

# The emperor jones the cabinet of dr. caligari

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The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1919) is a classic illustration of expressionist technique in film. The film production is about the disturbed Dr. Caligari. The stark distorted set, as a projection of his insane views, askew angles of vision and hypnotic acting enhances the portrayal of madness in this film.

The Emperor Jones, a play by Eugene O'Neill, tells the saga of an African American man who sets himself up as emperor in a Caribbean Island.

The film has been cited as an influence on several artistic expressions, including films, music and, among others, theatrical plays. O'Neill expressed in a letter "...planning for a new latitude in screen expression. I saw Caligari and it sure opened my eyes to wonderful possibilities I had never dreamed of before". The main difference in the expression techniques used is, by their own nature, the presence of dialogues. Caligari was a silent film while the play is based on strong and powerful dialogue and interplay between characters, which often seem to be an extension of Jones's inner demons.

In this play there are three major aspects that O'Neill seems to have picked from the film. The internal tribulations of The Emperor are offered on stage where Jones's expressionism is restricted to the scenes with Jones alone in them. The second aspect was the significance of setting design as a way to generate meaning in the theatre. Visuals in a play could be as important as dialogue. And the third way in which Caligari seems to influence O'Neill is through the lighting effects in the film.