Beneath the Hood
Secrets of Making Theatre

Act II - From Book to Look

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Beneath the Hood

Sign in and take a copy of Streetcar Scene

Review: Where do plays come from?

- Building a season
- Catalogs of plays (both online and hardcopy)
- Playwriting: dialogue as action and tactics
- The beat of action (an example from *Streetcar Named Desire*, scene two)
- Improvisation: say ‘yes and… ‘
- CROW: Character, relationship, objective/obstacle, when/where are we?

CROW, action, tactics and beats are something we will return to from various perspectives: director, actors, designers.
Auditions

- Actor prep (contrasting monologues, songs)
- Headshot/resumes (display a bunch)
- The basic process (& cattle calls, private readings)
- Memorization, physicalization
- Do’s and Don’ts for actors
- Callbacks - reading scenes, making changes?
- Auditions/feedback (use Streetcar or original scenes from week #1)
Streetcar Named Desire, Scene One.

- Read the scene
- What are some ways of describing what happens in this short scene?
- What changes from the first line to the last line?
- Where in the scene does the dynamic between them first change?
- Organic structure… the beat, a collection of beats, a scene, an act, a play.
Casting

- Actor vs Director perspective; The jigsaw puzzle and the dominoes.
- Philosophy: reward; opportunity; bankability; connections; character-match
- CAST *Little Red Riding Hood* from the class
- CAST *Streetcar* from the class, and/or from movie/TV actors now
- Revisit scene for guides as to how to cast
Behind the Scenes: From Page to Stage

● Production Concept - *Streetcar*...Is it about Fall from Grace, escape, power, sisterly bond, locale/era, macho vs feminine, secrets vs truth (“mendacity”)...?

● ADDIE - a process for creation
  ○ Analyze - what do you need? What do you have?
  ○ Design - what do you want (creative decisions time)?
  ○ Develop - how can you get what you want - experiments and improvements: rehearsal
  ○ Implement - what you end up with
  ○ Evaluate - how did it go? What to do/avoid next time

● Design principles and Design elements

● Collaboration w lighting, costumes, sound, set, props, etc. (mic pocket)

● Design decisions for *Streetcar* (color palette, use of space, set pieces; lighting, etc)
Principles of Design - CRAP

**CONTRAST**

- **COLOR**
- **TONE/VALUE**
- **SIZE/SHAPE**
- **DIRECTION**

Unique elements in a design should stand apart from one another. One way to do this is to use contrast. Good contrast in a design - which can be achieved using elements like color, tone, size, and direction - allows the viewer to focus on the intended message.

To the left, you can see 4 ways to create contrast in your design:

1. **Color Contrast**
2. **Tone/Value Contrast**
3. **Size/Shape Contrast**
4. **Direction Contrast**

**REPETITION**

Repetition brings coherence in a design. Once a design pattern has been established - for example, a dotted border or a specific typographic style - repeat the pattern to achieve consistency.

To the right, you can see 3 ways to create repetition in your design:

1. **Color Repetition**
2. **Tone/Value Repetition**
3. **Size/Shape Repetition**

**ALIGNMENT**

Proper alignment in a design means that every element is clearly connected to another element. Alignment helps to organize information, leading the eye and drawing attention to important details. When alignment has been handled well:

1. **Left alignment**
2. **Center alignment**
3. **Right alignment**
4. **Top alignment**
5. **Bottom alignment**

**PROXIMITY**

Proximity allows for clear and easy design. If two elements are related in some way, they should be placed in close proximity to one another. Doing so minimizes visual clutter and enables the viewer to comprehend the information more easily.

Imagine how important it would be if the proximity rules in this graphic were violated!
Elements of Design
Set Sketch

Set Design Sketch: Shannon Robert, Warehouse Theatre
(https://warehousetheatre.com/preliminary-design-sketch-for-streetcar-named-desire/)
Set Design

Set Design: Brian Prather, Barrington Stage Company, MA
(http://www.brianprather.com/a-streetcar-named-desire/)
Set Design

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Set Floorplan

Set Design: Joe Mielziner
Set Model

Set Design: Paul C. Weimer
(http://www.paulweimerdesign.com/new-gallery-1/)
Set Model

Set Designer: Robin Don
(http://www.robindon.com/page45.htm)
Set design: Sean O’Skea (http://www.seanoskea.com/a-streetcar-named-desire/)
Design and the Playwright

- Theatre making is collaborative
- Some writers are specific (O’Neill, Albee) in the look of the play
- Some writers are spare (Shakespeare, Pinter)
- Some are poetic (Tennessee Williams)
- A script is a blueprint
- Everyone is collaborating to tell a story (lighting, set, costume, props)

How much detail is enough, and how much is too much?

Collaboration means giving up control.
More on Playwriting

6 Line Exercises

- No such thing as failure… (musicians and scales)
- Some random thoughts and reactions (can’t cover them all)
- Look for:
  - Desire (what the characters want)
  - Action (what they do and how, tactics)
- The Promise
- Following the clues
- Writing as discovery
The Material (Where Ideas Come From)

Questions

Reflections

Comments

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