21M.732 Beginning Costume Design and Construction
Fall 2008

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Script, Character, and Concept

1. Concept
   
   a. Director establishes the major focus of the interpretation. Some questions to ask: Why do you want to direct this show? Here? Now? In this venue?
   
   b. Performing art is a collaboration. Production suffers if everyone is not working towards a common goal. Everyone should be aware of what everyone else is doing.
   
   c. Unity through: knowledge, understanding, communication
   
   d. Costume interpretation draws from both written material and directorial approach.

2. Character
   
   a. Script’s emotional tone
      
      i. How the plot flows, important moments, which characters hold primary focus, which are minor but have major input, which characters merely fill out the scene, what/who changes as story progresses
      
      ii. Example: Star costume/decorative costume vs. costume that grows out of interpretation of the drama
   
   b. Physical requirements
      
      i. Character costume develops out of what characters say and do and what others say about them. May or may not have anything to do with stage directions.
      
      ii. Sometimes 2D character: Superman, etc. Or clichéd, like villains
      
      iii. Costumes can progress to show change in production and/or character
c. DO NOT ANTICIPATE AN ACTION! (Regina, boy and girl in powder blue)

d. Ask:
   i. When do the crucial moments occur in the production, and how should they be staged?
   ii. What kind of line, texture, color will best express these moments?
   iii. What is the motivation of each character?
   iv. How does each character fit the framework of the entire production?
   v. Does the character go through changes as the action progresses, and if so how should this evolution be expressed?
   vi. What did the character do before the action begins, and what will they do after the action ends?

3. Script
   a. Geography
      i. At times a specific country is not as important as a feeling for a general area: Middle East, American West, etc. Other times, need to be more specific (Cabaret, Streetcar)
      ii. Chekhov – Russia, but fashions from France and England with a Russian feel.
      iii. Sometimes must be locale NON-specific
   b. Season – do they need coats?