

FUNDAMENTALS OF THEATRICAL DESIGN : A GUIDE TO THE BASICS OF SCENIC, COSTUME, AND LIGHTING DESIGN Pdf Free

ISBN 13: 9781581158496. Fundamentals of Theatrical Design: A Guide to the Basics of Scenic, Costume, and Lighting Design. Are you human?.



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256 pages
06 Sep 2011
Skyhorse Publishing
9781581158496
English
New York, United States

Fundamentals of Theatrical Design: A Guide to the [PDF]

Production lists from original productions may be included in the back matters pages of the script. Theater professionals treat these pages much as they do the aforementioned italicized stage directions, often totally ignoring the information or treating the pages as adjunct information to the play rather than primary source information. We must always keep in mind that, for designers, the essential information in any script is the art of the piece: the message, meaning, or theme of the play. That message is not just delivered through the spoken dialogue; it is also delivered by the actions performed by the characters. In order to best absorb the meaning of the play, designers must also learn to become part detective and part psychologist.

Characters in a play, like people in real life, do not always say what they mean and often their actions belie their statements. Theater artisans must become adept at reading between the lines, gleaning information not only from the obvious dialogue but from the subtext of the play. For example, in the opening scene of the play *Proof* by David Auburn, twenty-five-year-old Catherine speaks to her father Robert, who happens to be a famous mathematician.

These lines have one obvious layer of meaning that is easily ascertained on first inspection. But, when we discover that Robert is not only mentally ill, but also dead, it gives this dialogue another deeper, richer layer of meaning. It is the subtext that provides the intrigue in this play, and understanding the subtext informs the dialogue and should also inform the design work for any production of *Proof*. Subtext refers to the hidden or underlying meaning of a line of dialogue or action. Text is the line of dialogue; subtext is the way that line is spoken, or more specifically, the meaning behind the text. In this play, there are four characters, consisting of two married couples. We learn very quickly that these couples are the parents of two eleven-year-old boys, who recently got into a violent altercation in a city park where one boy attacked the other with a stick, knocking out his teeth.

The dialogue begins very collegially, at least on the surface. Through the course of the play we discover that the children are products of their own environments, as many truths and secrets are revealed about all four people and their marriages. As in the plays *Proof* and *God of Carnage*, or when considering subtext in any play, the crux is to determine what the characters are doing, how they are doing it, why they are doing it, and the consequences of their actions. The ability to gather and assess information from any script comes with practice and sensitivity and is necessary to effectively read and interpret plays for the stage. The best way to further develop the ability to access information from plays is to read more plays! The more plays one reads, the more informed one becomes with the various styles and structures.

Some scripts are more challenging to read than others. Many designers state that the more challenging plays to read or access include the following: If the dialogue in a play is written in verse or elevated language, the complexity of the language may

sometimes make reading and understanding the play more difficult. The reader must be mindful not to let the poetic form or archaic word usage get in the way of retrieving meaningful information about the story, but instead see the form itself as a revealing stylistic technique. Scripts with complex language or unfamiliar styles may require several additional readings in order for the nuance to become clear.

Musical theater pieces are particularly difficult to visualize when reading because of the diminished emphasis on dialogue and a significant emphasis on song and dance. For example, when the music and lyrics are removed from a musical theater script, what is left is the dialogue, known as the book or libretto, and it can be very thin. There is an emphasis on dance, movement, or action in musical theater that can be time-consuming when actually performed on stage, but can take very little space when typed into a play script.

In the modern book musical, the lyrics are an essential part of the script and give vital information about character and storyline. Designers must become very adept at piecing together information from the many methods of delivery dialogue, song lyrics, and stage directions when visualizing the intent of the composer, lyricist, and playwright. There are even scripts, such as works that are categorized as Theatre of the Absurd, where dialogue is purposefully enigmatic and nonsensical.

Reading these scripts is particularly challenging and demands an open mind and a vivid imagination. These plays can be difficult to understand and relate to, but designers must keep in mind that all of the stylistic choices made by the playwright are important clues to the meaning and intent of the play. It is only through careful investment in the play-reading process that designers can make informed and appropriate design decisions. Performance art, improvisational pieces, dance concerts, or music performances are often developed around an idea or concept. Designing for a devised or conceptual project where no formal script exists presents another design challenge. However, the goal is the same as for scripted pieces: exploring the idea or concept and the overriding message of the piece in order to create effective designs. This involves attending early meetings, speaking at length with the collaborative artists choreographers, composers, directors, or performance artists involved in the project, and viewing rehearsals, listening to music, and researching information about the concept.

