Costume Design

Strategic Dressing

Costume Design

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A costume designer has a lot of things to consider when creating the costumes for a show.

- Show concept
- Period
- Character
- Practicality

Show Concept

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As with every show, there is a concept or overall vision for the show.

- The designers and director will discuss and create a concept.
- Is the show time period accurate? What is the world like?

Show Concept

Show Concept

Period

Period is the time and place in which the show takes place.

- What era are we in?
- Where are we?
- What season is it?
- What did people wear at this time?
- What do people of this class wear?
- What fabrics were used?
- What was their hair like?

Those Answers

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You'll discuss a lot of this with the director. If they tell you we're doing high class victorian in the spring, there you go. The designers job is now to figure that out through…

RESEARCH!

Costume design is a HEAVY research field. Any show is going to involve at least a little but more than likely, it'll be a LOT.

Research

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The internet is your friend. You'll be pulling from a number of sources such as:

- Past Productions
- Paintings of and from that era
- Period Patterns
- Articles and essays on the period
  - Chances are, someone has done the exact research you're doing

Research

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Research

These are all Russian soldiers. It's all about finding which is right for your show!

Character

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Perhaps most important is to represent the character.

You know the period and style of the show, but how does a character fit into it? Does this person wear bright colors? Are they modest? How rich are they? Do they care about their appearance? What is their job?

Getting a sense of who the character *is* and what their clothes says about them is key.

Practical

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Costumes have to function. Things to consider when designing a costume:

- Do they have to dance, run or move in this costume?
- Do actors have to quickly get into or out of this costume?
- Will this costume look really funky under lights?
- Will this costume **read** from the audience?
- Can we afford to make this costume?
- Do we have time to make this costume?

Where are we? When are we? Who are we?
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1.

Where are we? When are we? Who are we?
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2.

Where are we? When are we? Who are we?

3.

Where are we? When are we? Who are we?

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4.

Where are we? When are we? Who are we?

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5.

Where are we? When are we? Who are we?

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6.

Where are we? When are we? Who are we?

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7.

Where are we? When are we? Who are we?

8.

So draw the following:

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You're each going to get two pieces of paper with the faint outline of a figure on it. This will be the basis for two costumes: One we are going to copy from a picture and one you are going to design yourself.

First:

Draw the front, side and back view of this dress.

Yes, there is no side and back picture. You will have to decide what that will look like.

Now make your own

Choose one of the following to design. Remember: Where are we? When are we? Who are we?

- A superhero who built his suit at home. He can fly and hates traditional capes, but wants a cape.
- Someone who casts spells, but has to tear their clothing to do so. They were filthy rich before being outcast
- Muppet Hunter: A person who has made their garb from the skins of puppets he has hunted.
- The high royalty of the realm with a demonic secret.
- Someone from the far, far future who can't afford to get their time machine fixed.