British Theatre Scenography
The Reification of Spectacle

Christine A. White
Goldsmiths College
London University
Phd.

Abstract

Over the last twenty years, the nature of theatre has changed due to the economic system of production which has led to the use of scenography to advertise the theatre product. Theatre has tried to make itself more attractive in the market place, using whatever techniques available. The technological developments of recent years have enabled the repackaging and sale of theatre productions both nationally and internationally. As a result theatre has become more 'designed' in an attempt to make it an attractive commodity.

Scenography has become more prominent and this has changed the authorship of the theatre production, the dramatic text; the experts required by the new technologies have had a different involvement with the product, as they have actively contributed to the scenic image presented. Commercial values may have improved the integrity of theatre design and raised its profile within the profession, with theatre critics and with the academic world but it has proved unable to sell a production, which is ultimately lacking in theatricality and true spectacle. On particular occasions the gratuitous use of technology has been criticised, and as such, has been referred to as 'spectacle'. However, spectacle theatre does not simply mean theatre which uses technology, and so it has become imperative for the word spectacle to be more specifically applied, when used as a critical term to describe a form of theatre production.

In this thesis, I intend to look at the significant factors that have led to the types of theatre presented in the last twenty years; to discuss these types of theatre in terms of their means of production and delivery to an audience, and to relate the change in scenographic values with a change in economic values; a change which has particularly affected the means of production, and as such is a vital beginning for any discussion of the scenography of the late twentieth century.

2

Contents

Introduction

Some of British theatre design has become extrinsic to the substance of the product, and the embodiment of designed theatre and of high production values have, during the late twentieth century, become normative. Erstwhile this has helped to disguise poor content but more predominantly the quality of the 'product' has been apparent. The design choices made in the course of theatre production and the discussion of concept have involved all areas of design for theatre, and new technologies have required experts in each field who have then had a different involvement with the product, as they have actively contributed to the scenic image presented. Scenography which is consistent with high production values, has become a desirable feature of a theatre production and it has come to play a significant role in how audiences respond to a performance. However, scenography cannot replace the actor as the leading performer in the theatre event; if it does, the theatre event becomes something else. The difficulty of defining what has recently been termed 'spectacle' theatre and the concomitant problems of describing the role of scenography in theatre productions has been compounded by the changing role of scenography.

It is apparent that theatre is still enjoyed by a minority of people whose buying power has substantially changed the content and form of what is on offer. This has highlighted forms which are both popular and efficacious, and which have become attractive to this relatively small audience. In discussing the nature of the product and its efficacy I hope to indicate some of the contradictions which spectacle and its technology present. Whilst the use of technology in performance has often been seen as a negative attribute, I would like to discuss the more positive uses of technology as a contributor to the efficacy of spectacle, and ultimately the theatre performance.

This will inevitably lead to an elucidation of the nature of scenography and how it might be discussed through the various theories available.

Methodology

Throughout this investigation into Scenography of the late twentieth century, I have used a number of methods of research and investigation. Initially, my investigation began as a series of premises about the way in which technology has shaped the product of theatre performance. This led me to associate myself with a lighting design manufacturer for whom I conducted surveys in Research and Development, investigating the type of products which would be appropriate for the company to develop, given the advancing aesthetic of performance and the growing importance of lighting design. This research led me to run discussions with the Strand Lighting R&D team in Kirkcaldy which resulted in the company developing low voltage technology aimed at the architectural market, which has filtered through to the equipment list of theatre lighting designers, and electric's departments.

As part of this product research I engaged in a series of surveys. These were with three separate groups. The first two were related in their use of particular technology as a part of the lighting design team. I surveyed lighting designers from the Association of Lighting Designer's mailing list, including in the data people I interviewed specifically; and chief electricians at a variety of performance venues with different producing structures. The results of this research were published as an internal document for Strand Lighting and later in Lighting and Sound International. The third group were designers of costume and set. This list was compiled from the Society of British Theatre Designers, which Ethel Langstreth helped prepare. I also used research results from an undergraduate thesis by Ursula Bilson, The Experiences of Women Set designers- Is there Sexism in the

<u>Theatre and If so What next?</u> 1993, Leicester University, which detailed the way in which women designers worked in theatre. Whilst the results of this were not of direct relation to my thesis the information in Bilson's work added to premises substantiated by the other works.

The next area of research was to conduct a series of interviews with designers who worked in a variety of theatre production areas. Their work offered examples from opera, mainstream theatre, young people's theatre, fringe and the national companies. Consequently, they had experienced a wide range of production aesthetics and budget structures.

Theory

The methodology for approaching a theory of scenography took into account the work of theatre theorists such as Keir Elam and Martin Esslin, Patrice Pavis, Marco de Marinis, Tadeusz Kantor and Richard Schechner. The need to discuss scenography through language naturally pointed me to the work in linguistics of Roland Barthes and Wolfgang Iser. In an attempt to discuss the aesthetics of scenography I have referred to Wittgenstein, Collingwood and Wilkinson. One of the areas which has been most important in determining empirically, the efficacy of scenography has been audience reception theory. I undertook my own survey of student groups at Loughborough University who viewed professional productions at the university theatre. The problems with this kind of survey are highlighted in a postgraduate thesis by J.E. Pinchen (Loughborough), to which I have referred but also in work by Susan Bennett. The latter offers a more coherent argument on the efficacy of scenography.

The rise of scenography and its influence on the theatre product need to be discussed in a theoretical sense, to analyse the way in which scenography affects theatre and its reception. The role of

scenography must encompass that which has a meaning as part of the dramatic text, that is, the performance, and be related to the society it is produced by.

Previous theories have looked at the component parts of the scenographic but have not grappled with what might be termed a poetics of scenography. Barthes's polysemy of signs applies but much of this theory is actually based on Brecht's ideas of alienation. Whilst the aesthetic of the late twentieth century has to a great extent evolved through the economics of production, the use of scenography as a major signifier of meaning has also produced a more critical response to the subject of theatre. This aesthetic can, therefore be traced to Brecht and his influence along with Neher, on the process of scenographic production which exemplifies the critical awareness that can be achieved, and was demonstrated in the reception of their work in the 1950s. However, in the period of the postmodern this theory must also note the contradictory nature of the process of production and the reification of this aesthetic. In the analysis of the 'unmarked', the product can become adopted both commercially and critically and this causes contradictions for the aesthetic, as the work can simultaneously be a producer of the capitalist ideology whilst also being within it. This plurality is to be celebrated as it suggests an educated spectator who actively participates in reading the works presented which consequently enables theatre production to further debates within society. Whilst the spectacle of scenography can be used to either affect criticism of, or complicity with, the ideology presented, the duality of spectacle is a progression from when it has been used in the past to simply reinforce the dominant ideology, as in the Court Masques. Here platonic truth was expounded through the reified spectacle of scenography.

Late twentieth century scenography *is* reified but popular criticism also suggests that the aesthetic as an object is not reified and is recognised when it is uncritical and not part of the Brechtian ideology of *Verfremdungseffekt* but uses its form. The formalist use of alienation techniques of scenography conflicts with Brecht's intended dialectic of scenography.

My research has taken me to talk to technical crews on Broadway and the construction crew at the newly refurbished Madison Square Garden (1991); to visit theatres and discuss their technology in a number of European cities; to discuss ideas of scenography and what it means, with a number of practitioners and academics under the auspices of the International Federation for Theatre Research. Lastly, my research has included my own practice. As a lighting designer who works professionally, I have found my own work and the work of the scenographic team of which I have been a part, fundamental to my progress, in particular on the nature of spectacle and what I mean by 'spectacular'.

