

# The Aesthetics of the Actor's Performance as a Technical System in Iraqi Theatrical Performance

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## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

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The research includes four chapters: The first chapter includes the methodological framework of the research, which the researcher defined with the following question: (Discovering the aesthetics of the actor's performance in the Iraqi theatrical performance)? Followed by the importance of the research and the need for it, and includes topics related to the aesthetics of the actor's performance in the Iraqi theatrical performance. As for the need for it, it benefits students of colleges and institutes of fine arts and those interested in the field of theatrical performance. As for the aim of the research, it is to identify the aesthetics of acting performance in Iraqi theatrical performances. As for the temporal limits of the research (2024), as for the spatial limits, Iraq and the subject matter, it is to study the aesthetics of acting performance in Iraqi theatrical performances, followed by defining the terms. As for the second chapter, the theoretical framework, it includes the first topic, the concept of aesthetics of performance, and the second topic, the actor's performance, the factors that help the actor's professionalism, the actor's mission and characteristics, followed by the indicators of the theoretical framework. As for the third chapter, it includes the research community and the research sample that the researcher chose randomly. The fourth chapter included the results of the research, including

1-The performance of the actor in the theatrical show relied on the internal references to the show, including the vision of the author and the director in presenting the character and the theme.

For the benefits, recommendations and suggestions and then list and review

**Keywords:** Aesthetics of performance, theatrical performance

## RESEARCH PROBLEM:

The theater is the title of the art that is only achieved between the actors and the audience, taking into consideration the urgent necessity of the nature of the architectural styles appropriate for each era for a new theatrical form. Because the actor's performance differs according to the development of the theatrical form and according to the society's methods and customs, expressions and signs appeared followed by the actor's motor behavior through the face and hands, and his performance developed with expressions that enabled him to carry various connotations to come out with good performance styles, passing through the various eras of the theater and beginning with religious rituals and ceremonies of offering sacrifices that were practiced publicly in front of the Greek people. This performance was the responsibility of the clergy, then the Romans adopted it after them and added to their performance results the features and identity of the Romans. As for the number of actors, it varied according to what the role required, so the performance multiplied according to the special role of each actor, then the performance developed in stages that came with theatrical techniques (scenography) and movements exaggerated in precision and expression, dancing, singing, gestures, signs, silent acting, and the most important element improvisation in the various eras that came after the Roman era, reaching the twentieth century, where it diversified Performance methods and techniques One of the basics of the previous performance systems and methods was the emergence of the star actor whose personality and performance dominate the theatrical

performance. As for the Arab theatre, the Arab world has witnessed great progress in various artistic fields, and perhaps epics, myths, literature, wisdom, stories and elegies are the best evidence of that. The researcher has identified the research problem with the following question (revealing the aesthetics of the actor's performance as a technical system in the Iraqi theatrical performance)?

### **Second: The importance of research and the need for it:**

- 1- Identifying the characteristics of the actor's performance as a technical system in the Iraqi theatrical performance.
- 2- It is useful for theatre students and students of the College of Fine Arts to familiarize them with the actor's performance in Iraqi theatre.

### **Third: Research objectives:**

The current research aims to:

Revealing the aesthetics of the actor's performance as a technical system in Iraqi theatrical performance.

### **Fourth: Research limits:**

**1- Objective limits:**The aesthetics of the actor's performance as a technical system in Iraqi theatrical performance

**2-Spatial boundaries:**Iraqi theaters in which theatrical performances were performed

**3- Time frame: 2024**

### **Fifth: Defining terms:**

#### **A. Technically**

**1- Beauty:**It is the symbolic manifestation of divinity and is represented in the system of existence, its order and its proportion in the unity of the universe that prevails in its various manifestations.(Huisman, 2015)

**Aesthetics:**"A quality noticed in things that brings joy or satisfaction to the soul. That quality or group of qualities in a thing that brings clear joy to the senses, especially the sense of sight, or enchants the faculty of reason or morals. Opinions differed regarding the nature of these qualities in various ways."(Majdi, 1974) **for**Procedurally.

