The Anima in Theatre: Animating a Jungian Concept for Devisers, Directors, and Actors


In order to distill Carl Jung's psychoanalytical theories on archetypes into a format, which can be better understood and used by dramatic analysts and theatre-makers, I explored the Anima archetype and its representations in two plays, Medea (431 BC) by Euripides and The Great God Brown (1926) by Eugene O'Neill. In this thesis, I first define the Anima in Jung's terms and explain how we can find it represented in drama. I then analyze the Anima-inspired conflicts in the two plays in a fairly traditional way, but through a Jungian lens. After an analysis of the use of the Anima in these two vastly different plays, I offer suggestions for the use of the Anima archetype among theatre devisers as well as actors and directors. Lastly, I briefly envision the future of this field of study and encourage others to engage in this style of analysis.

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