My thesis, as set out above, relates the change in the scenographic with a change in the economic. This has particularly affected the means of production and as such is a vital beginning for any discussion of the scenography of the late twentieth century.

Capitalism and Theatre Production

During the last twenty years, theatre funding has undergone a range of policy changes.[1] These have been undertaken as part of a necessary review of funding structures for theatre but they have more often been linked to a particular underlying belief about what theatre should be, what should be included in central funding, and what is consumed by the wider public. The major dichotomy for theatre funding is rooted in the conflict of the popularity of the theatre product, versus the worthy and possibly less popular appeal of a production. The finer feelings of the artistic community are encouraged to make a case for the latter, whilst the popular work is able to justify its existence by its popularity. The single belief, that if a work is popular it does not need to be funded and if work is unpopular, then the work should not be funded, ignores the complex arguments about what the Arts do for us. The problems of this argument are usefully compared to the properties of a public library, where the philosophy is to stock the popular whilst also keeping a range of worthy, less popular but quality works. It is the determining of quality which causes most problems for funding bodies and for fund raisers. Who determines what is popular, and who decides on quality? It is this question of taste which leads to a methodological argument which I will discuss in later chapters.

In the case of the library, it is the librarians, and a finite budget, which help to focus attention on what is really popular and what is really worth stocking for the greater good of the people who use the library. However, included in the choices made, is the requisite of increasing the library's popularity and the need to encourage more people to use the library. This rather simplistic argument about the books that appear on the shelves, is at the centre of theatre funding. Interwoven in this is the choice of who decides on the quality, worthiness and popularity of work and on those merits, who, and what, gets priority funding.

The various policy studies papers, foundation reports, Arts Council strategies, Royal Commissions, and cross party committee reports from the government all agree that there is a limited amount of money. However, beyond that, there is little agreement as to how to proceed. The fundamental differences of ideology are related to what we expect the theatre to achieve, what it does achieve and how it is valued.

If we return to the library, the strategy for discovering how often a book is used and therefore ascertaining its popularity is simple, it is related to the date stamp and the frequency of loans. This does not determine however, whether the book was worthy of being kept in the library, or that it is of high quality and thought to be so by the many who have borrowed the book. So ultimately, frequency of use, does not help us judge quality. It does not even help us determine popularity, since whilst the book is borrowed, we don't know if it is read, read with alacrity, read and thought to be poor, or read and thought to be useful, educative or life enhancing. In short, the fact that the book is borrowed at all is of little relevance to how we judge the quality and usefulness of the book. The theatre going experience is very similar. Some people go to theatre because it is a pastime which they enjoy. They go to a local theatre and see whatever is showing. These people are few. Others go to see a specific performance but are frequent theatregoers to specific performances at any number of theatres. Tourists from the UK and abroad, go to the theatre as part of their leisure time, on holiday. The nature of these contexts for viewing impacts on what is viewed and how it is chosen. As part of the latter tourist group, the choice of performance will rely on the viewers taste for certain styles of writing and genres. If however, one is an infrequent theatregoer the determining of the right choice, will relate to popular perceptions which are conveyed through other media, in particular the press. The other types of theatregoer may be interested in what the press has said about particular productions, but as they more frequently visit the theatre they presumably have prior theatrical knowledge from which to compare performances. This splits

"The significance of the overseas tourist market to London's West End can also be seen by contrasting two surveys of the West End audience carried out by City University in 1982 and 1985/6. Between the two years, overseas visitors attending West End productions increased from 27 to 37 per cent of the audience". [Feist:1990, p.36] Whilst this is statistically not a majority, this audience composition is significant and thus the impact of trends in tourism on theatre audiences is substantial.

the theatregoing public into those who are 'theatre educated' and those who are not. This was identified by Marco De Marinis who described the problem in terms of relying on, "a select band of 'supercompetent' theatregoers". [De Marinis:1987,104] Those performances which are attractive as part of leisure pursuits will achieve a high concentration of audience involved in that, whilst performances which do not endeavour to fulfil a leisure category will get a smaller audience. The audience for the West End theatre was 10.9 million in 1987/8, the majority of this audience comprises of tourists. [Feist:1990, p.36. Table 2:8]

There have been many studies as to the cause of the demise of public interest in the theatre; cinema and television have been discussed as the main culprits for the change in our cultural activity. Cinema and television are to a large extent commercial operations, with even the publicly funded sector, represented by the BBC, where "Audit becomes the raison d'être rather than programme making", [Hutton:1996, p.222] moving into a more commercial structure of production. The ideology which has kept most cinema from being publicly funded and which is attempting to make all broadcasting commercial, has taken over areas of theatre funding and queried the justification of theatre's funding from central government. As the nature of the product has changed and the popularity of theatre as a regular activity for the population of the UK has diminished, the argument for central funding has become harder. The Conservative government ideology of the market, has been encouraged over the last part of the twentieth century and it is the market ideology which has changed the theatre production. The problems of quality, worth, and the use of theatre have always been a conundrum for policy makers in the arts and no doubt will continue to be so, as it adds an esoteric aspect to a discussion of marketability. The policy makers, being experts in their field and therefore, not part of the 'theatre uneducated', have different expectations for the theatre which they see; as it is historically and socially seen in context for them. It is these

aspects of theatre funding which are ill-matched and provide little insight into the relevance of theatre for the majority of the population. Therefore, with a limited budget, which books/performances should be stocked/financed? The unpopular theatre and the unpopular novel suffer the same blight.

The private sector in theatre, like private sectors of most erstwhile public services, have profit as their underlying responsibility. Theatre performance in the last twenty years has changed and become a saleable product. The production's responsibilities are to the backers, who finance and place before the consumers the object for consumption. "Passengers, viewers and patients all become homogenised as 'customers' and 'clients' who consume 'products'. [Hutton:1996, p.218] The responsibilities of the press to the public are to attract readers. The sensationally good or bad can make good copy for a newspaper, and features on theatre productions are more and more prevalent but they do not result in a broader social range of theatre consumer, or a growing popularity in theatre attendance, except for very particular areas. These products are the large West End performances and similar work produced by the national and regional repertory theatres. The West End theatres have become akin to the stock market, where producers can make a good sale and move on to reinvest in the next blockbuster sell-out. Whilst the publicly funded institutions and companies are encouraged to form links with business and the business community, in terms of funding and sponsorship, these links are often encouraged in order that central and public funding is no longer needed. In the light of this funding strategy, the production is then discussed in the short term and in a strategic manner, which fits with the business aspirations of the backers. The performances become products, and these productions are seen as commodities to be sold on to theatres for consumption by the customers. This ethos is exemplified by Hutton's remarks on Arts funding, "In the government-sponsored arts the experimental gives way

to the safe and bankable. Museums advertise their shops and cafes, while the old ethic of curating and scientific merit is down valued." [Hutton:1996, p.223] When businesses find a hole in the market they try to make a quality product which will fulfil the need of the customer, and a product which will have a long enough lifetime to recoup the investment. The product may be adjusted immediately after the launch, modified to suit feedback from the consumer, or the product leads to the development of other products to form a product line, which will enhance the company profile and its profitability. An example of this policy is the product line created by Cameron Mackintosh, with the most recent product being Martin Guerre.[2]