The script or conceptual idea serves as the foundation for all of the collaborative artists who interpret it. And comparatively, early realist plays from the nineteenth century were typically constructed around three acts. Modern or contemporary works may even have just one or two acts, or may not use the word act at all. In whatever configuration, the arrangement of scenes and acts gives the play its structure. Traditionally, plays fall under one of two major structure categories: climactic or episodic. Climactic plays are tightly constructed and move in a linear cause-and-effect progression.

They are typically three acts or less and have a definite beginning, middle, and end. Because of this tight structure, climactic plays are sometimes referred to as well-made plays. They contain a small number of characters, take place in one or two locations, and the time span of the story is brief, covering a few days or weeks. In contrast,

episodic play structure has many scenes or acts and a large number of characters, takes place in multiple locations, and may have numerous subplots.

The time span of the story can take place over months, years, or even decades, and the progression of scenes in episodic drama may or may not unfold chronologically. In addition to the two major classifications of climactic or episodic, there are a number of other types of structures. Musical reviews or an evening of unrelated improvisational skits have a serial structure, as they are performed in a series, one after the other.

Repetition, ritual, and tableau are structures where a performance is constructed around an idea, visual image, or character. Book musicals really have their own unique structure, and this structure can appear to be a hybrid of all of the structures described here. Since theater is a live art and reflects culture and society, the manner in which it is presented is always evolving. Writers over the years have attempted to codify dramatic techniques and methods of telling stories. These dramatic theories are useful to theater practitioners today in two ways: they give us a historical perspective, and many of the practical applications of these theorists remain relevant to our time.

In BCE, Aristotle, through observation of play performances of his day, created a description of traditional tragedy containing six different components: spectacle, song, diction, thought, character, and plot.

His observations, titled Poetics , influenced subsequent dramatists for centuries. Aristotle maintained that the healthy release of emotions through catharsis allowed one to live life less emotionally and therefore with more order and restraint. Just a few centuries later, on the other side of the globe, a treatise on dramatic theory called the Natyasastra was ascribed to the Indian sage Bharata. Bhava was the term that Bharata used to refer to the emotions or feelings of the character onstage, and rasa the emotional state elicited in the audience. There were eight original rasas, or emotional states, audience members could experience: love, humor, anger, compassion, disgust, horror, courage, and wonder. Centuries later, a ninth rasa was added: tranquility. In the Natyasastra , Bharata gave instructions on dramatic structure and staging techniques in order to break down barriers to achieve rasa.

Another significant attempt to describe dramatic structure came from a nineteenth-century German named Gustav Freytag. Freytag is most noted in the theater world for creating an analysis of dramatic structure in his book Technik des Dramas in Freytag lived at a time when the well-made play, typically a three-act play with traditional climactic structure, was popular throughout Europe and the United States, and his analysis of dramatic structure was an attempt to create a template for the creation of such plays. The climax is the major turning point when the conflict is resolved and one opponent defeats the other. The resolution happens during the falling action and occurs when the major conflict or problem in the play is solved.
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Carousel Next. What is Scribd? Cancel anytime. Start your free 30 days Read preview. Publisher: Allworth. Released: Jul 27, ISBN: Format: Book. Veteran theater designers Karen Brewster and Melissa Shafer have consulted with a broad range of

seasoned theater industry professionals to provide an exhaustive guide full of sound advice and insight. With clear examples and hands-on exercises, **Fundamentals of Theatrical Design** illustrates the way in which the three major areas of theatrical design—scenery, costumes, and lighting—are intrinsically linked. Attractively priced for use as a classroom text, this is a comprehensive resource for all levels of designers and directors. Performing Arts. Advanced Search. Sponsored by Charles C. Sherrod Library. Privacy Copyright. Files Link to Buy Download or Purchase. The appendices will also be extremely valuable to novice design students. Visit Seller's Storefront. List this Seller's Books. Payment Methods accepted by seller.

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Chapters three and four begin to look at the work process. They do the same in their chapter on collaboration. Parts Two and Three deal with the visual and practical aspects of theater design. The scenery, costumes, and lights are all given full attention. Sub-chapters such as *The Psychology of Color, Balance, Proportion, and Rhythm* break the process down to very clear and digestible portions. The authors understand the practical world of budgetary and time constraints, and they reveal that world with plain, direct language.

Again, there are exercises that bring home the points of every major section. Part Four, called Epilogue, could become a book on its own. It covers a number of practical facets of building a career in theater design. Everything from applying for jobs, through preparing resumes and portfolios, and facing the interview is discussed. Enter your keywords. Author s : Karen Brewster. A step-by-step exploration of everything aspiring and practicing designers and directors need to know about the theatrical design. Shipping may be from multiple locations in the US or from the UK, depending on stock availability. Book Description paperback. Language: ENG. Book Description Condition: new.

