

STUDY GUIDE



GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE  
**WAITING  
FOR  
GODOT**

# WAITING FOR GODOT

11.06–12.15.2024

GIL CATES THEATER

*This guide is to be used for educational purposes only.*

**STUDY GUIDE COMPILED BY**

Brian Allman

**COVER PHOTO BY**

Justin Bettman

**DESIGN BY**

Mark J. Chaitin

**SPECIAL THANKS TO**

Brian Dunning, Olivia O'Connor, Chloe Shi, Mark J. Chaitin & Get Lit Players

**EXECUTIVE STAFF & EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STAFF**

Tarell Alvin McCraney — Artistic Director

Gil Cates Jr. — Executive Director / CEO

Amy Levinson — Associate Artistic Director

Brian Allman — Director of Education & Community Engagement

Mark J. Chaitin — Manager of Education & Community Engagement

Paloma Nozicka — Education Associate

**GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE TEACHING ARTISTS**

Sean Michael Boozer, DeJuan Christopher, Paris Crayton III, Lyssa Deehan, Sidney Edwards, Aja Houston, BJ Lange, Tiffany Oglesby, Tara Ricasa, Gerry Tonella

**ACCESSIBILITY AT GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE**

The theater has wheelchair and scooter-accessible locations where patrons can remain in their wheelchairs or transfer to theater seats.



**OPEN CAPTION PERFORMANCE**

Saturday, Nov. 23, 2024, 3:00pm — An LED sign will display the text of the live production in sync with the performance.



**AUDIO DESCRIBED PERFORMANCE**

Sunday, Nov. 24, 2024, 2:00pm — A performance audio describer will give live, verbal descriptions of actions, costumes, scenery, and other visual elements of the production.



**AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE**

**INTERPRETED PERFORMANCE**

Sunday, Dec. 1, 2024 at 2:00 pm — An ASL interpreter will be present in the house left.





*PHOTO BY MICHAEL HENNINGER*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

**ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION**

PRODUCTION & CAST CREDITS.....6  
PLAY SYNOPSIS & ARTISTIC BIOS.....7

**THEMES & TOPICS**

BIOGRAPHY: SAMUEL BECKETT.....8-9  
HIS WRITING SUSTAINS: AN INTERVIEW WITH JUDY HEGARTY LOVETT.....10-16  
INTERPRETATIONS OF WAITING FOR GODOT.....19  
A DEEPER LOOK INTO EXISTENTIALISM.....20  
SAMUEL BECKETT & THE SAM QUENTIN DRAMA WORKSHOP.....21-23  
THE PHILOSOPHY OF ALBERT CAMUS: EMBRACING LIFE’S ABSURDITY.....24-25  
THEATRE OF THE ABSURD.....26  
OH, MY GODOT!.....32-33  
POST SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS.....34  
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES.....35

**ACTIVITIES**

GO GO GODOT MAZE.....28  
SELF REFLECTION.....29  
CARD CARD.....30  
REBUS PUZZLES.....31

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SPOTLIGHT**

THEATER AS A LENS FOR JUSTICE INITIATIVE.....23  
GET LIT PLAYERS: DRAGON LADY.....36-37

**STAFF SPOTLIGHT**

AN INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATE, CHLOE SHI.....38

THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE PRODUCTION OF

# WAITING FOR GODOT

WRITTEN BY  
**SAMUEL BECKETT**

DIRECTED BY  
**JUDY HEGARTY LOVETT**

PRODUCED IN ASSOCIATION WITH  
**GARE ST LAZARE IRELAND**

SCENIC & COSTUME DESIGNER  
**KAYE VOCE**

LIGHTING DESIGNER  
**SIMON BENNISON**

SOUND DESIGN COMPOSITION BY  
**MEL MERCIER**

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR  
**VELANI DIBBA**

FIGHT DIRECTOR  
**STEVE RANKIN**

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER  
**ALYSSA ESCALANTE**

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER  
**MIRIAM E. MENDOZA**

CASTING DIRECTOR  
**PHYLLIS SCHURINGA, CSA**

## C A S T

---



**LINCOLN  
BONILLA**  
BOY



**CONOR  
LOVETT**  
POZZO



**AASIF  
MANDVI**  
ESTRAGON



**JACK  
McSHERRY**  
BOY



**ADAM  
STEIN**  
LUCKY



**RAINN  
WILSON**  
VLADIMIR



**TIMOTHY PAUL  
BROWN**  
U/S VLADIMIR



**ANDREW BRIAN  
CARTER**  
U/S POZZO / LUCKY



**BOISE  
HOLMES**  
U/S ESTRAGON

## ABOUT THE PLAY

**OVERVIEW:** As Vladimir and Estragon wait and wait for the arrival of the elusive Godot, a cast of mysterious misfits interrupt their endless vigil in Samuel Beckett's tragi-comic masterpiece that has captivated audiences for decades. Timeless and multi-layered, *Waiting for Godot* changed the course of contemporary drama and remains as resonant and riveting as ever. Gare St Lazare Ireland, "the unparalleled Beckett champions" according to the New York Times, bring their wit and skill to what promises to be a Godot for the ages featuring Conor Lovett (*I'll Find You, Versailles*), Aasif Mandvi (*Evil, The Daily Show*), and Rainn Wilson (*Thom Pain, The Office*).

**TIME / SETTING:** A country road. A tree. A stone. Evening.

**RUNNING TIME:** 2 hours and 30 minutes, including one intermission.

**AGE RECOMMENDATION:** 12+

**WARNINGS:** Herbal Cigarette Smoke

**CONTENT ADVISORY:** This production contains staged violence.

## ARTISTIC BIOGRAPHIES



**SAMUEL BECKETT** Playwright (he/him)

Samuel Beckett (1906-1989) is widely recognized as one of the greatest dramatists of the 20th century. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1969. Beckett is most renowned for his play *Waiting for Godot*, which launched his career in theatre. He then went on to write numerous successful full-length plays, including *Endgame* in 1957, *Krapp's Last Tape* in 1958, and *Happy Days* in 1960. Beckett received his first commission for radio from the BBC in 1956 for *All That Fall*. This was followed by a further five plays for radio, including *Embers*, *Words and Music*, and *Cascando*. Like no other dramatist before him, Beckett's works capture the pathos and ironies of modern life yet still maintain his faith in man's capacity for compassion and survival, no matter how challenging his environment may have become.



**JUDY HEGARTY LOVETT** Director (she/her)

Judy Hegarty Lovett is an awarding winning director and has directed over twenty three Beckett productions for Gare St. Lazare Ireland. Titles include *Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, *The Unnamable*, *Lessness*, *Enough*, *Worstward Ho*, *Texts For Nothing*, *First Love*, *The End*, *The Calmative*, *Ill Seen Ill Said*, *How It Is*, *Here All Night*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Rockaby*, and all six Beckett radio plays. She has presented in over eighty-five cities worldwide at venues including Lincoln Center Theater, Signature Theatre Company (NYC), UCLA Live, National Theatre (London), Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre, and Abbey Theatre (Dublin). In 2021 Judy directed a six-hour film of Beckett's novel *How It Is* and was awarded a Ph.D. on the staging of Beckett's prose at University of Reading, UK. She has a postgraduate degree in Dramatherapy and a degree in Fine Art/mixed media. Judy won Best Director at The Irish Times Irish Theater Awards in 2022 for *The Realistic Jones* by Will Eno and was nominated for Best Director at The Irish Times Irish Theatre Awards in 2019 for *How It Is (Part 2)* and for Best Production in 2018 for *How It Is (Part 1)*.

# BIOGRAPHY: SAMUEL BECKETT

20th century Irish novelist, playwright and poet Samuel Beckett penned the play *Waiting for Godot*. In 1969, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

## EARLY LIFE

Samuel Barclay Beckett was born on April 13, 1906, in Dublin, Ireland. His father, William Frank Beckett, worked in the construction business and his mother, Maria Jones Roe, was a nurse. Young Samuel attended Earlsfort House School in Dublin, then at 14, he went to Portora Royal School, the same school attended by Oscar Wilde. He received his Bachelor's degree from Trinity College in 1927. Referring to his childhood, Beckett, once remarking, "I had little talent for happiness." In his youth he would periodically experience severe depression keeping him in bed until mid-day. This experience would later influence his writing.

## CAREER BEGINNINGS

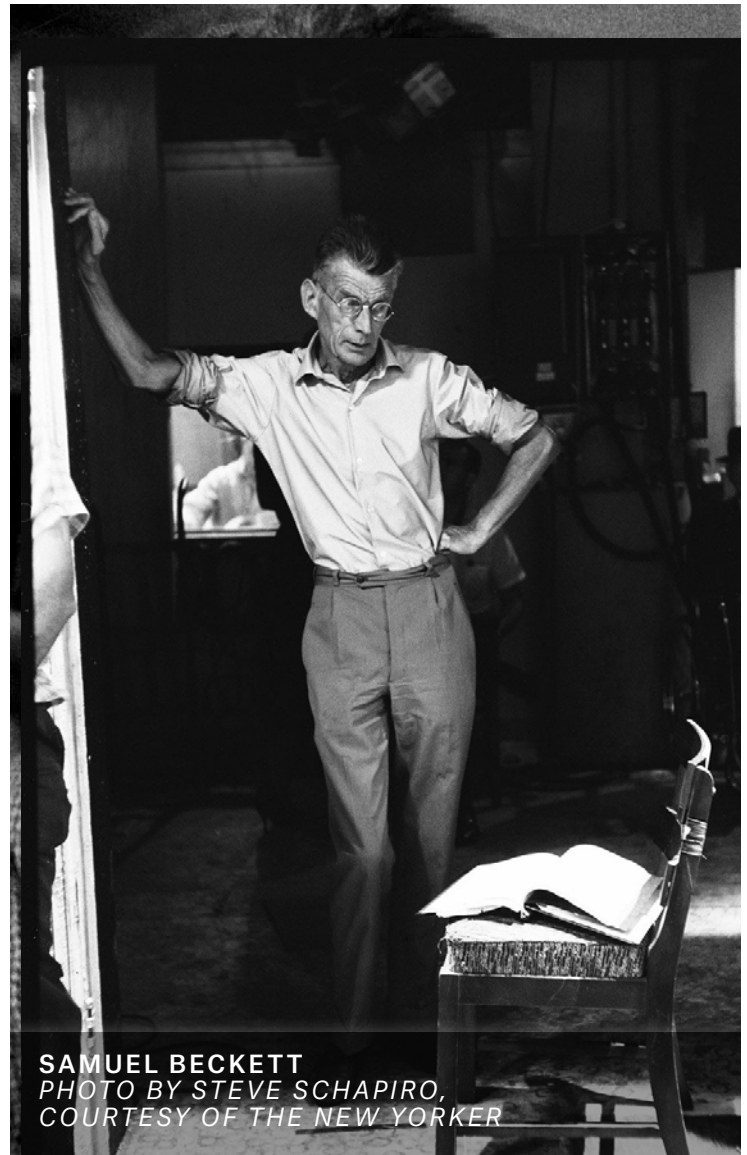
In 1928, Beckett found a welcome home in Paris where he met and became a devoted student of James Joyce. In 1931, he embarked on a restless sojourn through Britain, France and Germany. He wrote poems and stories and did odd jobs to support himself. On his journey, he came across many individuals who would inspire some of his most interesting characters.