The theatre performance as a commodity is best illustrated by work that is performed in the West End, but more and more regional institutions, arts centres and repertory theatres are trying to fill the category of what will sell, and therefore what people will want, in order to make a profit. The theatre performance as a bankable commodity which is worth investment and worth purchasing, is based on the feasibility of the financial return. All theatres whether publicly financed or privately funded, have to think of theatre performances in these terms. The 'Consultative Green Paper on Publicly Funded Drama in England' raised some concerns about this funding strategy, "There are increasing links between regional theatres and commercial managements. There are positive gains to be made for both sides, but it should be recognised that subsidised and commercial managements have different objectives: appropriate safeguards are essential to ensure that public money is properly used and that artistic objectives are not compromised."[Arts Council of England: 1995, p.12]

The organisation of the UK's world market has been, up until the last twenty years, undertaken by the British Council. The export of the arts and theatre in particular has been linked to business ventures in order to

13

enhance UK plc. Cultural exchange and links between countries are often used to begin the discussion of employment exchange and the opening of new markets. The theatre product, as a commercially formulated product, must be a saleable commodity throughout the world, and the UK is able to transport the theatre commodity to other outlets where English speaking theatre is welcomed. The affect on the means of production for UK theatre workers is very different from the production ethos of the 1960s and 1970s. Then the world product had the people of the event and not the nature of the event, as its raison d'être.

Exports of Shakespeare have always been popular with other countries, but alongside the British Council as the chosen representatives of UK culture, are the commercial productions, in particular, musicals which use large amounts of technology. It is technology which has become a major player in the sale of the product, and has changed the method of production and the role of the performer. As Joan Littlewood found when she began transferring successful product to the West End, this process of production and the cycle it sends a theatre on, creates a very particular background of employment and method of future employment, for those left behind at the producing venue. As more and more shows transfer, the inability to run an ensemble company affects the nature of the theatre's work, as the ensemble are always playing away at another theatre, and as a new ensemble is created, the problem of success is once more the dissipation of the human resources which make the product particular. The late twentieth century's answer to this problem of the market and its consumption of performers, is to rely on different areas of production to star in the work. Television stars have been used to sell a product when a 'name' has been found who is familiar to a large part of the population, as in the revival of Joseph with Philip Schofield, but this use of names has lessened.[3] The casting for shows has changed, due to the requirements of the stage. There is no longer a need to search for a star or indeed the right star to carry a production, as a consequence, many more younger performers are getting roles in these shows.

14

Economically, there is no need to negotiate large settlements with 'stars', the human performers can be on the standard wage. Fewer productions have used stars as the selling and marketing strategy for productions. More and more the sale of a performance has been rooted in the performance of technology. An exaggerated example of this use of technology is the production of <u>MFX</u>, which starred Michael Crawford and large amounts of technology including animatronics.[4] Similarly, the opening of <u>Martin Guerre</u>, 1996, was accompanied by news of the protracted production period, (some seven years) and the problems/ use of scenery in the show. Rob Halliday wrote in <u>Lighting and Sound International</u>, "The trouble with having an infinitely versatile set is that there are an infinite number of possibilities just waiting to be explored. The most dreaded change became the 'half revolve' change - if you cut or added a complete turn, then all of the trucks would still be in the correct position to start their move. Cut or add half a revolution and they would all be the wrong way round, and so their movements through the rest of the act would need replotting."[Halliday:1996,p.10]

Performances of varying levels of success from <u>Cats</u> to <u>Time</u>, <u>Starlight Express</u> to <u>Les Miserables</u> have used features of their staging to attract the pre-publicity necessary for advance sales at the box office. <u>Cats</u> used primarily costume and make-up, converting performers into pussycats but also the use of a rubbish strewn revolve to capture the imagination of the potential audience, and even people who have not seen the production know of some of these features which have been publicised in the press and on the television. <u>Time</u> took the technology further, or at least the marketing of it, by suggesting a hologram of Lord Olivier appeared above the proceedings. The fact that there was no such hologram but some trick projection did not concern the marketers. The performance of Lord Olivier was not the height of the production but the 'star' was the method by which he performed. "What <u>Time</u> had, in lieu of an idea or a score or a script or a cast, was a designer: the star of <u>Time</u> was the only true star to have emerged from the British Musical in the

Physical Theatre - This term has over the years of my study come to mean something very specific in relation to a genre of performance. For example it is used to describe most particularly the work of David Glass and DV8. However in the context of this thesis I am using it more broadly to refer to the physical techniques used to animate the inanimate; this also includes story telling techniques which require the acting out of the actual environment. This acting out as a method of animating that which is not scenographically present but which provokes imaginative activity in the audience, is what I mean by the term. Its antecedents being in particular the work of Shared Experience.

1980s John Napier (Cats and Starlight and Les Miserables) who turned
the Dominion into a planetarium where, under the constant blaze of laser
lights, twenty tons of scenery would nightly rise to the rafters like a
spaceship. This was not a set: it was a feat of mechanical engineering
which rendered all humans (and certainly those involved here) totally
unnecessary except on the nights when it broke down." [Morley:1987,
p.212] The roller skate track in place of the railway lines for Starlight
Express was a clever piece of design which sold the show and has kept it
running. The cantilever bridge which crosses the stage to form the track
adds to the performance of the technology, as there are no human stars,
no known names from the theatre world to sell the show, rather the
nature of the event sells it. Les Miserables featuring a more highbrow
subject matter in the form of Victor Hugo's novel, has also used
technology to drive two towers together to form the finale barricade that
falls into place as easily as the French Revolution. To a greater or lesser
extent these productions use technology and do not 'star' a human
performer. Consequently, they are easy to transfer and transport around
the world. A new cast can be rehearsed, a copy of the set, lighting,
sound and costumes can be transported to open this product anywhere in
the world that will buy it. In most of these designs there is an element of
mutability, that is, elements of the design appear as a number of
significant references for something else, and what appears changes in a
magical fashion. This all adds to a cohesively designed product, which
is ultimately easy to transport. The hi-technology is used to enable these
changes and the movement and transformation of the stage space, by
these means, becomes the major attraction to the performance. The
mutable has become part of the aesthetic.

Employment of theatre workers

The technology which has been used throughout theatre production,
whether for physical theatre or spectacle theatre, has required different
staffing. In the 1960s and the 1970s theatre workers were more broadly

educated in the traditions of production with the use of apprenticeship training for actors in the form of acting stage managers, and a clear progression of responsibility for stage staff who were promoted through the hierarchy from the assistant post within any specific area. The smaller companies worked with a smaller technical staff who had transferable skills within a number of areas, most of their knowledge being gathered on the job, and to a short deadline. The schemes which encouraged this were the apprenticeship posts, such as acting-stage managers. These people would usually be under the instruction of the stage manager, and were primarily her staff, who might occasionally be called on to perform. During a season, an acting-stage manager would then graduate or not, to become a full acting company member. As most people entering theatre production wanted to act this was a good way of teaching actors what to expect, how to behave and that there were a lot of other jobs going on behind the scenes. Employment in other areas such as electrics, sound, wardrobe, and props were again done by the stage management team, of which the acting stage managers would be the lowest in the hierarchy. Each of these areas would have one member of staff whose particular job was in that area, although sound was often 'looked after' by the stage manager. The employment practices for performers have also changed. In the 1960s and 1970s the welfare state still provided some finance for those who were not in work, and so theatre workers could continue working in their profession. Many created their own projects in between contracts. Now, if performers are out of work for longer than six months they can expect to be retrained with another skill for the job market.[5] When we consider that it is normal for a performer to have long periods of 'rest' between work, due to the nature of their skills combined with the lack of work available, this kind of retraining affects the non-traditional areas of theatre endeavour. The whole of Fringe theatre in London and the major cities of the UK, is affected by this new regime. The theatre fringe of any city is made up of performances of varying quality, and styles of production, it is where