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From the Back Cover : Praise for Fundamentals of Theatrical Design "Focusing on the analytical, intellectual, and artistic 'how and why' of the design process, Brewster and Shafer have written a wonderful, insightful text for young designers—in fact, for all collaborative artists. Buy New Learn more about this copy.

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Prepare to be tempted, teased and seduced with beautiful vocals, dazzling dancers, outrageous drag queens, jaw-droppin. In , siren eun young jung began to photograph the doors that obscure the impossibly narrow passageways between nightclub buildings in the small city of Dongducheon, South Korea. Profession: Producer and dramaturg Hometown: Dowagiac, Mich. Theater textbooks often begin with a definition of what theater is. While this may seem trite, the reason for posing this question is valid. In order to effectively practice an art form, one must understand what defines that art form. It is a given that many of the fine arts, such as sculpture, painting, and literature, create concrete and tangible works. And while it can be said that theater is an amalgamation of many of these same art forms, the essential art of theater is found in the exchange that happens between artists and audience during a live performance.

The art of theater is a transitory, shared, and empathetic encounter involving the intimate examination of the lives, thoughts, and feelings of other people. What is our purpose on this planet? Why do some individuals suffer, and some individuals prosper? Why do we love? The creative impulse shared by all people and cultures across time attempts to address these eternal questions. Throughout human history, we have used art—and particularly theater—to give voice to these questions and to postulate answers. That is the core of why we write and perform plays. Questioning the meaning and purpose of our lives defines our humanity. We learn about ourselves when we examine the lives of others. It is also important to note that it is the immediacy of this art form that draws us to it; the experience of live theater is much like life itself in that both life and theater are ever changing, at times fleeting and momentary.

While theater art is evanescent and fleeting, its creation is a lengthy collaborative process. Theater is created by artists who each methodically share their expertise in a number of disciplines: playwrights; scenic and properties designers; costume, hair, and makeup designers; lighting, sound, and projection designers; directors and actors; and a legion of craftspersons. Set and lighting designers create the environment in which the characters live and breathe; costume designers, along with the actors, create the characters that inhabit this world.

At the heart of making the art of theater is the excitement that comes from this collaboration, and the realization that this art form is indeed ephemeral—no two productions, or even performances, of the same play will ever be exactly alike. In order to be a successful designer and collaborative artist, one must study, learn to evaluate and critique, develop awareness and empathy towards the human condition, and cultivate a sense of aesthetics. Many sources, from teachers, to textbooks, share the technical aspects of making art, but it is difficult to find a source that tells one how to be an artist. How does one truly make art?

This is hard to explain, and even more difficult to teach. This task is akin to defining life itself—what is life? What is art, really? And, how do we make it? The purpose of this text is to grapple with this challenge: how can we help beginning theater designers learn to make works of art? The philosophy of this text is grounded in the idea that all areas of theatrical design—scenery, costumes, lighting, properties, projections, and sound—are built on the same core elements and principles and share the same purposes and goals. A somewhat novel premise drives this text: the idea that regardless of the specific design area, theater designers are all members of the same family. They share similar genetic material and upbringing. So, in the early stages at least, they should be reared together. While we acknowledge the importance of sound design, hair and makeup design, properties design, and the emerging field of projection design, this book focuses primarily on the fundamentals of scenery, costume, and lighting design.

But the basic standards and processes really apply to all areas: reading, analyzing and researching a script, developing design ideas, communicating these ideas to the other members of the production team, and implementing design ideas into a working, evocative theatrical design that effectively tells a story. This text is deliberately structured so that beginning scenic, costume, and lighting designers can understand and appreciate these processes in the order they typically occur, and also so beginners can receive essential fundamental instruction script analysis, design objectives, research, collaboration, design elements, and design principles before tackling the more complex and challenging details offered in the design-specific chapters scenic design, costume design, and lighting design.

Terms in bold font throughout the chapters can be found in the glossary. In addition, the appendices contain more detailed technical information on aspects of theatrical design. Each chapter of this book contains a series of exercises intended to solidify ideas and concepts in ways that are useful to students and teachers alike. Participants are encouraged to adapt these exercises as needed for both the purpose of making new pedagogical discoveries as well as reinforcing established design theories. Lastly, the final chapter of this text *Building a Career in Theatrical Design* was included in this book after much conversation and debate. Ultimately, we came to the conclusion that beginning design students must start early to develop a habit of documenting their work. As theater art is transitory, far too often early projects are lost due to improper archiving. When career preparation skills are nurtured early, alongside fostering of design proficiency, students are better prepared for the competitive nature of the theater world both practically and artistically.

We stress the importance of research and collaboration, as theater is a shared experience. It is created by a group of artists who share their expertise in the creation of a work of art and then share that work with an

audience. With proper care, that communal experience can be transformative for both artists and audience alike.