In 1937, Beckett settled in Paris. Shortly thereafter, he was stabbed by a pimp after refusing his solicitations. While recovering in the hospital, he met Suzanne Dechevaux-Dumesnil, a piano student in Paris. The two would become life-long companions and eventually marry. After meeting with his attacker, Beckett dropped the charges, partly to avoid the publicity.

## RESISTANCE FIGHTER IN WORLD WAR II

During World War II, Beckett's Irish citizenship allowed him to remain in Paris as a citizen of a neutral country. He fought in the resistance movement until 1942 when members of his group were arrested by the Gestapo. He and Suzanne fled to the unoccupied zone until the end of the war.

After the war, Beckett was awarded the Croix de Guerre for bravery during his time in the French resistance. He settled in Paris and began his most prolific period as a writer. In five years, he wrote *Eleutheria*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Endgame*, the novels *Malloy*, *Malone Dies*, *The Unnamable*, and *Mercier et Camier*, two books of short stories, and a book of criticism.



SAMUEL BECKETT  
PHOTO BY STEVE SCHAPIRO,  
COURTESY OF THE NEW YORKER

## PLAYS: WAITING FOR GODOT

Beckett's first publication, *Molloy*, enjoyed modest sales, but more importantly praise from French critics. Soon, *Waiting for Godot*, achieved quick success at the small Theatre de Babylone putting Beckett in the international spotlight. The play ran for 400 performances and enjoyed critical praise.

Beckett wrote in both French and English, but his most well-known works, written between WWII and the 1960s, were written in French. Early on he realized his writing had to be subjective and come from his own thoughts and experiences. His works are filled with allusions to other writers such as Dante, Rene Descartes, and Joyce. Beckett's plays are not written along traditional lines with conventional plot and time and place references. Instead, he focuses on essential elements of the human condition in dark humorous ways. This style of writing has been called "Theater of the Absurd" by Martin Esslin, referring to poet Albert Camus' concept of "the absurd." The plays focus on human despair and the will to survive in a hopeless world that offers no help in understanding.



## LATER YEARS

The 1960s were a period of change for Beckett. He found great success with his plays across the world. Invitations came to attend rehearsals and performances which led to a career as a theater director. In 1961, he secretly married Suzanne who took care of his business affairs. A commission from the BBC in 1956 led to offers to write for radio and cinema through the 1960s.

Beckett continued to write throughout the 1970s and 80s mostly in a small house outside Paris. There he could give total dedication to his art evading publicity. In 1969, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, though he declined accepting it personally to avoid making a speech at the ceremonies. However, he should not be considered a recluse. He often times met with other artists, scholars and admirers to talk about his work.

By the late 1980s, Beckett was in failing health and had moved to a small nursing home. Suzanne, his wife, had died in July 1989. His life was confined to a small room where he would receive visitors and write. He died on December 22, 1989, in a hospital of respiratory problems just months after his wife.

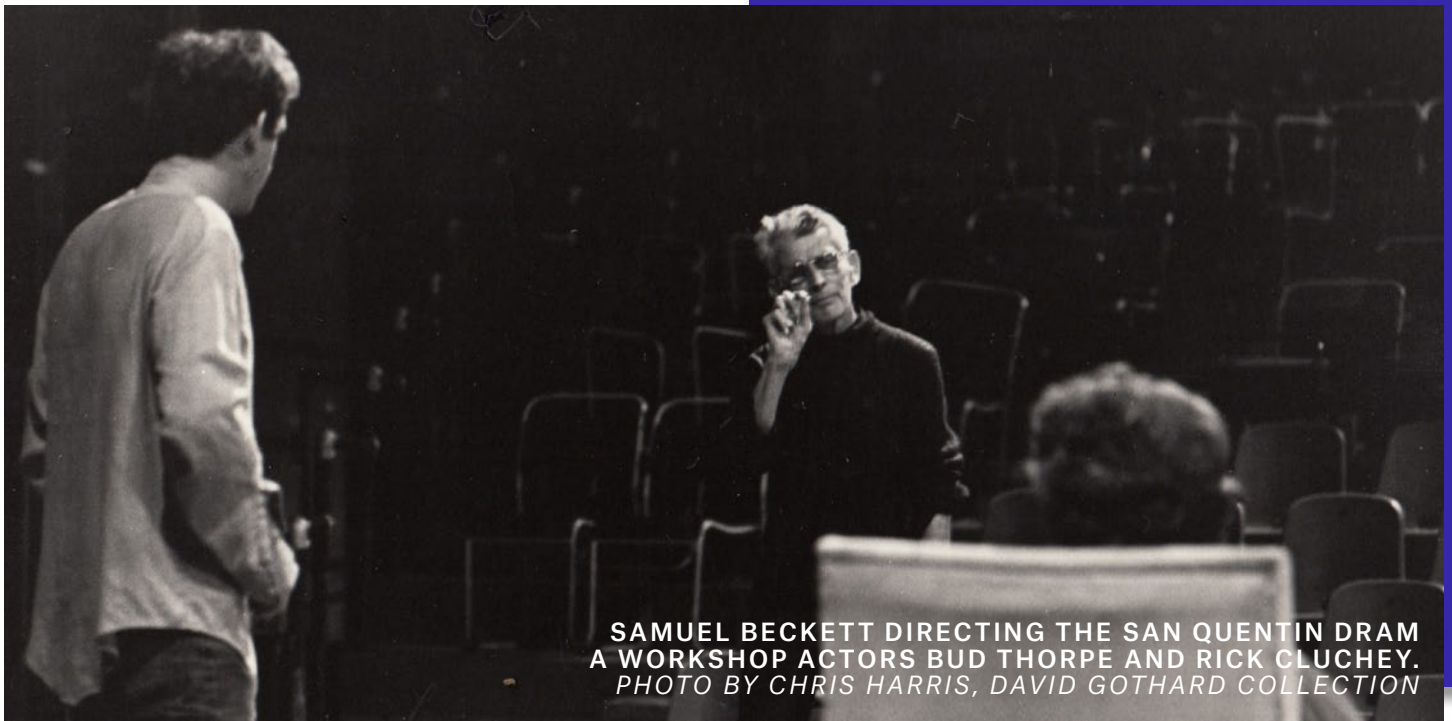
**SOURCE:** "Samuel Beckett." Biography.com 18th, August 2020. <https://www.biography.com/authors-writers/samuel-beckett>



SAMUEL BECKETT'S SIGNATURE

## THEATRE WORKS OF SAMUEL BECKETT

Human Wishes (c. 1936; published 1984)  
 Eleutheria (written 1947 in French; published in French 1995, and English 1996)  
 En attendant Godot (published 1952, performed 1953);  
 Waiting for Godot (pub. 1954, perf. 1955)[103]  
 Acte sans Paroles I (1956); Act Without Words I (1957)  
 Acte sans Paroles II (1956); Act Without Words II (1957)  
 Fin de partie (published 1957); Endgame (published 1957)  
 Krapp's Last Tape (first performed 1958)  
 Fragment de théâtre I (late 1950s); Rough for Theatre I  
 Fragment de théâtre II (late 1950s); Rough for Theatre II  
 Happy Days (first performed 1961); Oh les beaux jours (published 1963)  
 Play (performed in German, as Spiel, 1963; English version 1964)  
 Come and Go (first performed in German, then English, 1966)  
 Breath (first performed 1969)  
 Not I (first performed 1972)  
 That Time (first performed 1976)  
 Footfalls (first performed 1976)  
 Neither (1977) (An "opera", music by Morton Feldman)  
 A Piece of Monologue (first performed 1979)  
 Rockaby (first performed 1981)  
 Ohio Impromptu (first performed 1981)  
 Catastrophe (Catastrophe et autres dramatiques, first performed 1982)  
 What Where (first performed 1983)



SAMUEL BECKETT DIRECTING THE SAN QUENTIN DRAM  
 A WORKSHOP ACTORS BUD THORPE AND RICK CLUCHEY.  
 PHOTO BY CHRIS HARRIS, DAVID GOTHARD COLLECTION

# HIS WRITING SUSTAINS

## AN INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR JUDY HEGARTY LOVETT ON BECKETT, GODOT, AND THE GROWTH OF GARE ST LAZARE IRELAND

BY OLIVIA O'CONNOR, GEFEN PLAYHOUSE LITERARY MANAGER & DRAMATURG

Co-Founder of Gare St Lazare Ireland / *Waiting for Godot* Director Judy Hegarty Lovett and Gefen Playhouse Literary Manager & Dramaturg Olivia O'Connor sat down on October 3, 2024 to speak about Beckett, *Godot*, and the growth of Gare St Lazare.

**OLIVIA O'CONNOR:** We are speaking in the first few days of rehearsal for *Godot*. What are your priorities in this first week?

**JUDY HEGARTY LOVETT:** Ultimately to get the piece up and running. To give the actors a chance to stand it up, to come off the page, and to give them an idea into the direction we're headed. I take a lot of the lead for the direction in which we go from [the actors]: from what happens in the room and from what I see emerging from their skillset, their response to the work, their way of meeting the work.

**OO:** You saw your first Beckett play, which was *Waiting for Godot*, when you were a teenager in Cork, Ireland. Do you remember your first reaction to the play?

**JHL:** I do. I remember it very distinctly, because prior to that I had only the Christmas pantomimes to go on; I had not ever been brought to a play or something outside of vaudeville. It was fascinating for me to see a first play in my teens. It was a beautiful production. It was in a very small theater called the Ivornia Theatre with a very fine cast. I was fascinated by what I saw on stage—the visual imagery and the style of the dialogue. The most incredible discovery for me was Pozzo and Lucky, and the casual manner in which a man crosses the stage tied to a rope. I was wondering, *why is nobody taking any notice of the man with a rope around his neck?* It was a revelatory moment for me

**OO:** Since co-founding Gare St Lazare Ireland in 1996 [with co-artistic director and collaborator Conor Lovett], you've been directing and adapting



DIRECTOR JUDY HEGARTY LOVETT  
PHOTO BY JEFF LORCH

Beckett's work for more than 25 years. What about Beckett's body of work has continued to speak to you? Has your relationship to his work changed as you've gotten older, especially in regards to *Godot*?

**JHL:** Our company's approach to Samuel Beckett has been particular in that we focused principally on the prose works over the plays. In fact, we began with a short audition piece from Beckett's novel *Molloy*. Something clicked, and I knew this work was worth pursuing. We just kept extending the audition piece and eventually thought that it might be a good idea to present it as a work for the stage. And so it was a very simple entry in the sense of just liking the writing, reading Beckett's work and

## ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION

finding a way to present it on stage. There was no plan to head into 25 years of being with the same writer. Somewhere in the middle of touring the work around the world, we realized we could keep going and hopefully eventually present all the prose and plays, and here we are. Beckett's writing feels as fresh to me today as that first day, and I expect I will never tire of it. It is exceptional writing, and writers of this caliber do not come along every day.

To answer the second part of your question: I think the way my relationship has developed to the work has less to do with my own [personal] changes and more to do with actually spending that amount of time with a single writer. Having the privilege of delving deep [has led to] a rich excavation and a deeper understanding of the patterns, choices, and developments across Beckett's canon.