most performers get seen for other work, and of course, they are working. In this sense, they freelance in a profit share existence until they achieve an employed contract, after which they very often go back to the fringe, to either produce their own work or be a part of someone else's venture. The fringe in the UK is a vibrant and fertile ground. It provides work, and entertainment for millions of visitors to the UK and in particular to London. In the 1960s and 1970s in London particularly, the fringe theatre was producing interesting writers, directors and designers, most of whom have now become part of establishment and mainstream theatre. Between 1968 and 1973 ten separate venues throughout London offered lunch time theatre. The most successful of these venues was the Soho Poly which produced 30 new plays, some of which were evening shows but most of which performed at lunch time. The work of the Fringe stirred up theatre activity from the grass roots, which has now entered the repertory theatres.[Rees:1992] By the end of the 1970s there were around 70 groups in opposition to mainstream theatre. Hare, Brenton and Wilson were all part of Portable Theatre and they wrote about the social issues of the 1970s, reflecting in their work the underground and not the inside of the traditional proscenium arch theatre. Howard Brenton's writing was in a very particular space and used complete environments, and non-theatre spaces, as such, it was very much practised as underground theatre. Peter Ansorge suggests, that in Brenton's case such settings and experiments served to shape the specific style he has chosen for writing. As Portable's shows were designed for cross-country touring, the plays were relatively short, economic in design and equipped for immediate presentation in any number of theatrical empty spaces.[Ansorge:1975] "A new and often effective form of cultural production was created and consolidated on a national scale."[Kershaw:1992, p.167] As a place for the next generation of theatre workers, it is necessary to have as much freedom of movement and association in this work, which retraining unemployed theatre workers will not enable.

New theatre staffing led by new technologies

The wide range of theatre technology has lead to specialisation. However, specialism in the technical theatre areas, is also a result of specialist training, particularly in the drama schools. The specialisation works for areas of production which are well funded but where there is less money for wages, then the individuals who are multi-skilled are more cost effective. The specialist method of training in the drama schools, rather than a training in a broad range of theatre skills, is as a direct result of cuts in the funding of further and higher education. The drama schools in particular have responded to rising costs by increasing the numbers of students, which has lead to the expansion of courses, irrespective of whether the profession can employ these new workers. The lack of mandatory grants for drama school training and grants for higher education, has made the theatre profession less desirable. As the technology of these areas improved and theatres were able to afford equipment specific to these areas, so specialists who understood the technology were needed. This is the first part of the atomisation of the production process which has resulted in a greater democratisation of the attributed contribution of the experts in these areas but has also changed the nature of some of the existing jobs. For instance, the lighting designer is now an expert in the field of design, interpretation of text, lighting techniques, and innovative imagery through light. The electrics department must now be able to manage computers, electronics and digital media in order to offer the lighting designer all the current technology should they want it, and should the budget be able to afford it. A member of the department will be the computer lighting board operator for the production, who will need to know how to programme and run the board for subsequent performances. However, the lighting board operator has been removed from the performance, and has become a button pusher during the performance; fulfilling the production process of the mass culture produced, where once the electrics personnel might

be designer and operator for the lights. The operator no longer performs this function and therefore, no longer performs in the event. The technology performs instead.

Those involved with the running of technical theatre have also seen their roles change. Computers which were initially used for lighting, are now an integral part of technical theatre. "Most visitors to the stalls immediately remarked on the visual similarities to NASA's mission control....But there were no more than in an office containing a similar number of people,...".[Halliday:1996,p.40] Computer technology for sets, lights and sound can be co-ordinated before anyone gets into the theatre, via computer aided design systems. The development of computer rendering packages for specific theatre problems has begun to contribute to a variety of production areas. Initially, this technology was used by set and lighting designers for drafting purposes but it has also become a very useful tool for theatre technicians, stage and production managers. Specific software can help theatre workers pre-plan complex flying sequences, by allowing the necessary personnel to sit around a monitor establishing a pattern of movement in three-dimensional space. This avoids employing the company and technical staff for long periods of time and inevitably alleviates expensive labour costs. The first production to use this technology was <u>Cyranno de Bergerac</u> which opened at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket in 1993. All the scenery manipulations were first tried on Modelbox software for the theatre and then saved on disc as a basis from which to run the technical rehearsal at the Theatre Royal. Michael Yeargen was the designer, Elijah Moshinsky the director and David Hersey the lighting designer, both designers collaborated through the technology. "Yeargen's designs for the show were worked on AutoCAD by Modelbox. Hersey received plans in DXF format and transferred first to MiniCAD then to PowerDraw version 3.0 on which he draws his lighting plots at 1:50 scale. Daily draft plots were provided for the team, as well as full size rigging maps supplemented by

the normal Hersey bookful of paperwork prepared on his database Filemaker Pro." [Halliday :1993, p.28] The success of this technology was followed up in its use again for Oliver which opened at the London Palladium in 1995, again enabling the preplanning of the movement of scenery.

The use of computer technology facilitates a change in employment structures. Stage crew and scene shifters are not used as widely, especially if once in the theatre much of the movement is automated, and programmed off the original planning software. The director and designers knit together the design and the actor's rehearsed performance, with the actual human performers joining at a later date. The use of CAD as a feature of production undoubtedly affects the ultimate production, as the other theatre workers are not called to present the possibilities of the scenic components. These theatre workers become more divorced from the product which they now facilitate, rather than actively create. Computers and automated movement have been used in the field of lighting design for theatre for around nine years. The use of this technology has allowed another change in the role of those dealing with the scenographic environment. An example of this is illustrated in the relationship of David Hockney as lighting designer for Tristan und Isolde. The idea of moving lights is not a new one but the application of technology to make them move, as opposed to the human operator, is relatively new. The pros and cons of moving lights were given a full airing at the symposium held in December 1987 after the opening night of Tristan und Isolde. The event was staged at the Los Angeles Music Center and used the new technology not only as a publicity stunt for Vari*lite but also to test the use of automated lighting within a repertory system. The theatre was already playing Verdi's Macbeth and assorted concerts in repertory, and Tristan und Isolde had to fit into the repertory. A complete lighting system was installed in 1987 and this was the first full rig of Vari*lites to be used outside of a rock concert. David

Hockney was Scenographer, for Jonathan Miller's production, and in order to design the lights, Hockney worked with Wally Russell, a Lighting Consultant. Hockney's concept of "color-on-color...included costume and fabric and scenery pigments that were selected for their specific responses to colored light". Hockney and Russell used a scale model of the set with minature light fixtures to test results and plan the design in collaboration with Miller and conductor Zubin Mehta. The resulting repertory light plot for the LAMCO productions consisted of 150 VL2 and VL3 units: six in the box booms and 144 spread between six electrics towers and galleries. In addition, there were a handful of ellipsoidals to achieve precise shutter cuts, bow lights, and curtain warmers; a few T3 floods to help smooth out the cyc; and a couple of 3" fresnels to light the castle window. "We didn't use the Vari*lites the way we should have", Hockney said, "there was not enough time - not the unity of vision [with the director and conductor]."