It is a term usually applied to every human activity (theoretical or applied) that contains harmony, regularity and harmony between its parts, and through which the clarity of the idea and meaning appears through its parts interconnected by its moral content to enrich the cognitive system of its viewers and develop their sensory taste.

2- **Performance:**Hayes Jordan defines it as the ability to organize as well as "theatrical performance means creating vivid illusions that are linked in time."(Jordan, DT)  
Procedurally

**Performance:**It is defined as a certain degree of efficiency and ability to control the tools, methods, means and skills through which this performance is carried out.

3- The actor: is the person who has a store of life impressions that he feels an urgent need to show and reveal to the audience through speech and movement.(Al-Razzaq, 2003).

#### **Procedurally**

He is known as the character who clearly embodies the words of the text on stage with the help of theatrical techniques in order to convey artistic messages to the audience through this text.

### **Chapter One: The Concept of Aesthetics**

The term "aesthetics" in its traditional sense refers to the study of beauty in art and nature. The modern use of the term praises more than that, such as the nature of the aesthetic experience, modes of artistic expression, and the psychology of art. It means the process of creativity, appreciation, or both.(Ali, 2011)It is natural that art is a social activity that deals with material and spiritual aesthetic matters related to the creation of mythological literature.(Al-

Hamid Sh., 2001) Art refers to productive work, while beauty refers to enjoyment and perception. Sometimes the two aspects become separated from each other, and art becomes something imposed on the aesthetic material, or the opposite can be said. (Al-Ghanimi, 2010)

According to the philosophical definitions of the concept of "art," there is an implicit agreement on the close relationship between art and beauty, and that art in its true sense is that which satisfies our sense of beauty and pleasure. (Satire, 2008)

The opinions of ancient philosophers differed in presenting these two concepts of performance aesthetics through their philosophical theories. We find Socrates describing beauty as that which achieves benefit, advantage, or the highest moral goal. He has a famous saying: "What is useful for a specific purpose, its use is beautiful for this purpose." Socrates took beauty to the principle of utilitarian purpose. He saw that in order for something to be described as beautiful, it must be useful in some way, otherwise it would be extremely ugly, because everything in the universe has a goal that it seeks to achieve, and in it its perfection is achieved, provided that it is directed towards goodness and the highest moral values. (Muhammad, 2017)

The researcher believes that Socrates' philosophy is that the standard of beauty is objective and not subjective as the Sophists saw it. The source of this idea is that the human mind does not change with the change of people, and true beauty for him is the beauty of the soul or the beauty of the interior, and the goal of art for him is primarily moral, directed towards goodness and the highest moral values.

Plato was the first Greek philosopher to be interested in recording a specific position on the phenomenon of beauty, as he established an example of beauty, which is beauty itself, which the creator takes pride in in creating the beings of the sensible world. Plato began first by discovering the attributes of beauty in sensible beings and in individuals, but he gradually ascended from this individual sensible beauty in order to discover its cause in all individuals, and so on until he arrived at discovering the source of beauty, which is shared by sensible beauty. (Carlson, 2010)

Plato separated art from philosophy as much as he did between truth and appearance, the whole and the part. He took dramatic imitation as a great danger, as it leads to considering what are merely appearances as truths, thus developing in the soul the false exaggeration of belief in appearances and conflicting with the mind that seeks to transcend appearances and liberate itself from them in order to reach the truth. He attacked tragic poets because they portray characters controlled by passions, emotions and passions in order to gain popularity among the masses. (Al-Qassab, 1997) The experience of the Greek actor was rich and varied. Plato noted in his book "The Republic" that most actors succeeded in performing both tragic and comic roles. Cicero confirmed the same fact when he said that he saw how the comedic actor achieved greater success while performing a comic role. This means that the most important measure of success for an actor is the similarity of his performance to the character he portrays on stage. (Hassan, 2020)

The researcher believes that Plato's philosophy regarding beauty is that it is the most beloved thing to man because it exists in itself in the world of ideals and the feeling of beauty is to imitate what is in the world of ideals through which he reaches from the hidden beauty to the spiritual beauty and art was not separate from beauty and art is an imitation of the truth as he linked beauty and truth thus innovating a new psychological means that makes it easy for him to attract the hearts of all enlightened people from writers, artists, scientists and thinkers at once as beauty, morals and love represent the essence of true art.