Then just in terms of the approach to the plays: having had the possibility to stage *Waiting for Godot* several times, I have found it very interesting watching my own relationship to that work.

GSLI mounted our very first production [of *Godot*] when we first moved to Paris in 1991. It played in a studio theater in the First Arrondissement. The theater had an English-speaking program, which, as you can imagine, had small audience turnout. I didn't know it at the time, but this turned out to be of great benefit to my practice: it became for me a kind of a testing ground. The press weren't watching; the estate weren't watching. And so the company took liberties that perhaps would not be appreciated if we had been in the spotlight at the time. We did not have a tree; we did not have a stone. We did not have a budget. We had to improvise. The cast and crew all worked voluntarily. To have that freedom at that time was a great advantage. I learned so much about the play in that context.

In subsequent productions, I became very aware of Beckett's stage directions in *Godot* and how important they are to the production. They are, as such, part of the play-text and are deeply woven into the integrity of the play. [And so, for a time], following every stage direction to the letter became the approach to the work.

Fast forward to next productions, I now feel that it's best to meld, mold, and sculpt—[to find] a possibility for a freedom and an attention to the

prescriptive detail of the work. *Waiting For Godot* is all about juxtaposition, opposites, and balance – it's not surprising that the approach to staging it might suggest similar structures.

**OO:** *Waiting for Godot* is due to enter the public domain in 2049. I'm so curious about what productions we will see then.

**JHL:** I think it'll be very exciting. I welcome that, and I think it's important for that to happen so that his work doesn't get stuck in being a museum piece. It will be important for creators to go away from it in



ADAM STEIN AS LUCKY  
PHOTO BY JEFF LORCH

## ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION

with work when it is released into the public domain.

I think everything is in perpetual movement and change and is an adaptation of an adaptation. All plays are a blueprint for what becomes a three-dimensional event. And I think it's very important to consider that every production is different and is inevitably different from the last. This is the value of live work. The adaptation from page to stage process is a vital one. It's a living one. And it lives in time. It must live vitally within the moment for audience and creators. One should never feel hostage to tradition or expectations of time but to live freely looking back and forward and, if possible, outside of time.



AASIF MANDVI, RAINN WILSON AND  
CONOR LOVETT PHOTO BY JEFF LORCH

I've worked with a lot of students at the National Theater Institute in the U. S., and it's really interesting to work with people of different nationalities and [to see] their approach to the work: their understanding of Beckett and what they like to focus in on.

Some approaches I've witnessed focus heavily on *Godot* as a religious document and really pull out all the religious iconography across the work. Other people will heavily focus on the comedy and want to pull all of that out. And so be it, because it is. I mean, what is a work and what is a writer, unless they're offering something that becomes a new imagination and allows the work to live in different contexts? Of course, it's best to avoid projecting too much of your own agenda into any creation, but looking for that balance is what collaboration and engagement with a work is all about.

I understand Beckett himself would have been very attentive to how his work was delivered, but it's also crucial to understand that he became a man of the theater through his writing. I think he started out very much as a writer and he evolved

into theater, and I think he realized during his lifetime – by virtue of actually directing the work himself – how much work changes on the ground, in the rehearsal room with actors, and what it meant to bring a work from the page to the stage. You see that very especially with *Godot*. For a work that was written in apparently three months, from October 1948 to January 1949, it underwent a lifetime of changes. It had a 20-year evolution. From the early productions in the fifties, into the seventies, and right up to the eighties he was still directing that work and making changes to it for revivals and new productions. He made several changes to *Godot* over time and through collaboration with productions in different languages and countries.

I think there's an additional plus to the plurality of the work, in that it was written in two languages. That's an important factor and something to deeply consider – it is a bilingual play which underwent changes and cultural contextualization. It wasn't until [Beckett] got to the English version of *Godot* that he referred to it as a tragicomedy in two acts. He did not refer to it as that in the original French.

**OO:** You mentioned collaboration and the newness of any production. For this particular production, Rainn Wilson was a catalyst to the Geffen programming the piece; it was a bucket list project that he really wanted to do. How did you two first connect?

**JHL:** I'm so glad to hear it was on his bucket list. I think it should be on everybody's bucket list. Interestingly, the connection with Rainn is via Will Eno, an American contemporary playwright. Eno first saw one of Gare St Lazare Ireland's productions in New York in 1998. He was really taken by our presentation of *Molloy* by Samuel Beckett and met with us after the show.

We immediately struck a chord and developed a friendship from there. He wrote *Title and Deed* for the company in 2011. It is a brilliant piece of work, a solo work written for Conor Lovett to play. We presented it at the Signature Theatre in New York in 2011. It's wonderful now to report here that we just commissioned Eno to write a new play for the Gare St Lazare Ireland to play at the Gate Theatre in Dublin in 2026. So that relationship has sustained. That relationship happened through Beckett.

As you know, Rainn Wilson did a production of *Thom Pain* here at the Geffen [in 2016]. Will and Rainn remain very good friends. And so when Rainn said to Will, my bucket list play is *Waiting for Godot*,

## ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION

Will said, well, the only people to do *Godot* with you are Gare St Lazare.

And so he made a direct connection with us that way. And here we are.

**OO:** Earlier, you touched on some of the misperceptions about Beckett's work: that it's quite serious, or academic, or inaccessible. When you enter into a new process, is that notion something that you address head-on?

**JHL:** It's perhaps important to know that *Godot* and Beckett are still considered niche work. Despite the play being iconic and regarded as one of the classics, it wasn't when it first came out. It took time for people to embrace it and to accept it and accept Beckett's visionary masterpiece.

It is a truly modernist work, and nothing like it has happened before, perhaps even since. While I consider it a masterpiece I am, however, very aware that there exists a whole swath of audience members who don't know about Beckett and have never heard his name before and may not have had access to his work. Typically, people know only of *Godot* and may not know anything more about Beckett. The joy in this production is that we may find an audience who are meeting the work for the first time. It's exciting to think of a younger audience meeting the work, too.

There's a common misconception that *Godot* is really difficult, boring, and hard to understand. But *Waiting for Godot* is a truly accessible play. I think what has happened is that, not unlike Joyce, Beckett has been kept in an academic box. Somehow and somewhere along the way it was believed to be a play for intellectuals, and that's a great pity, because it's a play written for *everybody*. This play has been translated in multiple languages and is now seen as the most influential play of the 20th century. It's both funny and tragic, and it asks the questions we all ask at some point. I doubt there's a person on Earth who hasn't sat at one point and asked, *why are we here?* I've heard children ask that question, you know what I mean? So it doesn't take an intellectual mind to wonder what life is all about. This play asks those questions and more.

The important thing is the production itself. If it manages, and it's hard to do, to get a decent balance of comedy and tragedy and if the actors make a reach towards the audience and adapt to really making [the play] their own and making it feel

“ I DOUBT THERE'S A PERSON ON EARTH WHO HASN'T SAT AT ONE POINT AND ASKED, WHY ARE WE HERE? I'VE HEARD CHILDREN ASK THAT QUESTION, YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN? SO IT DOESN'T TAKE AN INTELLECTUAL MIND TO WONDER WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT. THIS PLAY ASKS THOSE QUESTIONS AND MORE. ”

concrete and human, then I think we're on a better track to be able to help an audience find a way into that work without feeling left out or ill equipped or not intellectual enough to understand it.

**OO:** I read it for the first time when I was about 12. I was very moved by it; I remember crying at the end of the play. I'm grateful that I encountered it before I had all of the awareness of Beckett as an important figure and *Godot* as an iconic play.

**JHL:** Well, there you go. A lot of people will say to me, *help me with Beckett will you How do I understand Beckett?* I generally respond by saying: just read the work; just read it and meet it in your own way. And you'll find your version of Beckett. And it won't be mine. It'll be yours. But start with the work.

**OO:** You and Conor Lovett co-founded Gare St Lazare in 1996. And you've been married since when?

**JHL:** Oh gosh. Conor and I met when we were 14.

**OO:** Oh my gosh, I didn't realize that.

**JHL:** Yeah. A ridiculous amount of time together.

**OO:** It's amazing.

**JHL:** Oh, God, somebody do the math. But, yeah, a very long time.

**OO:** Did you two meet, because you both grew up in Cork, did you meet in school, around town?

**JHL:** We met via mutual friend. I lived in a very small little village just outside of Cork City. And so yeah: mutual friend, party.

**OO:** Wow. My assumption was that the professional relationship predated the personal relationship, but it's the opposite. The question still stands though, which is, given the length of that relationship – personally, creatively – how do you two enter a room

## ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION

together and how do you collaborate? Has your process shifted over the course of your careers?

**JHL:** I suppose it has only shifted in the sense that much of the work that we did in the early part of those 25-plus years [of Gare St Lazare] was a very pared down version of [what we do now]. [It was] pretty much Conor and myself and only even eventually a stage manager coming into the room. It was a kind of sculpting process: an artist with material. We had a very private and intimate process up until probably 15 years ago, when we began to expand out and work with other collaborators.

That expansion into working with other collaborators came at a really good time for us both, as well. We had in some way completed this very intimate way of working. But [the experience] gave us a shorthand that is incredibly useful and a really clear, intimate understanding of each other's process. The respect for each other and each other's practice has always been there. I suppose it's not dissimilar to the relationship, as well. Sometimes, of course, those were hard to untangle, art imitating life and all of that, but we've always gone into the room with a mutual respect. And hopefully we carry that with us. It feels really great to have that deep

understanding and to bring that into a room and to share it with other people.

**OO:** Speaking of inviting other people into your collaborative work, Gare St Lazare Ireland founded the Atelier Samuel Beckett last year, through which artists are invited to residencies near your home in France. Artists of all disciplines have participated: architects, writers, actors, dancers. How did that program begin? And what do you feel is valuable about artists of all disciplines engaging with Beckett's work in their own practice?

**JHL:** The Atelier Samuel Beckett is really a fantastic story. When Conor and I first moved to France, after being married for a number of years, we went to a very small little village in Mericourt, about 40 minutes outside of the Paris city center.

A wonderful American couple gave us the possibility to look after their house in that village. It meant that as young artists, we had a possibility to build a body of work. [The house] was a rehearsal place and a place for us to work. It allowed us to create, over a number of years, a body of work that we're still living from today.



## ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION

From that beautiful village in a rehearsal room in France, we toured our work around the world, as far and wide as Australia, South Africa, India, China. It became a signature of the company to tour internationally. Via that touring, we were presenting the work in the U.S. And by virtue of those visits over sustained periods of time and with sustained support from Culture Ireland, we had the great fortune of meeting with patrons who loved what we were doing and wanted to make sure we had support to keep going.

While we are Arts Council funded from Ireland, there were periods of difficulty where funding was impacted by economic crisis, but we were able to sustain the company with our patronage from the U.S. And one of those patrons, just prior to COVID, came to us and said, "We'd like to give the company a substantial gift. What would you like to do with that?" That was a wonderful proposal: to be asked, "what do you want to do with that money," rather than just considering that it would go into a next production. They said, "where is the company at, and what would you like to do at this point in your careers?"