['Lighting Dimensions':1987] [6] This admission reveals that ultimately the technology could only be used effectively with more time scheduled to implement and choose between the many variations offered. The choices which the technology provided were not allowed due to the current working practices, and these were not altered to accommodate the new technology and its potential. Whilst the technology has developed very rapidly there has been neither reflection on how it can be used in the theatre industry, nor a consideration of what practices could or should be changed to adapt to the expanding use of these technologies.

Lighting design is often determined by the individual designer drawing and specifying a rig which will be capable of certain things. In this way, s/he designs a palette from which to work. If the lighting designer does not prepare the rig in some logical fashion then the design work will become inoperable and will result in a rather sporadic and haphazard method of working. If moving lights offer infinite possibilities those

possibilities will need to be thought through, added to the palette, or discounted. This idea was pointed out at the Symposium, "designer Martin Aronsrein objected to the idea of 'playing' with the lights, and designer Neil Peter Jampolis suggested that time could be saved only if a designer were prepared."[Lighting Dimensions, p.32] The "infinite possibilities", become more finite with the pressures of time as is illustrated by Hockney's experience. In fact what is suggested from this 'experiment' is the need for experts to apply working practices in order to make the new technologies work effectively and efficiently. Cameron Harvey writes, "Although this production became a unique receptacle for innovative technology, it ironically suffered from the traditional woes of collaborative confusion and lack of time. ... In the wrong hands they will most likely slow down rather than increase production efficiency - diffuse rather than enhance artistic vision...limitless opportunities present limitless problems - unless a clear vision of the intended result is shared by the creators. And that vision also requires knowledge of this particular medium, the legitimate stage, in order for it to be translated into reality."[Lighting Dimensions, p.35-37] The fear that the potential of technology will be used by 'non-experts' to 'play' with the form and technology once only used by experts, is a fear which has been prevalent in all areas of design. At the Design Research Society, '4D Dynamics Conference', a group of graphic designers and I explored these concerns which had upset their profession; as computer design packages advertised how everyone could be a designer. The internal fear of a profession is that this will emasculate them and show them to be charlatans, which is of course, not what has happened in the field of graphic design.

In the example of Hockney's lighting design an individual with expertise was needed to interface with the technology. The technology provided the reason for the expert in this particular field. Whilst lighting design has endeavoured to prove its craft and artistry through changes in

employment patterns, these changes have actually been due to the use of new technologies.

On Broadway the extent of the technology is phenomenal and best illustrated by the production of <u>Miss Saigon</u>. In 1991 I visited the electrics team for <u>Miss Saigon</u> on Broadway and they showed me the automated rig used by David Hersey. Hersey's (DHA) light curtain scrollers were being tested there. He is a lighting designer leading a market and the technology into new areas, as he designs equipment for the shows he also lights. The electrics team ran tests and had a series of incident books in order to log any faults as they occurred. Two Vari*lite Boards ran the moving lights, VL2 and VL3 on this show, and in addition there are PC's running the light curtain Scrollers. The Vari*lites on the proscenium can move from floor level to the height of the proscenium and can move independently of one another; these also have their own control. Ordinary colour scrollers were run via another computer and consequently the control room was full of technology - this was excluding the Light Palette 90 which ran the 'normal' lighting changes. There were two operators in this control room and they hardly have a break throughout the show, as they are continually calling commands, and are aware of each change they make and how it effects the show. They are also ready to troubleshoot any unit that malfunctions so that any error in technology performance, passes unnoticed by the audience. The spontaneity of performance means something quite different and while the operators are performing a role and are in touch with the piece, they are involved with the show only through the technology. The idea of anything going wrong and there being a change in the nature of the performance is unlikely. The Head of Electrics, proudly showed me all the technology involved but he was dismayed at how much hardware he had to use, in order to operate the show, due to computer incompatibility. One of the computers in the control room was in fact an interface so the others could talk to one another. He wished

manufacturers would get used to the idea that computer technology is leading the field in lighting control and that the addition of an interface on the Light Palette could mean a one person operation. In addition he felt that students should be encouraged to take computer studies if they wished to be technicians, "the lighting designer does not have to have this expertise, as they are working from a more creative angle". In the UK the theatre electrician is seen as an apprenticeship to Lighting Design and designers are often ridiculed if they do not understand the technology.

The sets for Miss Saigon are also controlled through computer systems. Once the trucks come off-stage they are hoisted on a series of tracks to be stored out of the way. The whole process is controlled from a series of computer stations which have c.c.t.v. throughout the backstage area. These stations are located in an area stage right, above the wing, which was constructed from stage trussing. As they control the suspended scenery, they too are suspended above the action of the performance. Consequently, the nature of the work for stage crew and scene shifters changes, as they are no longer required to lift heavy scenery and perform difficult manoeuvres, as machinery does this via computer operator skills which can be applied to such theatre problems.

Whilst the preplanning method of working saves the producer money on wages and theatre rental (if in the West End or on Broadway), it also enables safer working practices. As new directives arrive from Europe denoting what can be lifted and what are safe working practices, producers rarely pay for extra time in which to achieve the same amount of work, which is needed to apply these measures. The computer technology may begin to facilitate a better health and safety policy within the UK theatres. However, this will require a large amount of initial investment, the return from which, for the producers, may be hard to identify.

The performance skills and design ideas which come from the interactive process of rehearsal, and ideas which emerge through exploration in the technical rehearsal, ultimately effect the efficacy of the final performance. Traditionally, theatre presentation has used the production period for technological experimentation, as part of the creative process but the use of computers to short circuit this experimentation will inevitably change the nature of what is finally performed. The final theatre image is not achieved before or after the audience sees it but during their viewing time; it is the most interactive of designs. Whilst computers are a tool to aid theatrical production they have begun to change a fundamental part of the production process, raising questions of what, and how, the performance and the performative is to be achieved. The new employment structures are very different for touring companies and those companies which are not highly funded. These companies still have staff who are required to be multi-skilled.

The Lottery

The most notable change to funding strategies in the UK has been the National Lottery. In a Conservative discussion paper the idea of a local lottery, as the answer to the arts funding problem then suggested for Manchester, was first mooted in 1978. [Conservative Political Centre:1978, p.221] The amount of finance cut from theatre Arts Council funding is difficult to determine as most of the cuts have not only occurred through direct budget cuts but by not being indexed to inflation. Consequently, the cuts evolve from stand still funding which has inevitably fallen behind what theatres are charged for raw materials. Therefore, companies funded by the Arts Councils have less and less money to continue the same level of work. Most theatres are registered charities and as such must operate on neither a profit or a loss basis (this status is usually required by the funding bodies). This status inevitably makes capital investment extremely difficult for these organisations.