Aristotle differed from his teacher on several topics. Plato had never defined beauty precisely, while Aristotle did not hesitate to define it, even though there was no difference in reality between the Platonic standard of measurement and harmony. Plato agreed with Aristotle in emphasizing the necessity of simplicity, which calls for accepting the complete organic whole as a living being. Each of them seeks completion and improvement, and for personalities to become more beautiful than they are in reality, until their extreme beauty almost makes them unreal. (Al-Razi, 1983)

For Aristotle, beauty lies in the sensory perception of things, based on harmony and proportion. (Al-Khatib, 2014)

Beauty has been talked about since Socrates tried to distinguish between spiritual beauty and material beauty, as he considered spiritual beauty (essence) to be superior to material beauty as long as it is not possible to attain it. Beauty was the focus of Greek philosophical studies, some of them linked beauty to goodness and benefit

(Socrates), some of them linked it to the ideal (Plato), some of them linked it to nature (Aristotle), some of them subjected it to mathematical calculations based on symmetry (the Pythagoreans), and some of them linked it to morals and moderate values.(Badi, 2008)The researcher believes that Aristotle's philosophy of beauty is that beauty only occurs through the similarity of things and the proportion of harmony and unity between their parts, and that aesthetic pleasure is a purification of emotions that harm the soul as well as the regulation of disturbed feelings by arousing the emotions of pity and fear (purification).

For Kant, beauty is not linked to utility, or to the satisfaction of a material desire, or the achievement of a practical benefit, other than aesthetic joy and aesthetic enjoyment. Kant believes that beauty is a subject that satisfies taste without being linked to the achievement of a practical benefit or sensual pleasure, as beauty has a universal character that applies to all, and that beauty suggests a specific purpose without the beauty serving a specific goal outside of it.(Ryan, 1974)What (Hegel) was, for him, beauty is the appearance of the tangible idea, and the idea is the content of art and the tangible imaginative depiction, and that beauty is the clarification of the idea in a tangible way, and the subject of aesthetics does not deal with natural beauty because it is a creation of the spirit and the creation of consciousness and the product of freedom, and what is a product of the spirit bears its character and is higher than nature.(Saleh, 2015)

Hegel defines beauty as the absolute idea, and the idea, in that it exists in and for itself, is also the truth in itself. It is what enters into the preparation of the spirit in general, which is the absolute spirit. Hegelian idealism, based on the idea that existence is a manifestation of the spirit, came with an effective method based on the fact that development is legal and applies to all of existence, and that every phenomenon of this existence carries within it a nucleus of conflict and contradiction that soon leads to that phenomenon exploding and splitting, which results in the birth of a new phenomenon that carries in turn the nucleus of conflict, which is what is translated into the subject, its opposite, and the composition.(Jesuit Louis Maalouf, 1935)

The researcher believes that Hegel's dialectical philosophy of beauty is fundamentally linked to the sensory perception of things that contradict the truth, and beauty in art has a higher status than natural beauty, and theatrical performance is the means that shows the personal awareness of the absolute spirit, and the effective actor possesses certain characteristics that are effective on the recipient, and among these characteristics are intelligence, training, and quick wit.