And so we thought, as you do in mid-age: it's a time for reflection and looking back. We had to think about the great fortune that we had up to now, and all of the support and patronage from the very first visit to Mericourt with the American couple who had given us their home to live in. We knew the value of what it was to live in that rural village, and we thought, we need to give that back. That was the impetus and inspiration for the Atelier. We said to our patrons, what we'd like to do is set up an artist atelier and give other artists an opportunity to come to this beautiful village and create work.

A playwright from Wales and a mixed media artist from Singapore are sharing the residency at the moment. It's up and running. I can't quite believe it. It's quite miraculous. It really is a beautiful thing. It's so pleasing to think that those artists are there and enjoying the fruits of that experience. And all of that journey came through Beckett, came through sustained touring, came through patronage, very particularly via the U.S. So our relationship with the U.S., for us, is very special.

In terms of it being multidisciplinary, we were very keen to make sure that it extended to all artists. I come from a fine art background. Conor trained at the Lecoq theater school. We saw very immediately that a lot of Beckett's work has inspired a

number of different artists in different disciplines, and we thought it would be a shame to limit it to just theater artists. It should be musicians as much as dancers, to continue the legacy of Samuel Beckett through all disciplines. [We also wanted] to make sure that it was international, because we knew the value of Beckett and how he was perceived around the world. Not all artists and writers make an international name; he has. We knew that people from Japan would be as interested as people from Africa to come and work on Beckett's writing.

**OO:** Given what you just said about your own fine arts background and interdisciplinary work, I'd love to hear about your collaboration with the design team on this production of *Godot*.

**JHL:** It is of great importance to me what the visual picture of any work is. I've had various collaborations over the years, but what has been of principal importance to me is to engage the design as an integral part of the production and not something that gets stuck on or delivered halfway through. For me, it is hugely part of the collaboration and so important to engage the actors with the creative team. Nothing's arriving to the room made; it is being made in situ, so that the actors know that [the design is] the right fit, and it makes sense to the production that they're making. Not the *idea* of the production that it wants to be, the production that *is*.

We've been very, very lucky to have collaborators who've been with us for a very long time. We've worked with Simon Bennison, our Lighting Designer, over a 15-year period, [or even] longer. We have a shorthand with him, and I know his level of commitment and his understanding of what a production should be. He's not just delivering an idea, but [instead] is integrated into the process from the beginning.

It's a first-time collaboration with [Scenic & Costume Designer] Kaye Voyce, and she is amazing. She immediately understood the importance of engaging from the beginning and – exceptionally and brilliantly – she's here with us from day one of rehearsal. That is not a norm, and it's a hard thing to get past goal, but when you do, it's amazing.

[Sound Designer] Mel Mercier has worked with us over a 10-year period. We have a very tight and good relationship with him, and he is just a brilliant collaborator. He'll be with us [in the third week of rehearsal], which is well in front of the usu-

# [ GARE <sup>ST</sup> LAZARE ] I R E L A N D

al design time. He will be bringing sound into the rehearsal room, experimenting – painting, as he refers to it – in situ with the actors, to try and get feedback from the actors as well: *Does this work? Can you live with this sound? Where does this sound belong in the context of this play that we are making now?*

We engage all collaborators in the process rather than sticking something on and saying here, wear it. That’s very important to us as a company.

**OO:** After having engaged with Beckett’s work for many decades now, what still surprises you about his work?

**JHL:** Oh, the best surprise is people’s response. How different actors receive the work, how different collaborators respond and understand the work, how an audience reacts.

It’s a joy to see people find their own way through Beckett and attach meaning or understanding. It opens up my mind to new ways of thinking of Beckett and new ways of understanding the writer and not getting entrenched in any too-heavy opinions of what [the work] is or what it should be. I enjoy that the most.

The other thing that I find fascinating is: his writing sustains. I’ve never tired of it. It always feels new. It feels modern. There are so many layers, so much to keep on discovering. It feels like, I mean, [it’s] the most quotable work ever. It was really interesting for us to see during COVID, in particular, how many people ran to Beckett for solace. I thought, wow, that’s amazing.

Beckett really provides so much to the reader. He has become a go-to support for people when trying to understand humanity. That’s a fantastic contrast to not understanding him, [or his work] feeling impenetrable or difficult. It’s like, no, we know people ran to him in crisis. [Asking], *What is this crisis? How do we manage it? What does it all mean?*

We all suffer. We all have pain. We all have difficulty. Beckett’s writing is so human, so current, so rich and rewarding. And [Beckett’s] writing, in addition to just being funny or enjoyable or entertaining, can be hugely insightful. It can penetrate an understanding of the self, or at least help in understanding human behavior.

*To read more about productions at Geffen Playhouse visit [geffenplayhouse.org/blog](http://geffenplayhouse.org/blog).*

## GARE ST LAZARE IRELAND

*Gare St Lazare Ireland is dedicated to the staging of Samuel Beckett’s work with an emphasis on his prose works. It has staged over twenty-four Beckett titles spanning his prose, drama, and radio plays and tours around the world and the US performing at Lincoln Center Theater, Signature Theatre, ArtsEmerson, Rubicon Theatre Company, Laguna Playhouse, and at UCLA’s Royce Hall during the 2006 Beckett Centenary. Co-produced a new production of *The Realistic Joneses* by Will Eno, which toured to the West Coast in 2023; Eno also wrote the solo play *Title and Deed* for Conor Lovett to perform and Judy Hegarty Lovett to direct in 2011. In Ireland, the company has toured to over sixty venues and recently performed at Abbey Theatre, Dublin and *The Everyman*, Cork. In 2023, Gare St Lazare set up *Atelier Samuel Beckett* in France to offer residential stays for artists of all disciplines to take time and space to develop their own work while considering the work of Samuel Beckett. [www.garestlazaireireland.com](http://www.garestlazaireireland.com) Gare St Lazare are grateful to Culture Ireland for supporting this collaboration with Geffen Playhouse.*



SHADES THROUGH A SHADE FROM GARE ST LAZARE IRELAND, DUBLIN THEATRE FESTIVAL 2024, PHOTO BY EWA FIGASZEWSKA





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: RAINN WILSON AS VLADIMIR, ADAM STEIN AS LUCKY, AASIF MANDVI AS ESTRAGON, AND CONOR LOVETT AS POZZO, PHOTOS BY JEFF LORCH



AASIF MANDVI & RAINN WILSON  
PHOTO BY ERIK CARTER

# INTERPRETATIONS OF SAMUEL BECKETT'S WAITING FOR GODOT:

*Waiting for Godot* is well known for its open-ended nature, inviting from the audience multiple interpretations. Despite numerous attempts to definitively interpret the play, Beckett himself remained resistant to assigning a singular meaning to *Waiting for Godot*. He recognized and even embraced the play's ambiguity, stating that "it is a game" and that he "would have been satisfied with less" in terms of audience interpretation. This openness to multiple readings has contributed to the play's enduring relevance and its ability to resonate with audiences across different cultures and time periods. The audience has the freedom to apply their own experiences to the production and make sense of it in a very personal way, depending on the situation. The theme of time, waiting and hope are constant themes in the play, the dynamics between the themes and the social context change every time, depending on the space where the play is staged.

The time when the play is staged and the audience's experiences are key components in interpreting and seeing a different meaning in the play every time.

Here are some of possible, but not encompassing perspectives on *Waiting for Godot*:

**EXISTENTIALISM:** Closely related to absurdism, existentialism is another major theme in the play. The characters are faced with the meaninglessness of life, the absence of God, and the loneliness of being thinking individuals, forcing them to confront fundamental questions about their existence. Vladimir and Estragon are responsible for creating their own meaning and purpose, as exemplified by their dependence on each other and their anticipation of Godot's arrival. This emphasis on individual responsibility reflects the existentialist philosophy that gained prominence in post-World War II Europe, a historical context that deeply influenced Beckett's work.

**POST-WAR ANXIETY:** Written and first performed in the early 1950s, *Waiting for Godot* reflects the anxiety and uncertainty of a world grappling with the aftermath of World War II. The play's bleak setting, a lonely road with a single tree, mirrors the widespread destruction and despair in Europe during that period. Moreover, the characters' repetitive actions and dialogues, their inability to remember the past accurately, and their constant waiting can be interpreted as symptoms of a collective trauma experienced by those who lived through the war.

**POLITICAL ALLEGORY:** Some say that *Waiting for Godot* can be read through a postcolonial lens. Irish National Drama often deals with issues of colonization, independence, and post-colonialism, and some say that Beckett's work can be read in this context

**RELIGIOUS INTERPRETATION:** In *Waiting for Godot*, Samuel Beckett uses a combination of intentionally altered proverbs to force the reader to slow down and analyze what the characters are saying, and direct references to specific biblical events to allow the reader to relate and make connections to the text. Samuel Beckett was born in Foxrock, a suburb of deeply religious Dublin, Ireland, in 1906. He was brought up Protestant in a religious middle-class household ("Samuel Beckett"). Protestantism, represented by the Church of Ireland, was then as it is now a minority religion in Dublin and Ireland in general. Beckett identifies himself as atheist, and said "Christianity is a mythology with which I am perfectly familiar, so naturally I use it".

**DISCUSSION:** Conor Lovett said that the "audience completes the play." What do you think the play is about? How do your personal life experiences help you to see this play?



WAITING FOR GODOT AT GERALD W. LYNCH THEATRE  
PHOTO: RICHARD TERMINE

**SOURCES:** Banister, Suzy. "Beckett and the Bible." Medium.com, 2nd, October, 2014. [https://medium.com/@SOOZ\\_AY3/beckett-and-the-bible-cd027f15f06f](https://medium.com/@SOOZ_AY3/beckett-and-the-bible-cd027f15f06f)

A summary and analysis of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. (2023, April 23). Interesting Literature. <https://tinyurl.com/mkab4bv7>

OpenAI. (2024). ChatGPT (October 2024 version) [Large language model]. <https://openai.com>

Waiting For Godot: Meaning, summary &, Quotes. (n.d.). StudySmarter UK. <https://www.studysmarter.co.uk/explanations/english-literature/dramatists/waiting-for-godot/>

Wikipedia contributors. (2024a, October 3). *Waiting for Godot*. Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waiting\\_for\\_Godot#References](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waiting_for_Godot#References)

# A DEEPER LOOK INTO EXISTENTIALISM

**Existentialism** is a type of philosophy that focuses on individual experience and personal freedom. It's about how each person tries to find meaning in life, even when the world seems random or confusing. Existentialists ask big questions like: *"What does it mean to exist?"* and *"How do my choices matter?"*

The French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre coined the phrase **"existence precedes essence."** This means that when we are born, we don't have a set identity or purpose. We aren't born with a plan or a defined personality. Instead, we create who we are by the decisions we make and the actions we take over time.

Existentialists also talk about **"the absurd."** This is the idea that life doesn't have a clear meaning unless we give it one ourselves. The world doesn't naturally make sense, and that can feel overwhelming. People might feel anxious when they realize how small they are compared to the vast universe, especially when thinking about difficult things like suffering and death.

Two other big ideas in existentialism are **"facticity"** and **"authenticity."** **Facticity** refers to all the things about us that we didn't choose, like when and where we were born, our family, our bodies, and everything that has happened in our past. These things shape our lives, even though we don't have control over them. **Authenticity** is about accepting these facts but still making choices that reflect what we truly believe in. It means being honest with ourselves and living in a way that matches our values, even if life feels uncertain or doesn't always make sense.

