

INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE

Stage Costumes

STAGE COSTUMES

- Clothes have always indicated or signaled a number of things regarding the wearer, including the following:
 - Position and status
 - Sex
 - Occupation
 - Relative flamboyance or modesty
 - Whether one is dresses for work or leisure, for a routine event or a special occasion

STAGE COSTUMES

- ◉ Objectives of Costume Design:
 - Help establish the style of a production
 - Indicate the historical period of a play and the locale in which it occurs.
 - Indicate the nature of individual characters or groups in a play - their stations in life, their occupations, their personalities
 - Show relationships among characters - separating major characters from minor ones, contrasting one group with another
 - Where appropriate, symbolically convey the significance of individual characters or the theme of the play.
 - Meet the needs of individual performs, making it possible for an actor or actress to move freely in a costume, perhaps to dance or engage in a sword fight, and (when required) to change quickly from one costume to another.
 - Be consistent with the production as a whole, especially with other visual elements.

STAGE COSTUMES

- The Process of Costume Design
 - Read and Analyze script
 - Note character's:
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Physical qualities
 - Special traits
 - Role in the play
 - Needs of the play
 - Season
 - Meet with Director and other designers to discuss the “look” of the show

STAGE COSTUMES

- Preliminary sketches/roughs
 - Shows style: including period, color, possible fabrics
- Renderings - usually with swatches attached
- Meet with the cast and measure
- Work with the costume shop to create costumes
- Fittings - can have up to 3 with an individual actor
- Dress rehearsal

STAGE COSTUMES



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- ◉ Indicating style

- Like scenery should inform the audience about the style of the play.

- ◉ Indicating Period and Locale

- Time period - Historical or modern or futuristic



STAGE COSTUMES

⦿ Period and locale

- Can be anachronistic
- Can go against the play's setting/locale for style purposes.

⦿ Identifying status and Personality

- Costumes tell us if the character is aristocratic, working class, or professional.
- Bright and colorful can mean flamboyant, darker tones can mean subdued
- Age - Padding, facial hair, wigs

STAGE COSTUMES

- ◉ Showing relationships among characters
 - Major characters may be costumed differently than minor characters
 - Groups may have different colors
 - Romeo and Juliet - Montagues vs. Capulets
 - West side story - Jets vs. Sharks
- ◉ Creating Symbolic and Nonhuman characters



STAGE COSTUMES

- Nonhuman characters
 - May use masks, puppets
 - May use padding, hats



STAGE COSTUMES

- Meeting performers needs
 - Can do swordfights or dance as needed?
 - Can they make quick changes?
 - Using do-fer garments to practice movement
- Maintain consistency
 - All the costumes consistent through the production
 - All the costumes consistent with other elements

STAGE COSTUMES

○ The Costume Designer's Responsibilities

- Pulling costumes - When costumes are rented, bought, or taken from storage.
- Build costumes - When costumes are created in the costume shop for a production

○ Resources - Elements

- Line, shape, silhouette
- Color
- Fabric - texture
- Accessories

STAGE COSTUMES

◉ Silhouette and line

- Can be changed by undergarments
 - Corset, padding, petticoats, hoops
- Shoulder pads

◉ Color

- Can suggest mood
- Can suggest style of the play

◉ Fabric

- Soft, smooth
- Rough

STAGE COSTUMES

◉ Collaborators

- Costume shop supervisor/Manager
 - Usually hires the shop staff
 - Works with the designer to make sure the shop has everything it needs to complete the design
- Draper
 - Makes pattern for costumes and supervises the First hands and stitchers
 - In charge of fittings and alterations
 - Supervise Muslin Mock-ups being constructed
- First Hand
 - Cuts out the fabric
- Stitcher
 - Sews costumes
- Craftsperson
 - Creates anything worn that is not clothing such as hats jewelry
 - Dyeing and painting
 - Distressing - make costumes look old or worn

STAGE COSTUMES

- Stage manager
 - Schedules fittings
- Wardrobe Supervisor/crew
 - Supports the actors during the dress rehearsals and show
 - Help with quick change
 - Help with dressing, hair, and makeup

STAGE COSTUMES

- Makeup
 - Can age
 - Support fantasy
 - Prosthetics
- Hairstyles and Wigs
- Masks
 - Have been around since the Greeks
 - Comedia
- Millinery, Accessories, and Crafts
 - Jewelry, Walking sticks, purses, parasols
 - Support period or station



STAGE COSTUMES



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