## **THE SECOND TOPIC**

### **First: The development of the art of acting throughout the ages**

The roots of the art of acting extend back to ancient religious rituals, as indicated and confirmed by a number of researchers.The scholars and the priests of the temples were practicing their rituals in epics, and the most important of these were the Iraqis who practiced it in the epic of Kalgamesh. (Boskel) attributed the basic elements of the art of acting in our time to three main sources, the first of which is the Pharaonic religious ritual called (Abydos Passionate Play), in which the ancient Egyptians practiced a simulation of mythical events about the killing of the god king (Osiris) in a battle with his enemies who cut his body into parts and then brought it back to life. This practice took the form of the theatrical performance that we witness in our days, except for one difference, which is the actual slaughter of slaves who are offered in that ritual as sacrifices to the gods who brought the king back to life. The second is the singing element in the ancient Chinese theater, which appeared a thousand years after the appearance of the Egyptian ritual practice.(Sami Abdel, 2011)This theatre is characterised by the predominance of special, traditional songs that are similar to the singing in opera. In the show, there are long sections of chanting accompanied by loud music. There are also speech sections and natural voices. The third is Indian mime dance, which appeared in ancient Indian theatre performances at the same time that Peking Opera appeared. This theatre was characterised by mime dance accompanied by loud music and costumes.(Bawdkill, 1973)We confirm here that the Greeks were the first to change the religious ritual practice into a worldly imitative practice with its rules, methods and principles of performance. In view of its first connection with poetry, it was classified as one of the fine arts. This art had two main sources among the Greeks: the Dinarpos of tragedy and the Valliphoria of comedy. In both cases, there were actors who took on certain characters according to the data of poetic texts written by the ancients Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes. One of the techniques of this type of imitation was the use of masks.(Eid, 2002) During the fifth century BC, all actors wore masks except for flute players. Thespis was the

first actor in history to use many types of painted masks. In the advanced stages, the size of the masks was larger than the sizes of the actors' faces and had exaggerated features. The masks used in comedy were more diverse, and the masks of the choirs represented birds, animals, or insects. The show included one actor and the accompanying choir, but Schylos added a second actor to his plays, and Sophocles added a third actor to his plays. The three used masks to be different characters.(Abdul Qader, 1998)The techniques (scenography) that Greek and Roman actors adopted after them in their performance of various theatrical roles, and that the characterization depended on the actor's voice and the techniques (scenography) in the theatrical show and his delivery in the first place, and the delivery was characterized by a lyrical and chanting nature, and for this reason the actor must have a strong and beautiful voice and sufficient skill to color it, and the movement and physical expression come in second place in the performance, with its exaggeration, agility, breadth and extreme brevity. The actors did not get rid of the use of masks in their performance and depend on their vocal and physical expressions according to the various situations that the characters they represent go through except after a period of time and gradually. The researcher also sees that the nature of oratory and chanting remains the dominant one in vocal performance. **As a technical system (scenography)** It is accepted and preferred by the public, as it is considered one of the prevailing artistic norms that achieve the aesthetics of the art of acting. It was the behavior of the actors and members of the choir inside the arena (orchestra) and in the (kinesis).(Al-Hamid Y., 2001)It is far from the behavior of humans in life and daily reality, as it takes on a special stylistic character. One of its most important justifications is that the characters represented do not live among the audience, but rather live in the imagination of the poets who wrote the theatrical texts, and perhaps in the beliefs of some people or those they knew through myths and epics. They are often gods, heroes and kings, those who are enveloped in the world of imagination and do not belong to the world of reality. Therefore, the behavior of these creatures cannot be like the behavior of ordinary humans according to religious or mythological belief.(See: Morrell, 2001)

## **Second: Factors that help support the actor's professionalism:**

There are several factors other than voice and body that help an actor perform and provide him with professional abilities that enable him to succeed. These factors include:

**1- Artistic sense**(Vargas, (DT)):Artistic sensitivity entails a strong response to materials and experiences that includes the ability to retrieve, recall, and express the response when necessary. It is not possible to know why one person responds more fully to the outcome of an experience than another.(Constantine S., Actor's Preparation, (DT)) But certainly any ordinary person can increase his sensitivity and can learn how to be more aware of the essential elements and be more responsive to them, but (like the person with open knowledge) he may absorb the experience without effort, and the ordinary person very rarely uses his senses for more than utilitarian purposes.(Al-Sharqawi, 2001) The actor, in any case, when he is aware of these tasks and contributions, looks closely at the materials of nature. The researcher believes that the actor's first concern is with people and with human actions. He must comprehend other people in the same way he comprehends nature, either functionally or indifferently and habitually. He may not distinguish or recognize some of his neighbors, children, or animals playing in the street. On the other hand, he may be aware of identities, but if he is asked to describe the people he knows, he may fall short in arriving at a comprehensive and complete description. Many of us are unable to diagnose except with regard to some specific characteristics that are clear in their features, habits, attitudes, and responses to life itself. The actor must learn to see people and experiences in their field in order to fill his store of imagination, which in turn provides him with sources for diagnosis.