Existentialists also explore the idea of **"the Other"** which comes from the way we interact with other people and how our understanding of ourselves changes when we realize that other people are also thinking, judging, and seeing us. Sometimes, knowing that others are watching us can make us feel self-conscious or like we're not fully free to be ourselves.

A common feeling in existentialism is **"angst"** or **"dread."** This isn't just regular worry or fear. It's a deeper feeling of unease that comes from realizing we are completely free to make our own choices, but that also means we're responsible for everything we do. There's no clear guidebook or higher power telling us exactly what to do, and that responsibility can feel both exciting and overwhelming.

**SOURCES:** OpenAI. (2024). ChatGPT (October 2024 version) [Large language model]. <https://openai.com>

Wikipedia contributors. (2024, October 7). Existentialism. Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Existentialism>

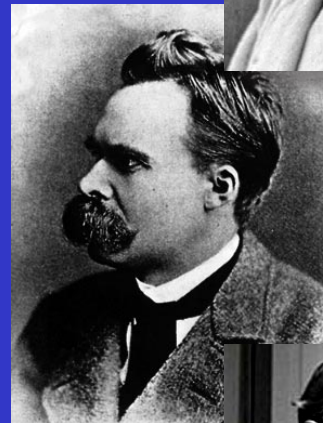
## NOTABLE EXISTENTIALISTS



SØREN  
KIERKEGAARD



SIMONE  
DE BEAUVOIR



FRIEDRICH  
NIETZSCHE



JEAN-PAUL  
SARTRE

PsyD, A. M. (2023, May 4). What to know About Existentialism—Philosophy and Existential Therapy. Verywell Mind. <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-existentialism-5667161>



ALAN MANDEL, (LEFT), AN ORIGINAL CAST MEMBER OF THE 1957 PERFORMANCE OF WAITING FOR GODOT AT SAN QUENTIN STATE PRISON IN SAN RAFAEL, CA. WITH MICHAEL ADAMS, (CENTER) JOHN NEBLETT, (FRONT) AND HENRY MONTGOMERY, (RIGHT) DURING A 2008 WORKSHOP. PHOTO BY MICHAEL MACOR/THE CHRONICLE

# SAMUEL BECKETT & THE SAN QUENTIN DRAMA WORKSHOP

BY JIM FARBER, FOR CENTER THEATRE GROUP

It was December 1974—one of those monochromatic winter days in Paris when the sky, the streets, and the river all seem to turn the same shade of gray.

Rick Cluchey (the founder of the San Quentin Drama Workshop) and I, a longtime friend of the company, were on a mission. Our goal was to find 38 Rue Saint Jacques in the Luxembourg district—the home of Samuel Beckett. Our mission was to deliver an invitation to Beckett to attend the company's production of *Endgame* that would be performed that night.

With a certain amount of fumbling we found the apartment and left the invitation. And although Beckett chose not to attend, he did send a representative who reported back that the production was certainly worthy of his attention.

Cluchey and Beckett had never met. But Beckett was well aware of the San Quentin Drama Workshop and its unusual relationship to his plays. The delivery of that invitation set in motion a chain of events that resulted in Beckett personally directing Rick in *Krapp's Last Tape* in Berlin in 1977, and then the famous San

## THEMES & TOPICS

Quentin Drama Workshop productions in Paris of *Krapp's Last Tape*, *Endgame*, and *Waiting for Godot* a decade later—the only time Beckett directed an American theatre company.

Flashback: On the night of November 19, 1957, Rick Cluchey was locked in a cell in San Quentin Prison serving a life sentence for armed robbery and kidnapping (though the circumstances had been questionable).

At that same time members of the Actor's Workshop from San Francisco were preparing to perform Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* in the prison's massive dining hall, their stage erected, ironically, on the spot where the prison's gallows once stood.

Alan Mandell, then a lanky young man in his late 20s, was the company's manager.

"There were about 1,500 inmates there," Mandell remembers. "So the play began and it was amazing; you could hear a pin drop. Herb Blau (the company's principal director) had explained to them that the play was about what we do while we're waiting—waiting for Godot—which for some people

represents the end and nothingness; for others it may be God and salvation. Well, these guys really understood what waiting was about. At the end there were screams and shouts and applause. It was astounding."

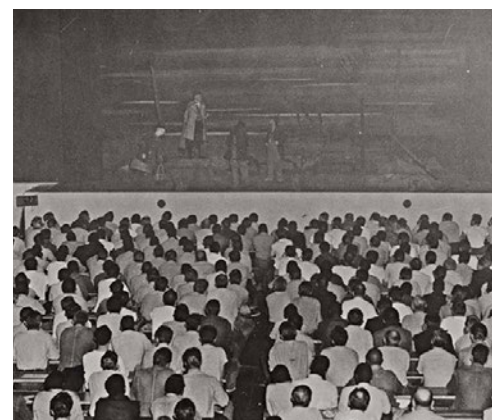
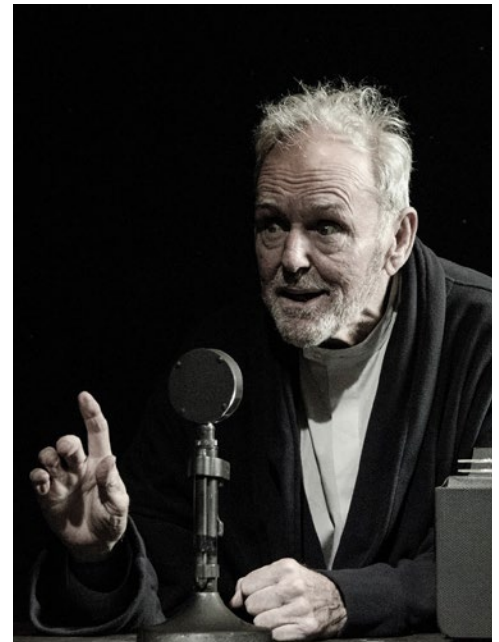
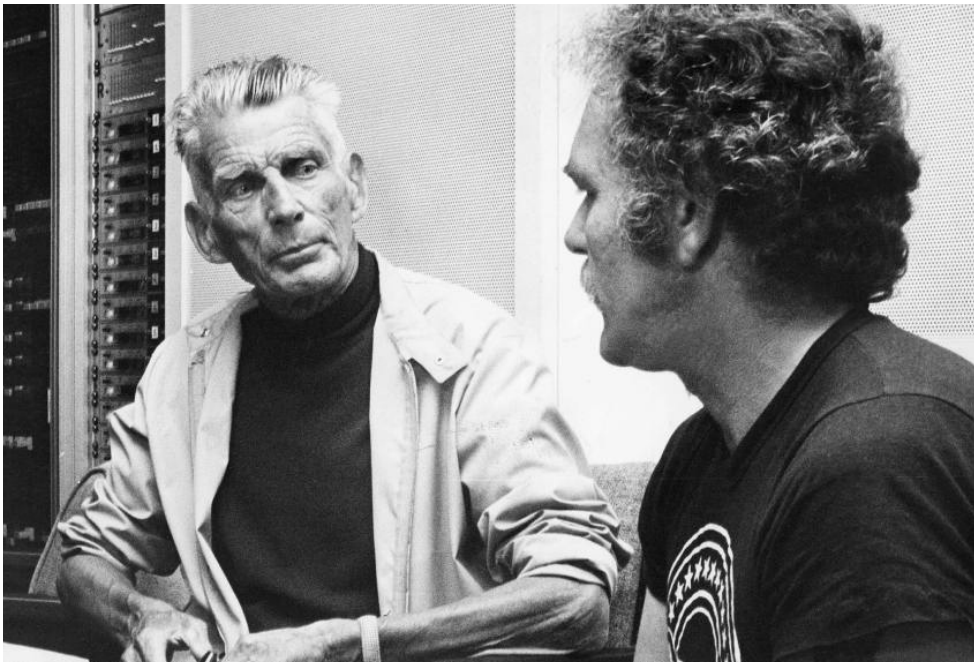
Locked in his cell, Cluchey was unable to see the performance, but he could hear it piped in over the prison's P.A. system. The effect it had on him was palpable. And in the months that followed Cluchey and a small group of inmates formed the San Quentin Drama Workshop. They asked Alan Mandell if he would coach them, which he did on Monday nights from 1958 until 1965. The first play staged by the fledgling company was *Waiting for Godot*.

With the aid of Mandell and Blau, Cluchey's case came under review, and with due consideration he was released on parole. In its new incarnation, outside the walls of San Quentin, the company flourished and gained particular notoriety for its productions of the plays of Samuel Beckett. It was at this time that Mandell became a formal member of the company, which toured extensively around the U.S. performing principally on college campuses.

In addition to the plays of Beckett, the company also gave performances of Cluchey's hard-hitting prison drama, *The Cage*.

In the early 1970s, in an attempt to expand its audience, the company moved to Europe and based itself in Edinburgh, Scotland. December of 1974 found them in Berlin, where after performances of *Endgame* they boarded the train to Paris. And that brings this story full circle, back to that gray day when Samuel Beckett and the San Quentin Drama Workshop crossed paths for the first time.

**SOURCE:** Farber, Jim. Center Theatre Group "Samuel Beckett in Prison" 1st, April, 2016. <https://www.centertheatregroup.org/news-and-blogs/news/2016/april/samuel-beckett-in-prison/>



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: RICK CLUCHEY STARS IN A CHICAGO PRODUCTION OF SAMUEL BECKETT'S *KRAPP'S LAST TAPE*, 1400 INMATES WATCH THE 1957 PERFORMANCE FROM THE ACTOR'S WORKSHOP OF SAN FRANCISCO. SAMUEL BECKETT (LEFT) WITH RICK CLUCHEY (RIGHT). PHOTOS FROM RHYSTRANTER.COM AND AMERICANTHEATRE.ORG



Scan the QR Code to the left to watch part of the documentary *Godot in San Quentin* (1988) of a theater production, of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, directed

by Jan Jönson, played by prisoners, at San Quentin State Prison in California. The play was open to the public and premiered 1988. Film Directed by John Reilly for the Beckett Project.

# THEATER AS A LENS FOR JUSTICE

“ For many Californians the concept of justice feels deeply out of reach. According to Prison Policy Initiative, nearly 200,000 individuals are incarcerated at any given time in our state with about 35,000 incarcerated people released each year. Those numbers are sobering. They are made worse when we remember that the families connected to those individuals are not counted in those statistics. But their lives too are affected by incarceration. ”

—TARELL ALVIN MCCRANEY

## ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

Established by playwright and Artistic Director Tarell Alvin McCraney, whose own work has been profoundly influenced by his family's experiences with the justice system, **Theater as a Lens for Justice** provides access to theater at Geffen Playhouse for populations impacted by incarceration, beginning with the 2024/2025 Season. This initiative provides individuals and their families the opportunity to experience performances throughout the season, supplemented with talkbacks and workshops by theater staff and artistic leaders.

To begin this work, Geffen Playhouse has partnered with **UCLA's Center for Justice** and **ManifestWorks**. Throughout the season this initiative will also provide programming within local prisons, including providing space and support for the UCLA Prison Education Program's Hip Hop Theater course. The Hip Hop Theater "Collaborative" will create a hip hop theater production written by formerly incarcerated artists and adapted in a creative writing workshop at the California Institute for Women (CIW) - the oldest women's prison in the state.

