

Cross-cultural new play development

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This research sought to highlight the differences between French theatre and American theatre, analyze the dramaturgical aspects of both, and apply the findings in the creation of a new theatrical work. Understanding multiple cultures is important for an artist seeking to convey worldly messages. For a playwright specifically, understanding different cultures aids in the creation of more rich and believable theatrical characters and worlds.

For this study, a site visit to Paris, France was organized. Four shows were analyzed and were chosen so as to encapsulate a variety of genres. *L'Hôtel du Libre Échange*, a late 19th century French comedy, was seen at La Comedie Française; *Ça Coule De Source*, a modern 21st century French play, was seen at Gaité Montparnasse; *Les Virtuoses*, a touring vaudevillian comedy sketch, was seen at Théâtre Fontaine; and *La Résistible Ascension D'Rrutro Ui*, a 20th century English script translated into French, was seen at La Comedie Française for comparison's sake.

Based on the chosen works along with supplemental textbook study, it became apparent that French theatre takes stronger roots in vaudevillian “comedy of gests”, retaining the influence of playwright Molière from the 17th century. The feeling of more “classical theatre” in comparison to American works will be conveyed through the creation and workshop of a French script utilizing asides and comedy of gests to convey a conventionally poetic text.