From its inception, the National Lottery has been used to fund primarily capital equipment projects, that is, hardware and buildings for companies, rather than particular projects. This unfortunately gives the impression that arts organisations, and theatres in particular, are unable to operate as 'proper' businesses. The charitable status changes how society views this industry and inevitably because of the broadcast deficits involved in production, (with no capital back-up allowed for, if/when financial underperformance hits), theatre is thought to be a dilettante profession. However, as an average 62% of regional producing theatre's income is self-generated this picture is not representative of how the industry operates.[ACGB:1993] Whilst extra funding from the National Lottery is welcome, it comes not as a strategic arts policy for maintaining companies, their buildings and equipment but as and when it is felt auspicious to fund various institutions. The timing of the funding of the Royal Opera House refurbishment juxtaposed with a revelatory television programme about how the company operates, ['The House', BBC1] was inauspicious, and has done maximum damage to the status of theatre workers. It reinforced the idea of the élite theatre world at play, which has contributed to a widening gap between those who pay, and those who benefit most from the theatre. Add to this, the notion of the revenue from the lottery as a tax on the poor for the leisure of the middle classes and the rich, and it is little wonder that theatre has a poor reputation with the working classes. Of the theatre and concerts attended by C2DE classes, the audience proportion was 20% in Glasgow, 26% in Merseyside, 33% in Ipswich. [Myerscough:1988, p.26] One only has to look at the lottery donations list, published by the Arts Councils, to see the exclusivity of the theatre arts which are funded. For example, the March 1996 recipients were: the redevelopment of Brewery Arts Centre, Kendal; a £1.8 million grant to The Drum in Birmingham; a new van for European Theatre Company; redesigning of the Pleasance Theatre, Islington; re-equiping of Exeter & Devon Arts Centre Ltd.; a van and lighting, sound and office equipment for The Custard Factory

Theatre Company, Birmingham; a database of community plays at the Open Theatre Company, Hereford; seating for the amateur Stoke-on-Trent Repertory Ltd.; heating, seating technical equipment and repair work for Actor's Workshop Youth Theatre, Halifax; a van for Fruitbat Theatre for Children, Scarborough; a research study for another venue for Live Arts, Sheffield; computer facilities for Northern Ballet Theatre Limited, Halifax.[ACE:1996] Whilst all of these projects may be worthy of public support, their contribution to a broad enlivening of theatre activity in the UK is limited, and as stated above, they contribute to capital projects and not individual artists who may create the projects to go on in the venues, be logged on to databases and be toured in vans. A more overall concern for the Arts and its relationship to the lottery is based in Keynes' The General Theory, where he states that, "When the capital development of a country becomes a by-product of the activities of a casino, the job is likely to be ill-done". [Keynes:1936, p.159] In fact he was referring to the stock markets but the parallels are obvious. The investments are based on trying to, "guess better than the crowd how the crowd will behave;".[Keynes:1936,p.156]

Public and private finance

The benefits that the cultural condition of a region produces for the business community has been noted in many studies. The affect of a good cultural community means that businesses can keep good quality staff. [1988:Conservative Political Centre, p.22-23] The maintenance of middle managers in a conurbation, that is, the provision of an educated work force, is enabled by the enhanced benefits of good facilities for leisure. "Good cultural amenities were also a strong factor assisting the recruitment and particularly the retention of senior and scarce managerial personnel. Senior executives thought that the quality of life was a particular influence on top postgraduate talent. The survey of staff aged 25-45 in management or advanced technical posts partially confirmed this view....Managers were heavy consumers of the arts, which were

regarded as a major factor (second only to pleasant countryside) in contributing to enjoying living and working in a particular region."[Myerscough:1988,p.145] This identification of the arts as a bonus to business, links the arts to a leisure for the middle-class B & C1, and not the population as a whole.

Although the Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts has managed the government funded Business Sponsorship Incentive Scheme(BSIS), which has matched sponsorship funds with government grants, these associations between theatre companies and business companies, are often based on prestige and social climbing for the businesses. A survey for 1993 showed that regional theatres receive less income through sponsorship and donations than other arts organisations, with just 1% of its income generated through sponsorship and donations.[ACGB:1993,p.19] This is made more apparent when we look at the figures for 1984/85 which show that opera companies received 7% of their funding from private sources as compared with English producing theatres, who received 2% an example of the interest in high art institutions by business. These figures also show that the amount given as a percentage of the income for companies, in general, is minimal, with 7% as the highest contribution made by the private sector to theatre funding. The major problem with match funding is the location of a specific aspect or return that theatre can offer to business. The Arts have frequently been sponsored, as Richard Digby-Day has written, "The government, as it has been inclined to do, behaved as if no one had thought of sponsorship before; all it did was give voice to efforts that had been going on both nationally and locally for some considerable time." [Digby-Day:1983. p,66]

The idea of broadening people's horizons, educating and entertaining a particular work force has become harder to justify as labour forces have become more fragmented with very different aspirations and needs. The Miners Institutes and Railway Unions which provided members with

debates, libraries and theatre shows for the 'enrichment' of the work force, are long gone. This had been one of the benefits which the unions brought to the working-class. "Another and more useful activity was that of helping in the self-education of the members, and this, beginning as early as 1840, has led the way to an important and valuable movement for independent working-class education."[Morton:1992, p.379] Earlier this century, "as an aftermath of the general Strike, there was an upsurge of theatrical activity, and groups sprang up all over the country, under the banner of the Worker's Theatre Movement....In 1930-32 there erupted all over Lancashire the strikes of the cotton workers against the introduction of eight-loom working in the mills, and the Group involved itself completely in this widespread movement of protest."[Goorney:1981, p.1-3] There are fewer large communities of workers who can be catered for in the same way and employers have not the will to provide these luxuries for their work force.

The change in taxation and tax benefits for companies who give to the Arts, has not resulted in the profit of such financial dealings of business companies finding its way to the Arts, on the contrary, patronage of the Arts has provided little financial benefit to individual businesses. Money can be made in other areas of stock investment and the Arts are not better off because of this policy. Private support by way of the charitable status of companies has been used as a method of raising funds from business. Again, this is not active participation in the Arts by business but a tax dodge; it is not a positive support for theatre but an active reaction to taxation. These funds, if collected, could be better placed by the Arts Councils if they were to receive the finance as increased grant.

The national theatre companies have been groomed as centres of excellence but more and more they are working to a commercial ethos which conflicts with this initial intention. "The largest arts organisations receive a high proportion of total available grant; but they exist on a

level of public investment very low by international standards. They are, furthermore, significant businesses in their own right, with a turnover of millions of pounds, and employing hundreds of people. Yet they exist without reserves which would be considered essential in the business world."[ACGB:1993, p.47] The RSC and RNT rely on tourists as their main source of income. The RNT is in strong competition with the West End, which has over the years had to change its production planning and as a consequence has produced less experimental, risky work and less variety. The problems of short term investment when related to theatre are exacerbated by positive returns being unviable within a short term time frame. Subsidy, high art and low art have a difficult life together but their combination should not be dismissed. "It is still sometimes thought that cultural life is split between high art, which should have no contact with commercial values, requiring public subsidy to keep its creative process pure, and the market sector which gives rise to suspicion because it is charged with supplying the world with debased products of mass culture." [Myerscough:1988, p.5] Inherent in most of the liaisons between the Arts and business, is the belief that the one can be made to help the other and that they have undeniably linked objectives. Whilst the case for the far reaching economic value of the Arts has been researched by Myerscough *et al* and quite clearly shown to be highly potent, the research was very clear to state that the Arts are not a tool to this end. "Encouraging experimentation and innovation in the arts is the most difficult and the most vital task. Any artificiality introduced into artistic life - say, plastic schemes specially mounted for tourists - would depreciate the region's cultural assets, alienate the most important aspects of the market and end in eventual failure. The purpose of the arts must never solely become related to alien objectives, be it job generation or social rehabilitation." [Myerscough:1988,p.8]

Marketing of the theatre product

In order to reach the prospective audience the theatre product has to be targeted and targeted at those who can pay. The product has to fulfil various prerequisites of what theatre is, and what the particular theatre is that people will pay for. All theatre companies have expanded their marketing of the theatre product. Companies no longer have a marketing department whose function it is to put up posters and sell tickets, in fact, these are now specialised areas of a companies organisation. Marketing has become the place where the theatre product is made, or broken, without it the product may be wonderful but no one will see it.