This initiative also aims to create employment pathways into the theater industry for formerly incarcerated individuals—in all aspects of theater making including technical, artistic, and administrative—through internships, mentorships, and professional development.

*Theater as a Lens for Justice is supported, in part, by Jayne Baron Sherman.*



GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR,  
TARELL ALVIN MCCRANEY  
PHOTO PHILIP CHEUNG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS



LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS INITIATIVE BY VISITING [GeffenPlayhouse.org/Justice](https://GeffenPlayhouse.org/Justice)

# THE PHILOSOPHY OF ALBERT CAMUS: EMBRACING LIFE'S ABSURDITY

BY ALISA GAREJEVA. FROM MEDIUM.COM

Albert Camus, a prominent French philosopher and writer of the 20th century, is renowned for his exploration of existentialism and the philosophy of the absurd. Camus's works, such as *The Stranger* and "The Myth of Sisyphus", delve into the complexities of human existence, the meaning of life, and the inherent absurdity of the world. His philosophical ideas continue to resonate with readers and provide valuable insights into the human condition. In this article, we will delve into the philosophy of Albert Camus, examining his key concepts and their implications.

Central to Camus's philosophy is the idea of the absurd, which he defines as the inherent conflict between human longing for meaning and the indifferent, chaotic nature of the universe. According to Camus, humans seek rationality and purpose in a world that ultimately lacks inherent meaning. Instead of despairing in the face of this absurdity, Camus encourages individuals to embrace it, confront it, and find personal meaning and fulfillment within it.

Camus presents his philosophy of the absurd through the metaphor of Sisyphus, the mythological figure condemned to endlessly roll a boulder up a hill only to watch it roll back down again. Sisyphus's eternal task serves as a symbol of the human struggle for meaning in a world that offers no inherent purpose. Rather than succumbing to despair, Camus argues that Sisyphus can find meaning in the very act of defying the absurdity, by embracing his fate and finding joy in the present moment.

Camus rejects the notion of a transcendent afterlife or external authority that can provide meaning and purpose to human existence. Instead, he emphasizes the importance of individual freedom and responsibility. Camus advocates for the pursuit of personal authenticity and integrity, recognizing that individuals have the power to create their own meaning in life through their actions and choices. In the face of the



absurd, Camus encourages individuals to engage in a constant process of self-discovery, personal growth, and the pursuit of ethical values.

Another significant aspect of Camus's philosophy is his critique of nihilism and his rejection of the extremes of despair or escapism. While recognizing the inherent absurdity

VLADIMIR

“ LET US NOT WASTE OUR TIME IN IDLE DISCOURSE! LET US DO SOMETHING, WHILE WE HAVE THE CHANCE...AT THIS PLACE, AT THIS MOMENT OF TIME, ALL MANKIND IS US, WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT. LET US MAKE THE MOST OF IT BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE! LET US REPRESENT WORTHILY FOR ONCE THE FOUL BROOD TO WHICH A CRUEL FATE CONSIGNED US! WHAT DO YOU SAY? ”

WAITING FOR GODOT

of existence, Camus encourages individuals to rebel against nihilism and live with passion and vitality. He argues that one should not seek to escape from the absurd, but rather engage with it fully and find value in the present moment and in human connections.

Camus's philosophy of the absurd also touches on the concept of revolt. He advocates for the importance of active rebellion against injustice and oppression. Camus believed that even in a seemingly meaningless and chaotic world, individuals should strive to create a more just and compassionate society. He emphasizes the need for personal and collective revolt against societal and political structures that perpetuate suffering and inequality.



Ultimately, Camus's philosophy encourages individuals to embrace the absurdity of existence, confront the meaninglessness of the universe, and find personal fulfillment in the pursuit of authenticity, rebellion, and connection with others. His ideas challenge individuals to engage with life's inherent contradictions and uncertainties, rather than seeking simplistic answers or escaping into illusions.

The philosophy of Albert Camus continues to be relevant and influential, resonating with individuals grappling with the complexities of the human condition. By embracing the absurd and recognizing the power of personal freedom and responsibility, Camus invites us to find meaning and purpose in the face of life's inherent uncertainties, contradictions, and absurdities. In a world that often lacks clear answers, Camus's philosophy reminds us of the importance of living fully, engaging passionately, and embracing the beauty and complexity of our existence.

**SOURCE:** Garejeva, Alisa. "The Philosophy of Albert Camus: Embracing Life's Absurdity." Medium.com, 21. June, 2023. <https://medium.com/@alistigris/the-philosophy-of-albert-camus-embracing-lifes-absurdity-14840ea61ffd>



ALBERT CAMUS  
PHOTO COURTESY OF MEDIUM.COM

“ LIKE GREAT WORKS, DEEP FEELINGS ALWAYS MEAN MORE THAN THEY ARE CONSCIOUS OF SAYING. ”

ALBERT CAMUS

THE MYTH OF SISYPHUS AND OTHER ESSAYS

Albert Camus

#### ALBERT CAMUS'S SIGNATURE

**ALBERT CAMUS** (1913-1960) was a French-Algerian journalist, playwright, novelist, philosophical essayist, and Nobel laureate ... He began his literary career as a political journalist and as an actor, director, and playwright in his native Algeria. While living in occupied France during WWII, he became active in the Resistance and from 1944-47 served as editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Combat*. By mid-century, based on the strength of his three novels (*The Stranger*, *The Plague*, and *The Fall*) and two book-length philosophical essays (*The Myth of Sisyphus* and *The Rebel*), he had achieved an international reputation and readership. It was in these works that he introduced and developed the twin philosophical ideas that made him famous—the concept of the Absurd and the notion of Revolt—... Camus considered the Absurd to be a fundamental and even defining characteristic of the modern human condition. The notion of Revolt refers to both a path of resolved action and a state of mind. It can take extreme forms such as terrorism or a reckless and unrestrained egoism (both of which are rejected by Camus). In simple terms, it consists of an attitude of heroic defiance or resistance to whatever oppresses human beings. In awarding Camus its prize for literature in 1957, the Nobel Prize committee cited his persistent efforts to “illuminate the problem of the human conscience in our time.” He was honored by his own generation, and is still admired today, for being a writer of conscience and a champion of imaginative literature as a vehicle of philosophical insight and moral truth. He was at the height of his career—at work on an autobiographical novel, planning new projects for theatre, film, and television, and still seeking a solution to the lacerating political turmoil in his homeland—when he died tragically in an automobile accident in January 1960.

**SOURCE:** Simpson, David. "Albert Camus". IEP.com <https://iep.utm.edu/albert-camus/>

The Theatre of the Absurd emerged as a reflection of the historical and cultural contexts following World War II, particularly in Europe. The devastation of the war, coupled with the unsettling implications of the Cold War, led to a sense of disillusionment and uncertainty about the meaning and purpose of life. The term was coined by critic Martin Esslin in his 1960 book *Theatre of the Absurd* to describe a new wave of plays that emerged in the 1940s and '50s. He defined it as such, because all of the plays resonated deeply with the philosophy of existentialism, which emphasized the absurdity of human existence in a meaningless, harsh and uncaring universe. Albert Camus, a key figure in existentialist thought, articulated this feeling of absurdity in his essay "The Myth of Sisyphus". Playwrights associated with the Theatre of the Absurd, including Samuel Beckett, Eugène Ionesco, and Jean Genet, translated these philosophical ideas into dramatic works that challenged traditional theatrical conventions.

Beyond the direct influence of World War II and existentialism, the Theatre of the Absurd also drew inspiration from various historical and cultural sources. These include Earlier theatrical traditions such as ancient Greek tragicomedies by playwrights like Euripides and Aristophanes, the improvisational comedy of commedia dell'arte, and the works of William Shakespeare. The absurdists were influenced by modern artistic movements like dadaism, surrealism, and their exploration of nonsense and the irrational. The works of Alfred Jarry, Luigi Pirandello, Antonin Artaud, and Bertolt Brecht, with their experimental techniques and challenges to realism, provided further inspiration for the absurdists. Influences from circus, vaudeville, and early film comedians, particularly the Marx Brothers, can be seen in the comedic elements of absurdist plays.

There was a difference in the historical and cultural context of the United States, which helps explain the delayed and less prominent emergence of the Theatre of the Absurd in America. The U.S. having avoided the physical and economic devastation experienced by Europe, enjoyed a period of post-war economic prosperity. This contributed to a cultural climate that was less receptive to the themes of disillusionment and absurdity central to European absurdism. It wasn't until the late 1950s, with the emergence of playwrights like Edward Albee, that absurdism gained a foothold in American theater. Even then, American absurdism often reflected a response to the materialistic and conformist aspects of American society in the 1950s, rather than a direct response to the horrors of war.

The Theatre of the Absurd reflects a complex interplay of historical events, philosophical ideas, and artistic influences. While its roots lie firmly in the post-World War II European context, it continues to resonate with audiences today, reminding us of the enduring questions surrounding the human condition.

**SOURCES:** Reynolds, Robin. "Decoding the Theatre of the Absurd." Backstage.com 16th May, 2024. <https://www.backstage.com/magazine/article/theater-of-the-absurd-explained-77265/>. Wikipedia Contributors. "Theatre of the Absurd." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theatre\\_of\\_the\\_absurd](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theatre_of_the_absurd)

# THEATER OF THE

# A B



LISA DWAN IN SAMUEL BECKETT'S *NOT I*  
PHOTO BY RICHARD TERMINE.  
COURTESY OF BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC.

# SURD

# ACTIVITY: GO GO GODOT MAZE

As Thomas Henricks, Ph.D, states in his article, “Why We Enjoy Puzzles: The View From Play Studies”, that interest in puzzling is more than a desire for pleasant escape. It expresses the satisfaction one derives from other forms of play. Play is transformative, bounded, contestive, unpredictable, self-regulated, and episodic. Puzzling shares these qualities—and their benefits. However, puzzling differs in its sensitivity to external logics, correct endpoints, solitary pondering, and discovery rather than creation. Making things “fit” teaches people to appreciate the workings of the world—and their place within it.

“

ESTRAGON

Let's Go.

VLADIMIR

We can't.

ESTRAGON

Why not?

VLADIMIR

We're waiting  
for Godot.

ESTRAGON

(despairingly)

Ah!...

