Atmosphere

The atmosphere created by Nowra when the characters first enter the “burnt out theatre” shows the harsh reality of the mental asylum and alludes to that fact that Lewis may wish he was in an illusion or just dreaming of being in the asylum. His opening description of the theatre of being “day outside but pitch black inside” also adds to and creates this atmosphere.

Crude Language

In contrast to pathos, crude language is used to provide comedic relief and also show the brutality of the patients which is seen through Doug’s “I suppose a fuck’s out of the question” and all the other sexual innuendos he makes.

Allusion

Justin alludes to the story of the Emperor’s new clothes to explain the difference between the sane and insane stating that he finds it helpful to remember that “A madman is someone who arrives at a fancy dress part dressed in the Emperor’s new clothes.” This is used to highlight the difference Justin sees between who he deems as sane people and insane people. This, along with his hurried exit, shows the pedestal he puts himself on when he works around the asylum patients.

Jargon

Jargon is used throughout the repetition of the saying, “go burn a cat,” as the mental asylum patients know what it means but the audience and Lewis are left in the dark for a while. At first the audience hears this phrase being said multiple times without really knowing its significance and it takes a bit of time before Lewis asks about it and we finally realise the importance of it and Doug’s past is revealed which is used to help us build a character profile on him.

Climax

The climax of the play is when the patients actually get to perform the play. This is the moment the audience has been hopeful for since the beginning of the story and is the time that Roy’s dream of cosi fan tutte becomes a reality, “I had a dream… there would be music… a world that was far removed from this depressing asylum as possible. A world that was like my childh-ood.”

Context

The context of Australia in the 1970s and how it influences the ideas and mentalities on the patients “This is the era of free love and orgies.” “Are you sure we should be doing something like that? In these days, you know, the Vietnam war.”

Pathos

Pathos is used throughout the play and can be seen through quotes in every character. For example, pathos is used in Zac’s quote “I cannot stand real things. If I could put up with reality I wouldn’t be in here.” The use of this is an effective way to convey the more serious themes of the story and help the audience feel sympathetic or even empathetic towards the patients.

Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing: The smell of the burnt out theatre that Nick, Lucy and Lewis find when they first get to the asylum foreshadows Dougs pyromania and is a hint of what is to come with all the patients and their issues eg, OCD and bipolar.

Paradox

There is a paradox between Roy and Lewis in the beginning of the play compared to the ending of the play. In the beginning, Roy acts as though he is in charge and takes control of the play . As Lewis gets to know the rest of the characters and they build relationships, he starts to gain more control over the direction of the play. “We must get started on costumes. I’ve told occupational therapy to stop making those baskets."

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