**2- Imagination and innovation** (Salem, 1972):The problem created by the use of the word "imagination" is that people tend to believe that there is a strange power that is obtained in a mysterious, inexplicable way, or perhaps based on divine inspiration. Actors who decide to wait for that magical transmission have to wait a long time before they receive it. If they do receive it, in the case of actors or artists who believe that this is exactly what happened, it is a matter of luck. Luck is possible, but the clarity of their observations and experience enabled them to reach results that they achieved through innovation and as a result of being influenced by previous discoveries. Shakespeare may have predicted his position and used the experience and traditions of his time in this way. Imagination means the ability of the actor to retrieve the experience at any possible time. The actor must observe the behavior of people and try to understand their mentality. He must ascertain what is going on around him. He



must learn how to daydream and create scenes with his inner gaze through his imagination and participate in those scenes. The actor must relax and imagine situations, situations and people and recall his memories of them. Everything we imagine must always be logical.

**3- Observation: The outside world: The environment:** We have previously known that the primary source of observational study for an actor is the people who live in a particular environment and are influenced by it. One of the elements that contribute to drawing conclusions about people is the way they respond to their surroundings. In what place is that person comfortable or uncomfortable? After that, for the actor's work, it is important for him to know the character's environment as a resource for expressing his inner life. This is followed by what the actor must learn to understand the different aspects of the environment. (Constantine S., op. cit.) .

**4- Focusing attention:** The actor must focus his attention on what is around him, on the action he is performing, and on the idea that is in his imagination and that he wants to express, and not distract his mind by thinking about other matters outside the context. Focusing attention is linked to observation and imagination. The actor must see, hear, and think. As the actor focuses his attention more, he will be more spontaneous and this will become a fixed nature for him. The actor must, as a beginning in acting, practice focusing his attention on the material and examine all its details for his imagination. He must implement the effort through expression, and there must be no physical tension in focusing attention. (Constantine S.).

### **Third: The actor's mission and characteristics:**

**Actor's mission:** From our previous review of the development of the art of acting throughout the ages and from our previous definition of the art of acting, we can say that the actor's task is limited to the following: -

#### **1- Simulating the character's external appearance (Otman, 1992):**

The actor creates with his body and voice a new character whose characteristics differ from those of the original character and interacts with a new artistic experience far removed from his life experience, an experience we call a play, a television drama, or a fictional film. He is therefore trying to take on an identity different from his own identity and lives life circumstances in a specific period of time different from the circumstances of his personal life and meets individuals on the stage other than the individuals he is accustomed to meeting in his daily life. The purpose of acting was to recreate a character from life and transfer it to the stage. (Aristotle, 1977) This means that there is a previous creator of the character, the author, who depicted its actions, characteristics, and relationships in his play. The external appearance of the actor consists of the visible body in a state of movement, in a state of stillness, in a state of excitement, and it also consists of the expressions of this body, including (the face), according to the different circumstances and the different emotions that consist of actions and reactions. The external appearance also includes the voice of the actor, his speech, and his style. The voice and speech also issue from an action or from a reaction, and the properties of the layer, rhythm, strength, and speed change according to the circumstances, relationships, and different emotions that consist of (actions and reactions). (Ramses, Studies in Art, 1st ed., 1969) According to the changes that may occur to the character's external appearance, the actor must harmonize his own external appearance, shape it, and change it according to those changes. The body is affected by external environmental factors as well as by internal psychological factors.

