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Playing the liminal: Exploring moments of transcendence during performance

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ABSTRACT

Religion is the socio-cultural lifestyle of a people. It is that which a people believe is instrumental in their lives and day to day existence. Consisting of one's wellbeing in relation to spirituality, moral and social awareness, religion is has remained a very crucial aspect in the lives of the world's population. The theatre grew out of religious rituals and activities, transcending into an instrument for socio-political correctness. Boal and Brecht emphasized the need for theatre to be employed as a space for socio-political education and advocacy, giving the masses a voice in the governance of society. Boal's study mutated from the political to the human, and treats the theatre as a self reflexive space with therapeutic capability.

The human takes center stage in this vein. The theatre exists for the study of the human aspects. One sees examines oneself in the theatre. Steaming from this premise, this study explores how the theatre functions as a platform for examining the religious self. From the productions of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and a reflexive piece *Inwaiting*, I explore the self of the performer in observation of itself in performing a text meant for religious purposes. The self of the performer is central I this study. The liminal space is that space of emptiness which one occupies during transition from on stage of life and/or existence to the other. In this study, the text *Waiting for Godot* becomes that space where the performer exists and plays the text. I examine how this playing of a religious text in the theatre facilitates self reflexivity, and how a performer deconstructs and reconstructs him/herself as they encounter new experiences and new meanings.