Theater begins and is grounded in a story. The story, usually created by a playwright in the form of a script, is the foundation for the collaborative theatrical experience; it is the central work that all of the other artists interpret. Stories about human circumstances can be expressed in a myriad of ways, and literary works generally fall into several broad categories such as poetry, prose, essays, fiction, and drama or plays. So, reading a play can be a challenging venture. It must be kept in mind that learning to read plays effectively is a fundamental skill for all theater artisans and is vital to successful designing. It is such an important skill, in fact, that beginners should ideally learn how to read a play effectively before embarking on any other study in the theater.

In this chapter, we will explore the physical aspects of a play script. We will learn what to expect when first looking at any play and then ascertain how to acquire the basic skills needed to effectively read plays. Imagination is of prime importance to any theater artist and in this chapter we will discover the essentials of imaginative engagement. We will realize how effective reading and imaginative engagement ultimately work hand in hand with collaboration in the creation of purposeful production concepts and evocative designs for plays. Reading the play aloud with friends or attending a first rehearsal or read-through is a great way to learn to focus on the dialogue and visualize the play. When a play is read aloud, we are able to hear it and get a sense of the characterizations and action.

Hearing it helps us visualize it. Readers will eventually acquire the ability to do this independently and silently, but in the meantime, if it helps to read a play aloud, then do it! Part of the challenge of reading a play is the way the dialogue and action are presented, or the formatting of the script. In order to focus proper attention on the dialogue and successfully interpret any script, readers must acknowledge and understand the structure of the script itself, otherwise called formatting. Plays or scripts can be found in anthologies, collections of plays, as well as bound for individual sale. Individually bound play scripts can be obtained through a number of publishers specializing in plays, including Samuel French, Inc.

Each publisher has a consistent formatting approach they use when publishing plays. For example, Samuel French, Inc. There may be some variation within this basic structure. For example, authors may include additional notes, dedications, or special thanks with the script. Play scripts included in anthologies will eliminate much of the information regarding previous productions and contractual arrangements.

Readers quickly note that publishers pay special attention to the margins, typeface, and the indentations utilized when printing scripts—these choices are usually made to enhance readability and actor usage. Italicized stage directions precede or are imbedded in many lines of dialogue. Some playwrights, such as George Bernard Shaw, include very detailed italicized directions in their plays. Experienced theater artisans often totally ignore these italicized references on the first reading because they do not want to be influenced by other productions of the play.

Others may read the italicized directions with interest, treating them as adjunct information to the play rather than essential instructions. Whichever the case, beginning play readers will find the formatting the way the play is typed on the page very different from prose writing: Raina—she pronounces it Rah-eena, with the stress on the ee Raina—she goes to the bed, expecting to find Raina there. Why, where—Raina looks into the room.

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With clear examples and hands-on exercises, Fundamentals of Theatrical Design illustrates the way in which the three major areas of theatrical design—scenery, costumes, and lighting—are intrinsically linked. Attractively priced for use as a classroom text, this is a comprehensive resource for all levels of designers and directors. Praise for Fundamentals of Theatrical Design "Focusing on the analytical, intellectual, and artistic 'how and why' of the design process, Brewster and Shafer have written a wonderful, insightful text for young designers—in fact, for all collaborative artists.

"I've been hoping for a design text of this caliber for a long time" Vickie J. Scott, Director of Design, Department of Theatre and Dance, University of California Santa Barbara "This text is a clearly presented, thorough introduction to scenic, costume, and lighting design. It is a useful tool for educators and a guide for early designers through basic research methods, design skills, and navigating the production process. Offers an insight to the language and culture of theatrical design that would benefit any early designer. It will be of benefit to serious high school drama programs as well as college theater programs. Several things make this

book outstanding, especially the superb practical exercises at the end of each chapter, which teach needed skills in a way that is interesting and accessible to the student no matter the level. The appendices will also be extremely valuable to novice design students.

She lives in Johnson City, Tennessee. Melissa Shafer is a scenic and lighting designer and technical director at East Tennessee State University. Convert currency. Add to Basket. Book Description Soft Cover. Condition: new. Seller Inventory More information about this seller Contact this seller. Book Description Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English. Brand new Book. Scott, Dept. With clear examples and hands-on exercises, Fundamentals of Theatrical Design illustrates the way in which the three major areas of theatrical design-scenery, costumes, and lighting-are intrinsically linked. Seller Inventory AAC Book Description Condition: New. Satisfaction Guaranteed! Book is in NEW condition. Seller Inventory BZV With clear examples and hands-on exercises, Fundamentals of Theatrical Design illustrates the way in which the three major areas of theatrical design scenery, costumes, and lighting are intrinsically linked.

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