#### **2- Simulating the character's inner life:**

There is no person who is similar to another person in his appearance, life, and emotions, that is, his feelings, sensations, and thoughts, because people differ in their genetic makeup, upbringing, and the living conditions they go through. (Ramses, the same source) There is also no doubt that the inner life of the character affects, in one way or another, his external appearance and its variables, as long as the physical and vocal variables are a result of the variables in the human psyche and his inner life. In this field, the actor's task is to recreate the inner life of the character, which differs from his external life. He has his feelings and emotions for the character, and she has her impressions and thoughts, and her actions and reactions. Therefore, one of his tasks is to prepare his external life to take the form of the character's inner life. (Mustafa Khaled, 1992) The researcher believes that some feelings cannot be shown publicly by a person due to moral rules, customs and traditions, and the role of the actor is to become familiar with all aspects of the character's inner life so that he can adapt his external life to the character's inner life.

This may be referred to in the author's text, and if he does not do so, the actor must discover it himself through imagination and assumption. The actor must then translate the character's inner life.(immortal)

3- Conveying the author's ideas and viewpoint:

The actor is a tool to convey the author's ideas, impressions and perceptions of life that he conveys through the character through the character's ideas, perceptions, impressions and relationships and the essence of which is the author's main idea or philosophy or vision. Through the body, voice and expressions, the actor can convey the main idea or goal that we find between the folds of the text and on the tongues of the characters and in their actions, movements and relationships.(See: Hassan Ahmed, 1979)There is no doubt that the actor's imagination differs from the author's imagination of life to some extent. Therefore, in order for the actor to be able to convey these ideas, he must cast aside his own ideas if they differ greatly from them and adopt the new ideas, that is, adapt to them in one way or another.

#### **Theoretical framework indicators**

- 1 - The principle of beauty is the utilitarian goal, meaning that the thing described as beautiful must be useful.
- 2- The standard of beauty is objective, not subjective.
- 3 - Beauty is the most beloved thing to man now existing in itself in the world of ideals.
- 4- Art is an imitation of reality, linking beauty and truth.
- 5- Beauty only occurs through the similarity of things and the proportion of harmony between the unit and its parts.
- 6- The Greeks were the first to change religious ritual practice into a worldly imitative practice with its own rules, methods, and principles of performance.
- 7- The actor must have a strong, beautiful voice and sufficient skill, and the delivery must be characterized by a singing style.
- 8- The nature of oratory and chanting remains predominant in the performance. The voice is what is acceptable and desirable to the audience.
- 9- Artistic sensitivity is a strong response to materials that includes the ability to retrieve, recall, and express them when necessary.
- 10- The actor must focus his attention on what is around him, on the action he is performing, and on the idea that is going through his mind and that he wants to express.
- 11- The actor, with his body and voice, is a new character, so its purity may differ from the characteristics of the original character.
- 12- The purpose of acting is to recreate a character from life and transfer it to the stage.
- 13- The actor is a tool for conveying the author's ideas, impressions and perceptions of life.

#### **Chapter Three: Research Procedures**

**First: Research community:**The research community includes a group of Iraqi theatrical performances that were presented inside Iraq. The period between them was limited and the community was arranged according to the names of the works, the names of their directors and authors, and the place and year of their production.

#### **Second: Research sample:**

The research sample consisted of a theatrical text that was chosen intentionally for the following reasons:

- 1- The sample is consistent with the research problem, objectives and importance.
- 2 - The presence of the phenomenon of aesthetics in the actor's performance in Iraqi theatre, which the researcher highlighted.
- 3- The sources of the theatrical text are available in newspapers and magazines.

Research Community A theatrical presentation presented by author Dr. Mithal Ghazi

#### **Third: Research methodology:**

The research adopted the descriptive approach in presenting the theoretical framework and analyzing and reviewing the sample models because it is compatible with the nature of the text that was chosen.

#### **Fourth: Search tool:**

The researcher relied on building her research tool on:

- 1- Indicators resulting from the theoretical framework
- 2- Some books and magazines

3- What was published in letters and theses

4- The researcher's personal experience

#### **Fifth: Sample model analysis units**

The researcher relied on the units of analysis provided in the indicators of the theoretical framework, which are:

1- Constants (aesthetics, performance, actor)

2- Auditory signs in theatrical performance (music and sound effects)

3- Visual signs in theatrical performance (theatrical space, scenery, lighting, makeup, actor, modern technologies, such as (cinema screens, videotapes, dassho), etc.)

