# INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE

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

- 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.

- 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

- 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



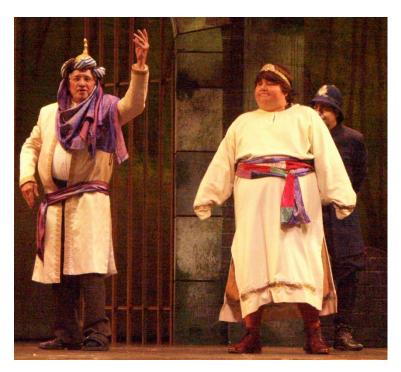














## Indicating style

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

## Indicating Period and Locale

Time period - Historical or modern or futuristic







#### 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

- 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



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



## 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

## 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

#### 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

#### 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 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

- 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









