Scenic Design

ROP Stagehand Technician
Considerations for the Scenic Designer

Know the rules before you can break them

- Design should be expressive of the **Mood** (e.g. happy, comic, tragic) and **Spirit** (the manner and style in which the play is presented; production concept) of the play (emotional)
- Historical Period of the Play- Realism
- Locale of the play/Geography- Realism
- Socioeconomic Level and Personality of Characters- Realism
- Season of the Year- Realism
Elements of Composition

– Drawing and rendering skills are important
  • Line
  • Form
  • Mass
  • Value
  • Color
Practicality of the Setting

• Can’t just be a pretty picture, must be functional
  – Needs of the Director- accommodate blocking, stage business, etc.
  – Needs of the actors- set must function properly, efficiently, and as planned
  – Construction demands of the design- know and plan for technically complex scenic elements ahead of time
  – Time and Fiscal Budgets
Visual Presentation of Scenic Design

- Sketches
  - **Thumbnail**: rough drawings in pencil, general shape, little or no detail
Visual Presentation of Scenic Design

- Sketches
  - **Renderings** - drawn to scale and in color
Visual Presentation of Scenic Design

• Models
  – Functional- 3-D equivalent to thumbnail sketch
  – Production- built to scale, with details
Visual Presentation of Scenic Design

• Other
  – Photomontage/Collage
  – Computer Generated
Designer’s Plans

• **Ground Plan**
  – a scale mechanical drawing in the form of a horizontal offset section with the cutting plane passing at whatever lever (usually 4 ft. above stagefloor) required to produce the most descriptive view of the set.
  – Bird’s eye view/ Down Plot
Ground Plan
Designer’s Plans

• Sectional
  – A drawing, usually in scale, of an object that shows what it would look like if cut straight through at a given plane

• Center-Line Section
  – A sectional drawing with the cutting plane located on the center line of the stage and auditorium; used to show the height of the various elements of the stage and theatre and any pertinent set pieces
Sectional Drawing
Center-Line Section
Designer’s Plans

• **Front Elevations**
  – A front view of each wall segment of the set, including all detail such as windows, doors, pictures, and trim
Front Elevation
Designer’s Plans

• **Detail Drawings**
  - Drawings that describe the detail of objects. Usually drawn in a fairly large scale, normally between $\frac{3}{4}”$ and 1-1/2” to a foot.
Designer’s Plans

• **Full-scale Drawings**
  – Scale drawings made actual size
Designer’s Plans

• Sight-line Drawings
  - A scale drawing (plan/top and section/side views) of sightings that extend from the extreme seats to any position on the stage; used to determine how much of the stage and backstage will be visible from specific auditorium seats
Designer’s Plans

- Painter’s Elevations
Actual Set...
Actual Set...
Drawings and Renderings for “Ghosts”
More stuff to look at…

• http://www.rfdesigns.org/
• http://www.usm.maine.edu/~kading/design_gallery.htm