dialogue. As theatre evolved, different artistic movements shaped its development. The 19th century saw the emergence of realism and naturalism, which aimed to depict life with authenticity and emotional depth. In contrast, the 20th century introduced experimental theatre, including expressionism, absurdism, and postmodernism, challenging traditional structures and pushing artistic boundaries. Today, theatre continues to evolve, incorporating digital technology, immersive storytelling, and interdisciplinary collaborations that redefine audience engagement and theatrical expression. A significant figure in the evolution of modern theatre is George Bernard Shaw, whose works revolutionized drama by blending wit, social critique, and intellectual depth. Shaw challenged conventional theatrical norms by addressing issues of class struggle, gender roles, and morality through sharp dialogue and realistic characters. His plays often served as platforms for political and philosophical debate, making theatre a medium for social change rather than mere entertainment. Among his most notable works:

Pygmalion (1913) – A satire on class distinctions and language, exploring themes of transformation and identity.

Saint Joan (1923) – A historical drama portraying Joan of Arc as a visionary ahead of her time, raising questions about faith, nationalism, and individualism.

Man and Superman (1903) – A philosophical comedy delving into the concept of the «Life Force» and human evolution.

This research explores the fundamental characteristics of theatre as an art form by analyzing its genres, styles, forms, and contemporary directions, with a particular focus on the contributions of Bernard Shaw. Understanding these components is essential to appreciating how theatre has evolved while maintaining its role as a powerful force in artistic and social expression. The study will examine major theatrical genres, including tragedy, comedy, and musical theatre, along with significant styles such as realism, expressionism, and absurdism. It will also explore various theatrical forms, from classical performances to immersive and digital theatre, highlighting Shaw's impact on modern drama. Finally, it will analyze contemporary directions in theatre, including technological innovations, globalization, and the fusion of theatre with other artistic disciplines, demonstrating the continued relevance of theatre in modern society.

Discussion. Theatre has long been a powerful medium for storytelling, cultural expression, and social commentary. Over time, various genres, styles, and forms have emerged, each shaping and being shaped by historical, political, and philosophical changes. Among the many figures who revolutionized theatre, George Bernard Shaw stands out as a playwright who not only redefined dramatic storytelling but also transformed theatre into an intellectual and political force. His works, which blend realism, satire, and philosophical debates, challenged societal norms and made audiences rethink class structures, morality, and human relationships. His influence extends across tragedy, comedy, drama, and even musical theatre adaptations, making him one of the most impactful figures in modern theatre.

Tragedy, one of the oldest dramatic genres, has traditionally explored fate, suffering, and the downfall of noble characters. From Greek tragedians like Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, who examined human flaws and divine justice, to Shakespeare's psychological tragedies (*Hamlet*, *Macbeth*), the genre has evolved

while maintaining its core themes of moral conflict and existential struggle. Though Shaw was not a conventional tragedian, his works incorporated tragic elements with an intellectual and satirical twist. His play *Saint Joan* (1923), considered his most tragic work, reinterprets the life of Joan of Arc, portraying her as a visionary who defies established institutions. Unlike classical tragedies, where heroes suffer due to fate, Shaw's Joan is defeated by the rigidity of society, religion, and politics—a theme that resonates with modern struggles for justice. In contrast to Shakespeare's tragic heroes, who are often flawed individuals, Joan is not undone by personal weakness but by societal intolerance, making her tragedy both historical and deeply philosophical. Shaw also critiqued traditional tragedy's fatalism, rejecting the idea that human destiny is predetermined. Instead, he believed that social structures and intellectual evolution shape human experiences. This perspective set him apart from classic tragedians and aligned him with the emerging realist and political theatre movements.