The general trend throughout the last twenty years has been for the balance of funding to shift from public to private finance with companies aiming to increase their income through ticket sales. This has been the most important factor for the growth in theatre companies' income, as grants have been reduced. Whilst the aim of this mixed economy funding is to encourage the adoption of more diverse funding practices, where the funding bodies might work between the subsidised and commercial theatre, this encouragment of the taking of risks or profit/sharing, in for instance, the negotiation of "terms for the transfer of subsidised productions to the commercial theatre."[ACGB:1993,p.158], inevitably affects what is produced.

All theatre is commercial; there is an exchange of finance for product. How far the endeavour is commercial depends on why the work is initially undertaken. Though the repertory theatres and arts centres have a different agenda for their work than producers like Cameron Mackintosh, and the Really Useful Group, who are setting out to produce shows that sell, in the strict nature of that statement, so are reps. and arts centres. No one has a desire to produce a performance that does not sell, but ingredients that are known to sell performances, can be used to sell others. The private sector has sales as part of its agenda much more than the public sector theatre provider. However, if we return to the popular library book, shouldn't public sector theatre be providing these

heavily marketed and formulated products? The contradictory nature of formulating artistic projects out of initiatives which fit the tourism market has not been understood. This contradiction is highlighted in the PSI report for 1988. "It is important that arts initiatives in a tourism context should be related to the work of existing arts organisations and grow out of the needs and ambitions of the arts community and its public. Effective co-ordination between the relevant bodies (local authorities, the travel trade, its administrative organs, and the arts bodies) will be essential, as will the creation of effective means of implementing appropriate marketing and promotional initiatives." [Myerscough:1988, p.94] This is quite a difficult task!

In 1984/85 61% of attendances at the theatre were made up of day visitors and tourists. [Myerscough:1988,p.25] This constitutes an alien objective in relation to what the arts are for, in terms of the Myerscough *et al* report. The report continues with an analysis of the success of the performances attended by the theatre visitors. The levels of satisfaction in attending the theatre events was very high and the report goes on to suggest that, "This makes an excellent foundation on which to build market developments, either by extending the reach or increasing the frequency of attendance of residents, day visitors or tourists alike." [Myerscough:1988, p.32 table 2.24] This research suggests that the product on offer should be extended for consumption, as it is popular and there is a market for what was seen. The report does not make any distinctions about the product whether it is provided by the fringe, public or private theatre companies. "More recently, financial co-operation has extended to co-production deals. This is a good instance of the way in which public money can play a 'research and development' role in the risky task of creating new productions for eventual exploitation in the commercial theatre....A deeper change is the acceptance of more commercial influences on the management of subsidised organisations, if not their artistic policies".[Myerscough:1988, p.40] The high risk of research and development in relation to theatre, would benefit from

special consideration by banks who might consider soft loans, which would help the industry to manage new work. Government funding of the arts is related to the systems of capital movement, and in this sense the public subsidy is required to make short term gains. This particular problem, caused by the banks' and financial institutions' need of short term dividends, is further highlighted by Hutton, who describes this financial straitjacket as the main reason for the lack of innovation in all areas of industry in the UK. "But for the banks to lend longer term, they themselves need less demanding financial criteria because long-term loans are less profitable for them than short-term revolving credits. They need to have their own cost of capital lowered; they need access to long-term deposits; and they need better credit assessment techniques, with incentives to develop closer relationships with their industrial customers in order better to judge the viability of their investment proposals."[Hutton:1996, p.300] This revision of the financial institutions is analogous to the revisions necessary in government funding. A warning of the result of a continuation and consolidation of the present system was given by Keith Diggle in 1980. "The system of arts provision now under examination must also try to operate a complementary role to the commercial sector wherever possible. That is not to say that the subsidised sector must always operate in deficit and must only choose to promote that which will lose money. There is a growing argument (made ever stronger by the present financial restrictions) that the subsidised sector should consider moving into the areas of promotion where profit is possible. It has some of the resources to do this now and could develop quite quickly along these lines. What it must not do is to chase quick and easy 'success' by abandoning the art forms which it exists to fund and promote, in favour of what is known as 'popular entertainment'".[Diggle:1980, p.16] This outline set out in 1980 has become the guidelines by which public companies are having to operate in order to survive. This is not the market talking but poor

investment, as is the case with other areas of late twentieth century life in the UK. It is this that has led to the repackaging of theatre.

Brecht's Legacy to Scenography and its Commodification

Brecht's influence on scenography and on the work at the Royal Court, the Theatre Workshop at Stratford East, and that of small fringe companies in the UK produced an aesthetic not only of economics, but of dialectics, which has become fetishized as a product. This product is recognisable as a style of theatre in the late twentieth century, particularly in terms of scenography and how that scenography operates. Implication, as in other art forms has become a dominant form in theatre scenography. "Just as the composer wins back his freedom by no longer having to create atmosphere so that the audience may be helped to lose itself unreservedly in the events on the stage, so also the stage designer gets considerable freedom as soon as he no longer has to give the illusion of a room or a locality when he is building his sets. It is enough for him to give hints, though these must make statements of greater historical or social interest than does the real setting."[Brecht:1964,p.203] Although some of these staging techniques were used earlier by Reinhardt and Meyerhold, the use of parts of an object to signify the whole within a dialectic had not been as clearly expressed until Brecht, and this has now become a dominant feature of theatre scenography in the late twentieth century.

In addition, new technologies have provided scenography with ever more sophisticated possibilities for the stage. However, the pleasure of watching such technology is not informed by Brecht's original theory for fostering, "critical observation and stimulate activity in the social domain."[Wright:1989,p.37] "Pleasure comes in adopting that critical view which picks up the shifts of meaning, be they comic or tragic."[Wright:1989,p.44] "It is of course essential that stylization should not remove the natural element but should heighten it."[Brecht:1964,p.204]

Whilst initially the abstraction of the 'real' in terms of the environment was undoubtedly thought-provoking and effective, the use of symbolic techniques has become an aesthetic which does not necessarily provoke a new discourse for the text, authors and audience. "The stage sets undergo a radical change from looking like traditional ready-made constructions to looking like constructions in progress, which required active interpretation as regards their function."[Wright:1989,p.26] In order for the technology and scenography to be used dialectically it requires a specific ideology to be linked to the narrative. The abstraction of the real and the presentation of an environment in a state of progress, allows the self-referential theatricality of Brecht's theatre. However, this self-reflexivity can result in passivity on the part of the spectator, as they watch and admire the signification presented, but they are not provoked by the narrative to re-address their lives in relation to the ideology Brecht originally intended. This has become the scenographic aesthetic and dominant practice of the late twentieth century.

