

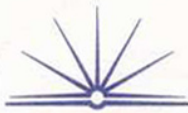


Dario Fo

Playwright Dario Fo is a master at using "Farce as a political weapon", which has become a cliché for describing the successful unpredictable and totally extraordinary ^{Italian} ~~playwright~~ Playwright. In Fo's two plays, Accidental Death of An Anarchist, and Can't Pay? Won't Pay!, the use of satire, audience, farce, tension, characterisation, commedia del arte and juxtaposition, all prove that Fo's satirical style is very admirable and ~~definitely~~ aids his revolutionary comments on society, rather than distracting "us from his serious political intent." Fo uses his humorous conventions and "comic performance styles" to evoke thought in his audiences, and express his ideologies and views on the injustices in Italy, and the world in general.



In Accidental Death of An Anarchist, Fo has used characterisation with his "epic clown" genre to create the Maniac, who creates chaos in the play. The Maniac reflects Fo's jester character which he often uses in his plays to reveal the "stupidity" of authoritative figures, as evident in his scene where the maniac confuses the inspector who believes the maniac is "sane", but the maniac explains that he is "certified mad". There are many moments of chaos where the maniac makes the inspector to look stupid in asking in a satirical style to "see your school reports" to check that his "grammar" was correct. Danio Fo successfully creates a humorous link between his plays and real life situations, which as Fo himself describes that in making authority in his plays in a humorous way creates



respect from the audience, as he describes himself, "There is no greater equaliser than the stupidity of men - especially when these men have power", which explains his serious intention revealed in his plays.

The use of *stapotick* and *commedia del arte* is a performance style in which Fo has successfully used in Accidental Death Of An Anarchist and Can't Pay? Won't Pay, to show real issues of police raids, pinelli's death, price rises. Fo does not want to create a catharsis with his audience, he wants them to be aware of the injustices within the world, in which he uses humour, because he states that "laughter opens people's minds and renders them receptive to ideas they might otherwise reject". In one particular scene the Mariac's arm falls off, and he states in a mocking tone that "next you'll be pulling



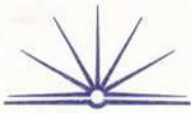
off my leg," this incident symbolises the hidden mishappenings in the society, things which are covered up such as Pellis's death and other incidents, the audience laughs yet recognises and acknowledges Fo's purpose for this symbolic arm and they relate and act on the serious issues of injustices and hidden incidents by politicians, police and other organisations.

In Can't Pay? Won't Pay!, Slapstick is a convention which Fo has used to show stupidity and create relief from an intense moment. The chaos begins when Margheritta explains that she's "pregnant with shopping" to the audience and as the chaos occurs, "she's dripping" says the inspector who pretends to know everything, and says that "it means she's near her time", however the dripping is a burst bag of slices which creates



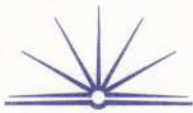
mayhem and confusion in the play, speaking to the audience on a deeper level on the "stupidity of men" and hidden events within Italian society. Fo does not want his audiences to have an emotional breakdown, rather to acknowledge and act on his ideologies about the injustices of price rise, murder and the statement that "Fo's use of comic performance styles distracts us from his serious political intent" is inaccurate, as a real Fo style performance proves meaning and value beyond words.

In Accidental death of An Anarchist and Can't Pay? Won't Pay!, Fo breaks the 4th wall with the audience, as he interacts, and creates an atmosphere where the audience is aware of each element in the play, and creating the sense of being co-conspirators with the



characters in the play. As the maniac changes from a "counsel of the high court", to a representative from "forensics", the audience laughs and admires the Zaney approach to convey the stupid side of many members in high places, who would be just as qualified as the maniac. Fo expresses how politicians are fake in their "promises of reform", and the audience feels involved in the final song of Anarchy, in which the voice and opinions of these people are heard through the maniac.

Playwright Dario Fo is successful in conveying his, political concerns and ideologies to his international audiences. Fo himself argues that by his use of the clown it's "the voice of oppressed Italian people", and "humour opens peoples minds". Fo is very successful



in his plays Accidental death of An-
Anorchist and Can't pay? Won't pay!, to
express his controversial and revolutionary
ideals, hence the great controversy
which arose with his acceptance of
the 1997 Noble Prize for literature. Dario
Fo is a worthy and masterful playwright
who successfully uses theatrical forms
of farce, satire, slapstick and commedia
del arte to express "his serious political
intent."