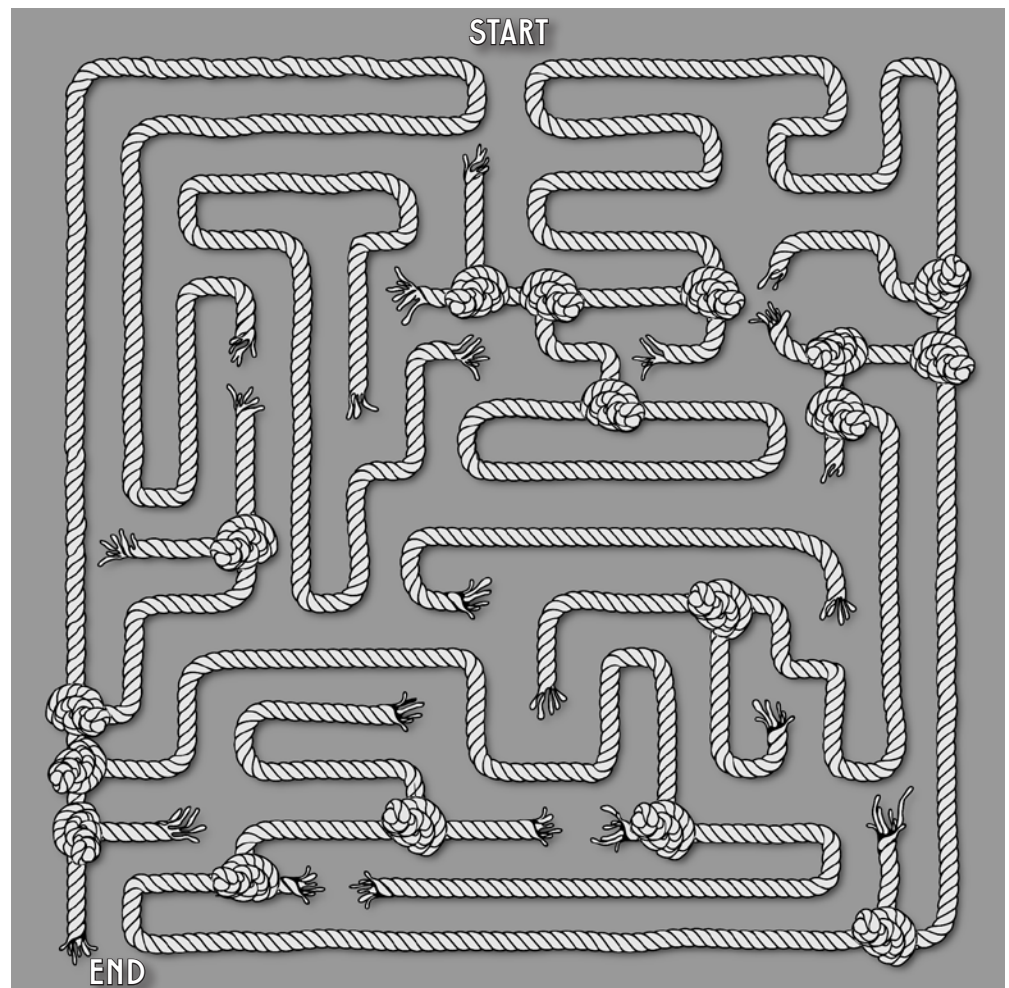
”

WAITING FOR GODOT

**ACTIVITY TIME:** 1 hour+, can be completed before or after you've seen the play.

**INSTRUCTIONS :** Vladimir and Estragon are waiting... for Godot. In the play they say they should leave, but they decide to stay. Help Vladimir and Estragon find their way from the Start to the End of the maze below.

*The Answer key can be found on page 39 of this Study Guide.*



**SOURCE:** Henricks, T. H. [The Pathways of Experience]. (2022, March 1). “Why we enjoy puzzles: The view from Play Studies: Puzzling is a special kind of play—and teaches special lessons”. Psychologytoday.com. Retrieved October 1, 2024, from <https://tinyurl.com/y3x492fe>

MAZE IMAGE COURTESY OF PIXABY.COM

# ACTIVITY: SELF REFLECTION



**ACTIVITY TIME:** 1 hour+, can be completed before or after you've seen the play.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Pencils, pens, markers or other writing instrument.

**INSTRUCTIONS :** In this activity, you will use the mirror provided to the right, to draw your reflection. This does not have to be a "photographic accuracy. Feel free to explore the idea of who you are as a person and what you represent. Think about the concepts from Existentialism of **Facticity & Authenticity**. (*Facticity refers to all the things about us that we didn't choose, like when and where we were born, our family, our bodies, and everything that has happened in our past. Authenticity is about the choices we make that reflect what we truly believe in.*)

## FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS :

- How long did the above activity take you to complete?
- What part of "you" did you draw first? Why?
- In thinking about and drawing your reflection, what discoveries did you make about yourself?
- Based on what you've read about Existentialism in this Study Guide, what parts of your reflection are based on facticity and what parts represent authenticity?



**BANNER PHOTOS: ALFRED H. WILSON & ALLEN GILMORE, WAITING FOR GODOT, COURT THEATER PHOTOS BY MICHAEL BROSILOW OVETT**

MIRROR IMAGE COURTESY OF PIXABY.COM

# ACTIVITY: CARD CARD



**ACTIVITY TIME:** 1 hour+, can be completed before or after you've seen the play.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Two or more players. One deck of playing cards.

**INSTRUCTIONS :** One at a time, each person draws a card from a standard 52-card playing deck, not sharing the card with anyone. Using only gestures, facial expressions, and sounds — but no talking — get the other player(s) to guess which specific card from the deck you pulled. Go back and forth, taking turns, until you have run out of cards. The player that makes the most correct guesses wins.

In a group, make up teams. If your teammate guesses the correct card, you get 2 points. If someone on another team guesses correctly, they get 1 point. Continue until all cards have been picked.

## FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS:

- How did you get the other players to guess a specific card, without speaking? What did you notice about how your teammate got you to guess a specific number or suit?
- What was more absurd, performing which card it was, or guessing the correct card? Why?
- What was the easiest card to guess? Why? Which was the hardest card to guess? Why?

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: LUCIAN MSAMATI AND BEN WHISHAW IN WAITING FOR GODOT AT THEATRE ROYAL HAYMARKET** *PHOTO BY MARC BRENNER*

**PATRICK STEWART AND IAN MCKELLEN IN THE 2013 BROADWAY REVIVAL OF "WAITING FOR GODOT"** *PHOTO BY JOAN MARCUS*

*CARD IMAGE COURTESY OF CANVA.COM*







# ACTIVITY: REBUS PUZZLE

**ACTIVITY TIME:** 1 hour+, can be completed before or after you've seen the play

**INSTRUCTIONS :** A rebus puzzle is a type of puzzle that uses pictures, symbols, or letters arranged in a specific way to represent words or phrases. The challenge is to figure out what the pictures and symbols mean when put all the elements together. For example, a picture of an eye, a heart, and the letter "U" can be read as "I love you."

Rebus puzzles require abstract thinking because they use symbols instead of words, requiring the viewer to think beyond the obvious. To solve rebus puzzles, you need to understand how the pictures, letters, or characters relate to ideas or phrases, making you connect different elements in a creative way. This type of puzzle helps one to think in more flexible and imaginative ways.

Try to figure out the Rebus puzzles below. *The Answer Key can be found on page 39 of this Study Guide.*

MILLION	R O R O A D S D S	<u>WORKING</u> 	 <b>THINK</b>	<u>TRAVELING</u> C O C C C C C C
TROUBLE?	I FELL I FELL I FELL I FELL I FELL	META META META META	<b>SECRET</b> SECRET SECRET	<u>SOMEWHERE</u> 
GGES EGSG SGGE	<u>STAND</u> 	3. BLAME 4. BLAME	SIGHT  SIGHT SIGHT	SMOKE G
PAWALKRK	GET IT GET IT GET IT GET IT	M1Y L11F1E	 <u>TH</u>	WHAT MUST ISNW

# OH, MY GODOT!

Perhaps no 20th-Century theater piece has been as influential amongst artists — or as divisive among audiences — as Samuel Beckett’s *Waiting For Godot*. Impactful, the story of a titular character that never arrives, has been interpreted, reinterpreted, dissected, reassembled, and interpolated many times in the nearly 60 years the play has been produced. Below are only a few of the creative responses brought forth in response to Beckett’s brilliance. Or, perhaps his madness.



## WAITING FOR GUFFMAN

The 1997 comedy film *Waiting for Guffman* concerns a small-town community theater group in Missouri who put on a show hoping to attract the attention of prominent Broadway producer Mort Guffman, who never arrives.

## BILL & TED’S MOST EXCELLENT GODOT

After years of friendship and collaboration in the beloved *Bill & Ted* film series, Keanu Reeves and Alex Winter Reunite for a Broadway Debut in *Waiting for Godot* In the upcoming fall of 2022. This marks a significant milestone in their careers, particularly for Reeves, who will be making his Broadway debut. Alex Winter, who first appeared on Broadway in 1979 in “Peter Pan,” is no stranger to the stage. Keanu Reeves will play Estragon, bringing his unique presence to the role, while Alex Winter will portray Vladimir. The collaboration between Reeves, Winter, and Lloyd promises to deliver a memorable and thought-provoking theatrical experience.

À ESPERA DE GODOT | WAITING FOR  
GODOT AT TEATRO NACIONAL SÃO  
JOÃO PHOTOS COURTESY OF TEATRO  
NACIONAL SÃO JOÃO WWW.TNSJ.PT



## ESCAPE FROM GODOT

*Escape From Godot* is a game and a show, the show is the game and the game is the show. *Escape From Godot* is a theatrical and puzzley experience in between an escape room and a stage play. An audience of eight participants must work together to explore the space, solve puzzles, call cues, and watch the performance in order to get out before “lawyers arrive to sue everyone in the theater for the entirely unauthorized and disrespectful production.” Without the audience’s focus, communication and cooperation, the show may never end. If you’re in Los Angeles, Check out their next showing: <https://misterandmischief.fun/shows/escape-from-godot>





**SESAME STREET: MONSTERPIECE THEATER**

Sesame Street did their own version of Waiting for Godot, titled, Waiting for Elmo. Check out the clip at Monsterpiece Theater: Waiting for Elmo (w / library intro) (youtube.com)

**WAITING FOR GODOT: THE GAME**

Check out this computer game based on the play, Waiting for Godot at <http://www.beesgo.biz/godot.html>



**K.D. LANG'S CONSTANT CRAVING**

The music video for K.D. Lang's, Constant Craving, is set during a performance of Waiting For Godot. See the late 20th Century song at <https://tinyurl.com/bdeyfd8j>



TEACHING ARTIST TARA RICASA, ACTOR SARA PORKALOB AND STUDENTS AT *DRAGON LADY* STUDENT MATINEE AT GEFEN PLAYHOUSE

# POST-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Depending on the time available and your participants' interests, guide them to respond to the suggested below. Encourage everyone to participate, and respect differing opinions. Individuals can share their thoughts with a partner or in a small group. Ask for several volunteers to share their groups' answers with the larger group.

- What images and moments from the performance stood out or resonated with you? What was meaningful, stimulating, surprising, evocative, memorable, interesting, exciting, striking, touching, challenging, compelling, delightful, different, and unique?
- Overall, how did you feel while watching this show? Engaged? Amused? Inspired? Provoked? Uncomfortable? What made you feel this way?
- How do you view theater, and its responsibility as an art form? As an examination of life? As a mirror? As the truth? Should it be uncompromising? Share your thoughts.
- What do you think the tree represented, or acted as a symbol of?
- Have you ever seen *Waiting for Godot* before? If so, how would you compare this to other productions you saw?
- Who or what is Godot? Why are they waiting for him? What from the text would lead you to think so?
- How would you describe the inner life of each character in the play? Are they conflicted? If so, how, and why? And what do you find them conflicted about?
- How familiar were you with the plays of Samuel Beckett before seeing this production?
- Describe the design elements from the show: set, props, costumes, music. Be specific as possible. What did you see, hear, feel and experience? How do these design elements inform the storytelling and how do they make you feel as an audience member?

