

2024 SAMUEL BECKETT SOCIETY ESSAY CONTEST

Samuel Beckett's plays have a long-standing history of being read and performed inside correctional institutions. Actors and directors have performed the plays of Beckett and cast incarcerated persons in these plays in prisons such as San Quentin (California), Wuppertal (Germany), Kulma (Sweden) and Mountjoy (Ireland).

Of Beckett's plays, *Waiting for Godot* has been performed more frequently than most plays inside prisons. The play features two men by the names of Gogo and Didi who are waiting for a man they call Godot. While waiting for this mysterious man who never arrives, Gogo and Didi are visited by two other men, Pozzo and his slave Lucky. The play, notably, has had a profound impact on incarcerated persons. When it was performed in San Quentin Prison in the 1950s, the play was to change the course of Rick Cluchey's life. He dedicated his life to staging Beckett's work through the San Quentin Drama Workshop. After his release, he worked as a professional actor and worked with at risk youths.

Incarcerated poet Spoon Jackson was moved by the play when he was cast as Pozzo in the Swedish director, Jan Jonson's 1988 production in San Quentin. In a letter Jackson wrote to Samuel Beckett, he credits the play for his growth: "Playing Pozzo has introduced me to parts of myself I hadn't known and I have grown tremendously as a human being!"

We invite you to submit an essay response or a creative response (a poem, short story, or dramatic scene) to Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* or any of Beckett's other literary works. You may want to consider how *Waiting for Godot* or another work by Beckett speaks to you and your experiences?

Your essay or creative response should be no more than 1,000 words. Responses may be handwritten.

CONTEST THEME:
RESPONDING TO
SAMUEL BECKETT'S
WAITING FOR GODOT

TOPIC: WE INVITE ESSAY
& CREATIVE WRITING
RESPONSES TO *WAITING*
FOR GODOT OR ANY
OTHER WORK BY
SAMUEL BECKETT

**samuel
beckett
society**

Winner of the Contest will be announced and featured at the Samuel Beckett Society Conference in Los Angeles.

Winner of the Contest will receive a monetary award of \$500 and will be published in *The Beckett Circle*.

**Submission Due:
April 13, 2024**

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