

SET DESIGNER

The set designer is usually responsible for the overall visual presentation of the production. He/she works closely with the other designers (lights, costume, make-up, poster design, foyer or crew heads of props and set décor) to ensure an overall visual unity. Although you're responsible for the visual presentation, it is generally accepted that the director has final say in all matters.

PLANNING

1. Become thoroughly familiar with the play.
2. Attend planning meetings with producers and crew heads (if available) to discuss basic production schedule and deadlines.
3. Confer with director and technical producer ascertaining style of production, period, mood, dramatic importance of entrances, levels, acting areas, etc.
4. Obtain floor plans and sectional drawings of the stage area of the theatre from properties manager in order to design within the space available. Obtain similar plans of other theatres in the event of festival or touring situations.
5. Proceed with research and begin rough sketches at least one month before auditions.
6. Work out rough floor plans, perspective sketches (if desirable) or rough model for further discussion with director.
7. Upon approval of director, draw final floor plans to scale and give copies to stage manager, director, assistant director, technical producer, and other crew heads.
8. If desirable build a model of the set to be exhibited to cast and crew at first rehearsal.
9. Provide working drawings as necessary, i.e. front and rear elevations, construction drawings for special units. Include color swatches of set, drapes, etc. if possible.
10. Confer as early as possible with costumes, props, set décor people re the coordinating of colors, texture, styles, etc.
11. Confer as early as possible with the lighting designer regarding required effects and checking design for allowances for proper mounting of lighting instruments and masking.
12. All final plans or changes are to go through the director, the head of set construction and the technical producer before presenting to the crews.
13. Check with administrative producer regarding proper purchasing procedures.

WORKING

1. Meet with crew heads and assist in preparation of detailed lists, pictures, sketches etc., where appropriate for props, set décor and set construction heads.
2. With technical producer prepare cost estimate and materials list and acquire same.
3. Before the first rehearsal get together with director (if desirable), assistant director, head of set construction, set décor head and technical producer and masking tape out the set on stage, and/or rehearsal area, showing major levels, entrances, exits, windows, etc. and pull appropriate rehearsal furniture pieces from storage.
4. Be available for consultation with all departments and for production meetings.
5. Attend early blocking rehearsals to check on workability of design and inform stage manager or technical producer of any changes.
6. Attend work parties.
7. Be prepared to do final detail work on set, set décor items, props, furniture, etc. i.e. wallpapering, upholstering, painting, shading, distressing, locating pictures on walls, painting set floor, etc.
8. Be on hand for trial and/or actual set up of set and or parts thereof – inform key people of any changes.
9. Be aware that early set up is helpful to actors and lighting people and ultimately makes for a better production.
10. Assist all related areas in an effort to stay ahead of production schedule.
11. To maintain unity confer frequently with costumes, make-up, props, set décor.
12. Confer with publicity as early as possible regarding poster and program design, and consult foyer display people for possible continuance of visual themes.
13. Have 98% of detailed work finished prior to first tech rehearsal – leave only small details for completion.
14. Be at all tech rehearsals, make notes regarding changes and confer with director, technical producer, stage manager and other designers as required.

RUN

The designer's job is completed by preview night except for emergencies or repair situations. The designer should, however, be available at any time throughout the run for consultation or work.

STRIKE

1. As he is responsible for the show's birth, so he is responsible for the show's burial.
2. Consult with technical producer and set construction head to ascertain what is to be saved and what can be destroyed.
3. If desired, designs and model can remain at the theatre as reference and guidance for future set designers.
4. Ensure that all bills and/or receipts, job description manual and theatre key have been submitted to the administrative producer.