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**ACTIVATE** children with existential intelligence activities at <https://tinyurl.com/bdf8f33d>

---

**BE** like Samuel Beckett and write creatively, utilizing Geffen Education Theater Making at Home projects at <https://tinyurl.com/4fxpbcbn>

---

**CALL** the National Drug Hotline at 1-844.-289-0879 if you or a family member needs help

---

**DO** something when you're bored at <https://tinyurl.com/4wbxu75a>

---

**EDUCATE** yourself about allegories and how they can be applied to Beckett's Godot at <https://tinyurl.com/67myt6ux>

---

**HEAR** Waiting for Godot, the Acclaimed 1956 Production Starring The Wizard of Oz's Bert Lahr at <https://tinyurl.com/mryxh4ex>

---

**KNOW** the difference between Nihilism vs. Existentialism vs. Absurdism at <https://tinyurl.com/49dh256s>

---

**LAUGH** or don't, reading existential comics at <https://tinyurl.com/nhdfbtxx>

---

**LOCATE** your local library to learn more about the plays of Samuel Beckett at <https://lacountylibrary.org/locations/>

---

**REACH OUT** to the Los Angeles Department of Mental Health if you are suffering from overwhelming grief or loss at <https://tinyurl.com/mw8yxbfk>

---

**SHARE** a series of existential puns with others at <https://tinyurl.com/bddtmy8b>

---

**WATCH** a short clip of Steve Martin and Robin Williams in their 1988 production of Waiting for Godot at <https://tinyurl.com/3vyzf87w>

---

**VISIT** the Prison Journalism Project to learn more about incarcerated actors at <https://tinyurl.com/2p9chywd>

---

# GET LIT: DRAGON LADY

This season Geffen Playhouse Education & Community Engagement has partnered with the Los Angeles-based nonprofit Get Lit. Get Lit ignites student engagement, literacy, and young voices around the globe using the power of spoken word, technology, and community.

Each Study Guide this season will spotlight written response pieces to Geffen Playhouse Gil Cates Theater productions, crafted by students enrolled in Get Lit Players literacy programs. Get Lit receives complimentary tickets to all Geffen Playhouse Gil Cates Theater shows as part of our Lights Up & Access Community Engagement Programs.

The poem "I Only Want to" written by Jada Leung on the following page was written in response to the Geffen Playhouse's production of Sara Porkalob's *Dragon Lady*, presented Sept. 4th - Oct. 16th, 2024.

The next Get Lit written response will be to Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, and will be shared in the Study Guide for Geffen's upcoming *Noises Off*, by Michael Frayn, presented January 29- March 2nd, 2025.



SARA PORKALOB, *DRAGON LADY*  
PHOTO BY JEFF LORCH



Get Lit - Words Ignite is striving to change LA's literacy rate & arts scene into a grassroots wonderland, one teen poet at a time. Through classic and slam poetry, using the power of Spoken Word, technology, and community they ignite a love of words and introduce teens to great works of literature and poetry. They respond with their own original poems and perform them all over the world.

Ultimately, Get Lit's goal is to improve students' writing and speaking skills, which will benefit them in university and beyond. Through their program they also develop self-confidence and unbreakable friendships and collaborations

Get Lit - Words Ignite was founded in 2006 in Los Angeles by Diane Luby Lane to increase literacy, empower youth, and energize communities through poetry. Get Lit began with a show that Diane toured with internationally-celebrated poet Jimmy Santiago Baca, turning it into a curriculum which transformed youth into poets, leaders, and scholars.

**SCAN the QR code to the left to check out Get Lit's performances, interviews and behind-the-scenes tomfoolery at their Youtube page. Learn more or get involved here: <https://www.Getlit.Org>**

# I Only Want to

by Jada Leung

dance my-self in technicolor  
 cycle an art that i named my-self  
 and hope it is a parent  
 (and maybe leave it alone)

still call us a tricolon, knowing then it's unrealistic.  
 still st-em from the sa-me jukebox in the base-ment  
 throat and song  
 sp-am fried rice  
 still like to think in threes, trisected  
 syntax  
 belligerent and uncouth  
 stubborn, they say i say i've  
 stolen english and i'll steal this too  
 still wound my mouth on your tongue still  
 the thumping, bleeding, breathing re  
 wound the record (for art, i mean)

(i mean so-metim-es i put on so-mething with so-me bass and  
 pretend to be above my-  
 self. i used to be interesting but now i just cook  
 microwave pasta and study art and  
 forget my keys and whose  
 blood i borrow. so-metim-es i think i'm getting erased on stage and  
 maybe she worries. so-metim-es, i am dusty springfield  
 and know there is so-meone waiting  
 to be my childrens'

mother) people who are afraid of a little color hate the LEDs.  
 they will whisper a dragon was once  
 papier mache like i was  
 once not a performer.  
 mother of mythic violence grows up to  
 write jokes and crafts wings out of laughter.

like if they abandon us enough we might cease to exist like if i  
 schis-m the letters namesaked: "one woman"  
 i might accidentally scramble them i mean

in the art at least.  
 we karaoke and are the same voice at least.  
 i write a poem and have to break them apart because some  
 people

just can't stand being in the same performance, i mean,

the last time i sang you gave me the whole show  
 and left

and left and  
 (i can't help but notice the intermission her lullaby  
 stopped and we moved on, oh god) last wednesday  
 we were sitting in the same room and  
 i was sitting above myself and  
 we put a band in the walls with the  
 rest of the philippines

this is my act of subservience.  
 i will tell you this is all  
 only a jukebox on a stage  
 a girl  
 a joke! and

you  
 you  
 (who are gone, i keep dismissing) will sing back, Trust  
 me this time, baby. Baby. Everyone beautiful was once  
 alone. Thrice alive. This is what hatches. Let me  
 Be with You.



**JADA LEUNG**, poet (*she/her*)

Jada Leung is a freshman at USC. She is a current member of the Los Angeles-based youth poetry troupe Get Lit Players, who perform spoken word in schools across Southern California. She was first runner-up for the 2024 Los Angeles Youth Poet Laureate. Also, she is really really good at peeling hard-boiled eggs...

# STAFF SPOTLIGHT

## AN INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATE, CHLOE SHI

### What is your position at Geffen Playhouse?

I first started in September 2022 as a part-time COVID Compliance Officer. When COVID restrictions were relaxed in May 2023, the theater kept me part-time as a Production Assistant, and in June 2024, I became full-time staff as a General Management Associate.

### What are your primary responsibilities as General Management Associate?

As a member of the theater's Administration department, I am primarily responsible for supporting our Production and Artistic departments. Most of my work happens in the pre-production phase: before a play can enter rehearsals or a set can begin construction, months of scheduling and planning are needed. I help the theater plan ahead, so other departments can build on this framework once production begins. For example, I began scheduling for *The Reservoir*, the last show in our 24-25 season, back in February 2024 before we even finished our 23-24 season!

Once artists arrive for rehearsals, my other primary responsibility is handling payment, travel, housing, and any other logistics. At every point in the process, I also work closely with Accounting to pay invoices, execute contracts, and track budgets. Overall, I enjoy this behind-the-scenes supporting work because it keeps the theater running smoothly and allows my friends in Production and Artistic to focus all their energy on putting the show on stage!

### What do you find most challenging about your work?

With so many shows per season and the constant need to plan ahead, sometimes I feel like I'm juggling plays! There are definitely days when my to-do list feels endless and I wish I could be in two places at once. Luckily, I collaborate a ton with other departments around the theater, so we all work together to make sure we're on-schedule and nothing slips through the cracks.



PHOTO BY ISAAK BERLINER

### Was there a pivotal moment when you realized you wanted a life in the arts, or did it occur incrementally?

The arts actually caught me completely by surprise! Though I had a soft spot for theater in high school, I studied Applied Physics and Astronomy in college. Unfortunately, the pandemic brought changes to my life that I couldn't control, so I had to drop out before completing my bachelors degree. For a few years, my life felt like it was on hold-- not just because of the pandemic, but also because I couldn't see any path outside of academia and I didn't know how to bounce back from dropping out. Then, the theater found me! As I met more folks through the Geffen, I began to learn what a life in the arts could be like. I'm forever grateful to everyone who encouraged me along the way and helped me find this path.

### What was one of your favorite shows to work on? And why?

I only played a very, very small part in the overall process, but my favorite show (and my first show!) at the Geffen was *The Inheritance*. With the way my work schedule lined up, I was able to watch that show through the monitors at least a dozen times, and every single time I noticed some new, beautiful detail.

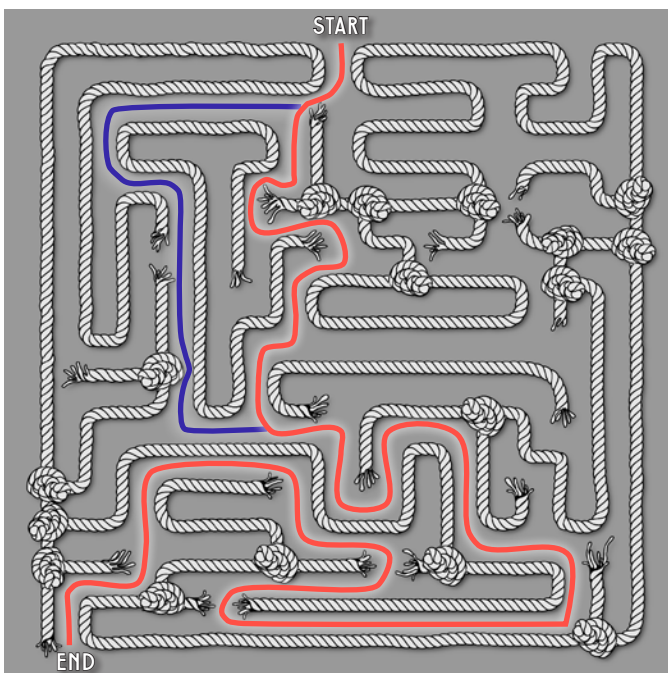


A STAGE MANAGER'S CONTROL CENTER IN THE BOOTH  
 PHOTO BY BRIDGE THEATER, X: @\_BRIDGETHEATRE



SCAN this QR code to watch videos from American Theatre Wing's Masterclass series on different jobs in American Theater. Stage Managers, Wig Makers, Scenic Designers, Front of House staff, Marketing Directors and many other people work behind the scenes to bring a show to life! If you are interested in a career in the arts and work behind the scenes, learn more here. #theater #jobs #alifeinthearts #getintothetheatre #americantheatrewing #career #behindthescenes

## ACTIVITY PUZZLE ANSWER KEY



ONE IN A MILLION	CROSS ROADS	WORKING OVER-TIME	THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX	TRAVEL OVER-SEAS
ARE YOU IN TROUBLE?	EIFFEL TOWER	META-PHOR	TOP SE-CRET	SOME-WHERE OVER THE RAINBOW
SCRAM-BLED EGGS	I UNDER-STAND	NO ONE TO BLAME	LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT	GO UP IN SMOKE
A WALK IN THE PARK	FORGET IT	FOR ONCE IN MY LIFE	THUNDER STORM	WHAT GOES UP MUST COME DOWN

# GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

[EDUCATION@GEFFENPLAYHOUSE.ORG](mailto:EDUCATION@GEFFENPLAYHOUSE.ORG)

10886 LE CONTE AVE  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90024