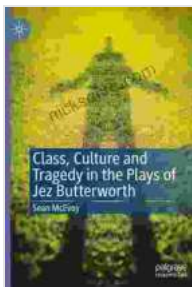


Class Culture and Tragedy in the Plays of Jez Butterworth

Jez Butterworth is a contemporary British playwright whose work has garnered critical acclaim for its exploration of class culture and masculinity. This essay will examine the ways in which Butterworth's plays use tragedy to illuminate the tensions and conflicts that exist within British society. We will focus on three of Butterworth's most famous plays: *Mojo*, *Jerusalem*, and *The Ferryman*, to demonstrate how he uses the genre of tragedy to critique the class system and its impact on individuals.

Class Culture in Butterworth's Plays

Butterworth's plays are set in a variety of working-class communities in England. These communities are often characterized by poverty, unemployment, and violence. Butterworth's characters are often struggling to survive in a world that seems to be stacked against them. They are often trapped in cycles of poverty and addiction, and they often turn to crime as a way to make ends meet.



Class, Culture and Tragedy in the Plays of Jez

Butterworth by Sean McEvoy

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Butterworth's plays do not simply depict the hardships of working-class life. They also explore the ways in which class culture shapes the lives of individuals. Butterworth's characters are often defined by their class status, and they are often judged and treated differently based on their social position. This can lead to a sense of isolation and alienation, and it can make it difficult for individuals to break free from the cycle of poverty.

Tragedy in Butterworth's Plays

Butterworth's plays often end in tragedy. His characters are often destroyed by their own actions or by the circumstances of their lives. This is not to say that Butterworth's plays are pessimistic. On the contrary, his tragedies often offer a glimmer of hope. They show that even in the darkest of times, there is always the possibility of redemption.

Butterworth's use of tragedy is not simply a matter of shock value. He uses tragedy to illuminate the human condition. His plays show that tragedy is not limited to the wealthy or the powerful. It can strike anyone, regardless of their social status. This is a powerful message, and it is one that has resonated with audiences around the world.

Mojo

Mojo is a play about a group of working-class criminals in London. The play follows the group as they plan a robbery that goes terribly wrong. *Mojo* is a classic tragedy, and it features all of the elements that we have come to expect from the genre: a tragic flaw, a fall from grace, and a sense of catharsis.

The tragic flaw in *Mojo* is the character of Baby, a young man who is desperate to prove his worth to the group. Baby's ambition leads him to make a series of bad decisions, and he ultimately brings about his own downfall.

The fall from grace in *Mojo* is the robbery itself. The robbery is a disaster, and it results in the death of one of the group members. The robbery is a turning point in the play, and it marks the beginning of the group's downfall.

The sense of catharsis in *Mojo* comes from the realization that the group's tragedy was inevitable. The characters are all flawed, and they are all trapped in a cycle of violence. The robbery is simply the final straw that breaks the camel's back.

Jerusalem

Jerusalem is a play about a group of working-class people who are living on a housing estate in England. The play follows the group as they struggle to survive in a world that is changing around them. *Jerusalem* is a modern tragedy, and it explores the ways in which the class system can destroy individuals.

The tragic flaw in *Jerusalem* is the character of Johnny "Rooster" Byron, a charismatic but flawed man who is trying to hold his community together. Rooster is a victim of his own hubris. He believes that he is invincible, and he refuses to change his ways. This ultimately leads to his downfall.

The fall from grace in *Jerusalem* is the eviction of the group from the housing estate. The eviction is a devastating blow to the group, and it marks the beginning of their downfall.

The sense of catharsis in *Jerusalem* comes from the realization that the group's tragedy was a result of the class system. The group is evicted from the housing estate because they are poor and working-class. This is a clear example of how the class system can destroy lives.

The Ferryman

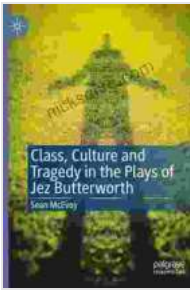
The Ferryman is a play about a family in Northern Ireland during the Troubles. The play follows the family as they struggle to cope with the violence and uncertainty that surrounds them. *The Ferryman* is a historical tragedy, and it explores the ways in which war can destroy individuals and families.

The tragic flaw in *The Ferryman* is the character of Quinn Carney, a young man who is torn between his love for his family and his desire to fight for his country. Quinn's decision to join the IRA ultimately leads to his downfall.

The fall from grace in *The Ferryman* is the death of Quinn's brother, Shane. Shane is killed by a British soldier, and his death devastates the family. The family is never able to recover from Shane's death, and they are ultimately destroyed by the Troubles.

The sense of catharsis in *The Ferryman* comes from the realization that the family's tragedy was a result of the Troubles. The Troubles was a senseless and brutal conflict, and it destroyed the lives of many innocent people.

Jez Butterworth is a master of tragedy. His plays explore the ways in which class culture and war can destroy individuals and families. Butterworth's tragedies are powerful and moving, and they offer a glimpse into the human condition.

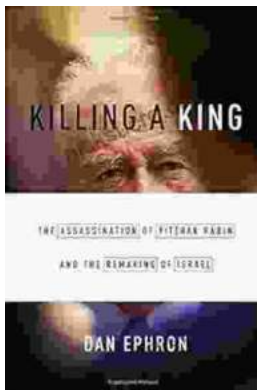


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