#### **SIXTH: SAMPLE ANALYSIS: AZRAEL PLAY**

Theatre is based on many paradoxes, the most prominent of which is its establishment on the duality of (text/performance) or (author/director). In fact, the debate about this duality has been and still is ongoing for a long time among a number of theatre theorists and directors. This debate increases when determining the priority that the dramatic text or the performance text or the author's vision and the director's vision acquires, and the importance that is given according to the variables made this duality, which is in contact with other genres, problematic in the face of the variables of the image that bring the recipient closer to the visual arts. The concept of the author/director duality and their level of influence in contemporary theatrical performance may be embodied through the commonalities and perceptions that accompany them, representing the continuity between the word and the image, to be a complex mixture of the form of actions and aesthetic methods that reflect the level of awareness and its influence on the complementary process and what the work system adopted in light of the convergence in the theatrical performance patterns. An example of this duality is the theatrical performances presented between the author "Dr. Mithal Ghazi" and the director "Osama Sultan", which represents a renewed and different duality that may produce a group of questions that can be answered in all the joint performances between them, including: "A chapter from the play Macbeth that was not written by Shakespeare" and "The Key", as well as the play "Azrael", which was presented at Al Rashid Theater. The play was written by: Dr. Mithal Ghazi, directed by: Osama Sultan, and starred by: Bushra Ismail, Jassim Muhammad. These examples of performances show us that each theatrical performance has a style and importance as a space that accommodates intellectual models that illustrate the concept of reality through semantic and interpretive interpretation. What was presented in the play "Azrael" Questions that produced a set of perceptions and opinions about this "duality", as the author tried to portray to us that death is eternal life, meaning that this type of theatrical performance is a theater full of life. This is what the Polish "Tadeusz Kantor" did in his theatrical works, and through the act of strangeness, which made what was presented constitute an exceptional act, but in the end, life remains his demand first and last. If death is in harmony with life, this is because life and death are ultimately one thing, and without life, there can be no death. Kantor launched

It was called "Theatre of Death" because he began to explore that philosophy that intertwines death and life in one space, and at a time when he had begun to feel the approach of...

Death from him. Perhaps this interference was his way of conquering death.

This is what the author, Mithal Ghazi, worked on, trying to make death, through the character of Azrael, a gateway to the beginning of a new life, far removed from the life before death, which is permeated by movement, work, and struggles with oneself and also with others. A life filled with uproar and psychological secretions, unlike the role played by death and its rituals in the plays of Samuel Beckett, where death plays the role of "silence," and death and silence are two sides of the same coin. The text of Azrael carried an integrative vision that distinguished itself and surpassed the directorial vision, which did not employ scenes in a manner consistent with the textual idea, which includes shapes and blocks that can affect the recipient, with their fluidity, dynamism, and diverse lines. The important thing is that the author embodied unconventional visions and unusual forms within the interactive text, the text that included death and love, which is similar to a happy death. This type of theater expresses human action and the pain that overwhelms man. Hence, the audience is drawn to these performances that simulate death because they consider it a cathartic theatre that cleanses the soul of the sorrows, memories and conflicts of the past. In this sense, death is achieved and continues despite the joys of life. Here, the dramatic text constitutes the axis of the theatrical creative process, being a fundamental element to which all other components are attached to embody the visual visions in the theatrical space and employ theatrical discourse through the transformation of the



formative structure of the theatrical space, given that the text carries visual and pictorial connotations that are activated and composed through the directorial possibilities and the movement of the abbreviated signs within them.