Comedy has long been used to entertain while subtly critiquing society. From Aristophanes' political satires (*Lysistrata*) in ancient Greece to Molière's comedy of manners (*Tartuffe*), comedic theatre has exposed hypocrisy, challenged norms, and provided a lens for social reflection. Shakespeare's comedies, such as *Twelfth Night* and *Much Ado About Nothing*, introduced humor through witty banter, mistaken identities, and romantic conflicts, but often avoided direct political commentary. Shaw, however, revolutionized comedy by using it as a tool for social and political debate. His comedies, unlike lighthearted romantic works, contained sharp critiques of class structures, gender roles, and economic injustices. *Pygmalion* (1913) is perhaps the best example of his intellectual comedy. The play follows Eliza Doolittle, a poor flower girl trained to speak like an aristocrat, highlighting how language and social class are interconnected. While many viewed *Pygmalion* as a charming transformation story, Shaw deliberately avoided a conventional romantic ending, emphasizing instead that social mobility is not simply about external changes but deeper societal acceptance. Another major work, *Man and Superman* (1903), blends comedy with philosophy, introducing Shaw's concept of the “Life Force”—the idea that humans, particularly women, drive social and evolutionary progress. Unlike traditional comedies that focus on romantic fulfillment, Shaw's work questions the very nature of love, power, and human purpose.

Unlike tragedy and comedy, drama delves into the psychological and moral struggles of individuals in a realistic setting. Henrik Ibsen, often called the father of modern drama, revolutionized theatre with *A Doll's House*, which questioned gender roles and societal expectations. Anton Chekhov introduced psychological realism, focusing on character-driven narratives rather than external action (*The Cherry Orchard*). Shaw was deeply influenced by Ibsen's realism and further developed it by integrating philosophy and social critique into his plays. Unlike Ibsen and Chekhov, who focused on domestic and interpersonal conflicts, Shaw broadened the scope of drama to include political, economic, and ethical dilemmas. His plays often served as a platform for debate, where characters represented opposing ideologies, forcing audiences to critically engage with the issues presented. For example, in *Major Barbara* (1905), Shaw examines morality, capitalism, and social responsibility. The protagonist, Barbara, is a Salvation Army officer who believes in charity, while her father, an arms manufacturer, argues that economic power is the true force for change. The play avoids a simplistic resolution, instead forcing the audience to question whether morality can exist independently of economic systems.

Although Shaw did not write musicals, his influence extended into musical theatre through adaptations of his works. The most famous example is *My Fair Lady* (1956), a musical adaptation of *Pygmalion*. While the musical retains much of Shaw's critique on class and language, it alters the ending to suggest a romantic resolution between Eliza and Professor Higgins—something Shaw deliberately avoided. Despite these adaptations, Shaw's works remain grounded in intellectual debate rather than spectacle, proving that theatrical storytelling can be engaging without compromising intellectual depth. His influence is evident in modern musical productions that incorporate strong social and political messages, such as *Hamilton* and *Les Misérables*, which, like Shaw's plays, examine power, identity, and class struggles. Beyond genres, Shaw played a critical role in shaping modern theatrical styles. He was a strong proponent of realism, rejecting exaggerated melodrama and focusing instead on sharp dialogue, well-developed characters, and social critique. Unlike Stanislavski's emotional realism, which emphasized deep psychological acting, Shaw's realism was intellectual and debate-driven, often making the audience actively engage with the themes rather than just empathizing with characters. Shaw's plays also share similarities with epic theatre, later developed by Bertolt Brecht. Both playwrights rejected passive audience engagement, instead using theatre as a medium for critical thought and political awareness. Brecht's alienation effect, which prevented emotional immersion, can be traced back to Shaw's technique of breaking conventional storytelling structures and ensuring that characters engaged in philosophical discourse rather than purely emotional conflict.

Bernard Shaw's contributions to theatre are inseparable from its broader evolution as an art form. He transformed tragedy by making it intellectually rather than emotionally driven, revolutionized comedy by turning it into a platform for social critique, reshaped drama by integrating realism with political debate, and even left an imprint on musical theatre through adaptations of his works. His plays challenged traditional structures, inspiring later movements such as epic theatre and postmodernism, which prioritize intellectual engagement over passive consumption. Ultimately, Shaw's legacy proves that theatre is not merely entertainment but a force for cultural change. By blending wit, realism, and philosophy, he redefined the role of the playwright—not just as a storyteller, but as an intellectual provocateur who forces audiences to think, question, and engage with the world around them.

