COSTUME DESIGN

Costume Design 101
WHAT ARE COSTUMES?

- They are clothes that actors wear in a play.
- They help portray the character.
- Help the audience understand the time and place of the story.
- Differ from everyday clothes.
THINK ABOUT HALLOWEEN...

WHAT DID YOU DRESS UP FOR LAST HALLOWEEN AND WHAT DID YOUR COSTUME LOOK LIKE?
– Think about the materials you used
– Think about the design you used.
COSTUME DESIGN REQUIRES MUCH STUDY AND EXPERIENCE. THE STUDY OF COSTUMING WILL HELP YOU UNDERSTAND ANOTHER ASPECT OF THEATRE AND PERFORMANCE.
WHAT REQUIREMENTS MUST A DESIGNER MEET?

1. THE COSTUMES OF THE DESIGNER MUST READILY REVEAL TO THE AUDIENCE THE CHARACTER’S PERSONALITY.
2. THE COSTUMES MUST REVEAL THE:
   a. AGE
   b. OCCUPATION
   c. WEALTH
   d. SOCIAL POSITION
3. The costumes must reflect the setting of the play, both time and place
COSTUMES SHOULD BE CAREFULLY PLANNED...

- Study the period of when the story takes place
- Research in costume books
- Look in encyclopedias
- Old magazines (people or national geographic)
- Paintings
There are 4 things to consider when planning a costume.

1 Consider the line or silhouette. That is the curvature of the costume. For example, a short, straight “sack” silhouette is indicative of the late 1920’s.
There are 3 basic types of silhouette:

1. The **draped line**, like in an Indian sari
2. The **fitted line**, like men’s tights in Shakespearean times.
3. **Combination**, like fitted bodice and draped skirt.

This costume to the right is an example of a Ladies’ summer walking-out dress of 1804.
2

Consider the **choice of fabric**.

A. Fabric helps to suggest social status.
   1. Luxurious texture suggests wealth
   2. Rough textures suggest poverty

B. The weight of the fabric is important too.
   1. Regal robes require bulky material
   2. Fairies’ from Midsummer Night’s Dream need light weight material that will flow easily.
Consider the **color**.

Proper choice of color will help establish the play’s mood and the personality of the character.

- Blues and greens are restful
- Red conveys danger or anger
- Black denotes tragedy
- Purple suggests royalty
- White is associated with purity and innocence
Consider decoration.

Decoration includes trim and accessories attached to the costume.

- Buttons
- Lace
- Hats
- Shoes
- Fans
- Canes
- Jewelry
Costumers

- Costume Designer—meets with the director. Researches the play, then designs the costumes for the entire play to fit the period. Costumes with compliment each other and the scene design.
- Costume Crew—The committee in charge of costuming the show.
HOW DO WE GET COSTUMES??

- Making
- Renting
- Buying
- Borrowing
Costume Plot

- Costume Plot—A chart listing each character, the acts or scenes in which they appear, and all the garments, undergarments, and accessories needed.

- Costume plots tell you what you need to get. Then you can meet with the actor or cast and find out who already has what.
Videos

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZCtpcca35K4

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJbzlXuCQ-c