In the play "Azrael", director "Sultan" tried to rely on the act of waiting, and this was confirmed by actress "Bushra Ismail" when she asked the character of Azrael "Jassim Mohammed" to give her some time to complete what she started in her life, including her work in acting and embodying many characters that mimic society about happiness and love despite the presence of pain and sadness. The "Angel of Death" responds to her, "You took enough time in your life, where were you to need more time?" And time passes until the doors are closed by the crowds. The woman's death is postponed, and she takes the hand of the "Angel of Death" to introduce him to the reality of life through a beautiful scene that includes rapid movement of performance images of what happens in real life and human nature. Therefore, the "Angel of Death" must complete his mission and seize the soul of the woman who is clinging to life by opening the gates that represent a new beginning for souls that did not complete what they started in this world. Waiting for death is an inevitable act that summons memories of life with its sweet and bitter aspects and transforms it into a kind of ritual confession that constitutes a state of purification of the soul through death and also represents life with its multiple aspects and its struggle with society in general.

A good directorial vision portrayed the script's concept through a distinguished performance, through which the director weaved his vision through the "lady's" performance and her emphasis on recalling her experiences, which transformed into images preceding death. The actors' performances were distinguished, and their presence had an aesthetic impact on the audience. Meanwhile, the scenography was simple, not in keeping with the script's importance and the variety of its events, nor was the technical use of lighting and music simple.

In the moments before death, a person tries to convey a message through which he acknowledges that we all feel remorse and that this may be the punishment we deserve, and that at the moment of death we will have become pure and dignified. This is what the author tried to convey to the audience, to clarify his idea, which is open to reading and interpretation, and to remind them of an important moment that will be a watershed between doing good and doing evil. A beautiful and important text, as it carries philosophical potential that can be employed in a different visual way. The play "Azrael" is an example of the duality (author, director) and the modern concepts this duality adopts, relying on ensuring integration in the pleasure of the dramatic text and the magic of the theatrical performance, because each serves the other and calls upon it, starting from the writing stage and continuing through the directing and physical embodiment by the actors, and then the reception. Nevertheless, this text remains full of emotional and aesthetic values that are only highlighted by the magic of the performance.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **First: Results:**

The researcher reached, through analyzing the sample and based on the indicators of the theoretical framework, the availability of (the aesthetics of the actor's performance) at the level of types and functions, and presents them in the following form:

- 1- Referring to place in the theatrical performance based on the use of theatrical performance elements as indicators that produce place according to their systematic overlap within the performance's vocabulary.
- 2- The scenography is simple and does not match the importance of the text and the variety of its events, as well as the simplicity of the technical use of lighting and music.
- 3- From the writing stage to the directing stage and the physical embodiment by the actors and then the reception, this text remains full of emotional and aesthetic values that are only highlighted by the magic of the show.
- 4- The semantic employment of the elements of the theatrical presentation to produce the narrative structure in the theatrical presentation.
- 5- The general comprehensive vision of arts through employing them within the exhibition system and giving them their intellectual and aesthetic dimension.

### **Second: Conclusions:**

Based on the results reached by the research, the researcher summarizes a set of conclusions as follows:

- 1 - The theatrical text was able, through theatrical techniques, to leave the literary levels of texts based on narration.
- 2 - The Iraqi theatrical text was able to employ a modern text with daily life topics and reproduce them in a transparent aesthetic style close to the taste of the recipient and carrying his concerns through theatrical techniques and modern means of communication.
- 3- The text elements formed signs indicating the availability of drama on two levels (auditory and visual) if the sound effects had the ability to reduce the visual image.
- 4- Data on drama elements and modern techniques and their use within the theatrical text.
- 5 - The theatrical text relied on the potential and visual and auditory effects achieved by drama to add a harmonious unity within the theatrical text space.

### **THIRD: RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1- Developing the methodological vocabulary for studying acting, which enables the student to know the differences between the types of acting performance.
- 2- To be a workshop that specializes in works that aim to identify the aesthetics of the performance represented in the Iraqi theater.
- 3- Providing the libraries at the College of Fine Arts with books that focus on the aesthetics of performance as represented in theatrical performances, so that this library can contribute to the development of theatrical performances.

#### **Suggestions:**

- 1- Archiving theatrical performances of the actor's performances
- 2- Harmony between the inner self and the outer self of the dramatic characters in Iraqi theatre performances.
- 3- Paying attention to teaching acting in colleges and institutes of fine arts because it is the best way for actors to perform with good performance technique.

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