Results. Theatre has long served as a mirror of cultural, social, and philosophical ideas, adapting to societal changes while preserving its core function as a medium for reflection, critique, and intellectual engagement. Whether through realism's depiction of everyday struggles, comedy's satire on social norms, or tragedy's exploration of human suffering, theatre provides a space for audiences to engage with pressing ethical, political, and philosophical dilemmas. George Bernard Shaw played a pivotal role in shaping this tradition, bridging classical theatre's structural integrity with modern drama's emphasis on social critique. His works not only entertained but also challenged societal conventions, exposed power dynamics, and prompted audiences to rethink moral and ideological frameworks. Theatre's ability to serve as a catalyst for dialogue and self-examination is deeply rooted in its history. In Greek tragedy, playwrights like Sophocles and Euripides examined moral responsibility, divine justice, and human suffering, forcing audiences to confront questions of fate versus free will. Similarly, Shakespeare's plays, such as *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, probed psychological conflict, ethical dilemmas, and the consequences of power and ambition. However, while these classical works emphasized personal and existential crises, Shaw shifted the focus to broader socio-political concerns. Shaw's works differ from traditional tragedy and realism in that they provoke intellectual, rather than purely emotional, engagement. His characters, unlike Shakespearean tragic heroes, are not undone by fate or psychological flaws, but rather by the rigid and oppressive structures of society. For example, in *Saint Joan* (1923), Joan of Arc's downfall is not the result of personal weakness, but rather society's refusal to accept a visionary who challenges religious and political hierarchies. This aligns with the function of theatre as a reflective space, where audiences are not only moved by the plight of individuals but also prompted to question institutional authority and historical injustice. Similarly, as it is mentioned above *Pygmalion* (1913) critiques class mobility, education, and gender roles, demonstrating how society dictates personal transformation and success. By refusing to conclude the play with a conventional romantic ending, Shaw reinforces theatre's role as an intellectual and social commentary rather than mere entertainment. Shaw's impact on theatre extends far beyond his lifetime, influencing key modern theatre movements such as postmodernism, epic theatre, and political drama. These movements, much like Shaw's plays, reject passive audience engagement and challenge traditional storytelling structures.

Postmodern theatre rejects linear storytelling and absolute truths, instead embracing fragmentation, irony, and self-awareness. Shaw's plays, while structured, often challenge conventional dramatic forms by breaking the fourth wall, engaging audiences directly in philosophical debates, and blurring the boundaries between fiction and reality. His rejection of romanticized endings and fixed moral conclusions aligns with postmodern theatre's tendency to leave narratives open-ended and subject to interpretation. Bertolt Brecht's epic theatre sought to alienate audiences from emotional immersion, encouraging them to think critically rather than passively engage with the drama. Shaw's works similarly demand intellectual participation. Rather than presenting heroes and villains in a traditional sense, he forces audiences to grapple with competing ideologies, as seen in *Major Barbara*, where the moral debate over capitalism and charity remains unresolved. Like Brecht's plays, Shaw's theatre prevents audiences from becoming emotionally consumed, instead making them question political and ethical structures.

Modern political theatre, such as Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*, aims to empower audiences by making them active participants in societal change. Shaw's plays, though set within structured narratives, encouraged discourse on socialism, women's rights, and social justice, laying the groundwork for theatre as a tool for political awareness. *Saint Joan* remains one of the most politically charged historical dramas, drawing attention to the manipulation of history by those in power. Shaw rejected conventional storytelling norms, particularly the romanticized endings and predictable resolutions that were common in 19th-century theatre. His works often subverted audience expectations, forcing them to question the morality, logic, and implications of social conventions rather than becoming emotionally absorbed in idealized narratives. Shaw's integration of philosophy, politics, and drama parallels modern interdisciplinary performances, which blend literature, music, and film. Productions such as *Hamilton* use historical figures to critique modern social issues, much like *Saint Joan* reinterpreted history through a contemporary lens.

Conclusion. Theatre remains a dynamic and evolving art form that continues to shape, and be shaped by, the cultural, political, and intellectual landscape. Shaw's works prove that theatre is not merely entertainment but a force for social transformation, capable of challenging institutions, engaging audiences intellectually, and inspiring change. His influence on postmodernism, epic theatre, and political drama ensures that his legacy endures in modern theatre, where storytelling remains a tool for reflection, resistance, and progress. By rejecting passive audience consumption, romanticized storytelling, and moral absolutism, Shaw set the foundation for contemporary theatre's intellectual rigor, social consciousness, and political relevance. At the end, just as tragedy explores suffering, comedy critiques social norms, and drama reflects human struggles, Shaw's theatre bridges these elements, ensuring that theatre remains a platform for both artistic exploration and societal transformation.

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