The description of the late twentieth century scenography, by Barthes, as a recognition of the playfulness of theatricality in social terms, contains contradictions which Lukács and Adorno tried to avoid, "remained committed, albeit in very different ways, to an art which contained its contradictions within itself, and thereby, in their view, resisted the twin dangers of reification and commodification to which the new techniques seemed to lend themselves."[Wright:1989, p.69] The theatre of the twentieth century does not contradict the nature of presentation with the content of presentation, consequently what is presented is the commodification and reification of theatre and scenography which eludes a positive potential and ideological function in society. The techniques of presentation do not comment on what is performed and as such the scenography almost becomes independent of the theatre for which it was designed. "The reification of the product as an independent object he [Marx] named 'commodity fetishism', because he regarded this

36

Bourgeois - I am using this term as a political distinction as Brecht does. I am not using it as a pejorative term to describe late twentieth century audiences.

aspect of reification as a delusion in which imaginary characteristics were being given a thing-like status."[Wright:1989,p.70]

Whilst Brecht wished to eradicate the effects of reification under capitalism, the use of over- simplified schema have enabled the opposite to become an aesthetic which is part of bourgeois theatre in the late twentieth century. The abstract is no longer, "the socio-economic force which determines the object:" and does not produce the affect of mobilisation of the spectator, "the more one understands the abstract, the more one begins to be dissatisfied."[Wright:1989,p.74] New technologies have and will continue to lend themselves to commodification and as such technology can be used contrary to Brecht's intention, which was to break the spell of the theatre of illusion over the spectator, "stage and auditorium must be purged of all that is 'magical' and that no 'hypnotic fields' come about."[Brecht:1967,15,p.341; Wright:1989,p.27] "It was Adorno and Lukács who proved to be *historically* right: technology increased rather than decreased art's vulnerability to commodification."[Adorno:1975;Lukács:1971] Subsequently, it is the parodic nature of postmodernism which has enabled the reification and resultant commodification of the scenographic. Eagleton identifies this parody within postmodernism as the, "formal resolution of art and social life attempted by the avant-garde, while remorselessly emptying it of its political content...a grisly parody of socialist utopia."[Eagleton:1985,p.61]

Therefore it is the idiomatic within epic theatre which has become a universal language of scenography. The use of technology for disruption and the V-effect are used far more radically but perhaps with less involvement of the spectator's critical awareness. In contrast to Brecht and the epic, contemporary scenography uses big narratives and grand illusions, for example in the most recent War and Peace at the RNT, because illusion is a method by which to mediate reality. Whilst a

certain kind of mimesis has been discontinued, there is still an attempt at representation and the illusion of the sense of place but the illusionist mediates reality for presentation and not for criticism.

Bibliography

W. Theodor Adorno, 1975, 'Culture industry reconsidered', New German Critique, 6, pp12-19.

Arts Council of England,[ACE] 1996, 'Arts Council News National Lottery Supplement', April 1996.

Arts Council of Great Britain, [ACGB] 1993, A Creative Future: The way forward for the arts, crafts and media in England, HMSO.

Peter Ansorge, 1975, Disrupting the Spectacle:Five Years of Experimental and Fringe Theatre in Britain, Pitman.

BBC1, 1996, The House.

Bertolt Brecht, 1964, Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic, Edited and translated by John Willett, Methuen Drama.

Bertolt Brecht, 1967, Gessamelte Werke, Volume 15, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt.

Conservative Political Centre, 1978, The Arts - the way forward, A Conservative Discussion Paper with a foreword by Norman St John Stevas MP.

City University Box Office Survey undertaken for SWET.

Marco De Marinis, 1987, 'Dramaturgy of the Spectator', The Drama Review, 31.2, Summer, pp100-114.

Richard Digby-Day, 1983, 'Sponsorship and Fundraising' in The TMA Marketing Manual, Volume 4, Edited by Glyn V. Robbins and Peter Verwey, Theatrical Management Association Ltd. with assistance from the Arts Council of Great Britain, pp.

Keith Diggle, 1980, Only Connect, The arts provision system in the UK, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation & Commonwealth Branch 1980.

Terry Eagleton, 1985, 'Capitalism, Modernism and Postmodernism',
New Left Review, 152, pp60-73.

Andrew Feist & Robert Hutchinson, 1990, Cultural Trends in the
Eighties, Policy Studies Institute.

Howard Goorney, 1981, The Theatre Workshop Story, Eyre Methuen,
London.

Rob Halliday, 1993, 'Cyranno', Lighting and Sound International,
February, P.L.A.S.A. pp.25-28

Rob Halliday, 1996, 'C'est la Guerre', Lighting and Sound International,
August, P.L.A.S.A. pp.33-40.

Will Hutton, 1996, The State We're In, fully revised edition with a new
introduction and a new final chapter, Vintage.

Baz Kershaw, 1992, The Politics of Performance: Radical theatre as
Cultural Intervention, London:Routledge.

John Maynard Keynes, 1936, The General Theory of Employment
Interest and Money, London Macmillan & Co. Ltd.

Georg Lukács, 1971, History and Mass Consciousness: Studies in
Marxist Dialectic, Cambridge, Massachusetts, MIT Press.

A.L.Morton, 1992, A People's History of England, first published 1938,
Lawrence & Wishart, London.

John Myerscough et al, 1988, The Economic Importance of the Arts in
Britain, Policy Studies Institute.

Pink Book, 1988 United Kingdom Balance of Payments:The CSO Pink
Book, Central Statistical Office (Enterprise Unit), HMSO

Roland Rees, 1992, Fringe First Pioneers of Fringe Theatre on Record,
London:Oberon Books.

Select Committee, 1983, House of Commons Select Committee
Education, Science and Arts, Public and Private Funding of the Arts,
Eighth Report, Session 1981-82, 3 volumes, HC 49-I/II/III, HMSO.

Elizabeth Wright, 1989, Postmodern Brecht: A Re-Presentation,
Routledge, London and New York.

[1] 'The Glory of the Garden', 1982; 'Towards a national Arts and Media Strategy', 1992;'A Creative Future The way forward for the arts, crafts and media in England',1993 ;'Consultative Green Paper on publicly funded Drama in England, 1995'.

[2] Martin Guerre opened July 10th 1996, at the Prince Edward Theatre, London.

[3] Joseph and His Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat, opened 1995, at the London Paladium

[4] EFX opened February 1996, in Las Vegas. Rob Halliday, 1996, 'Fear and Lighting in Las Vegas', Lighting and Sound International, February, p.46-49

[5] Department of Employment practice for those seeking unemployment benefit. John Dove, associate director at Hampstead Theatre explained how this had affected some of the actors who he worked with, in particular where one actress had been asked to retrain as a gas fitter, in order to receive benefit.

[6] Full review in 'Lighting Dimensions', 1987.

Repackaging Theatre

Whilst the notion of what constitutes 'success' for performance has been altered by the economic imperatives which funding has highlighted, those who influence popular opinion, such as the press and particular theatre critics, have begun to have the power to close shows in the same way as their US colleagues. Although, there are exceptions to this, such as shows like <u>Les Miserables</u> which received extremely negative reviews by the critics and is still running.

The influence of other media and merchandising to sell productions has increased over the last twenty years. The Theatrical Management Association Ltd. produced a series of guides for administrators in 1977. Volume IV, published in 1983 covered more specifically 'The Product' by Peter Harlock, and the way to market it. He points out that, "I would accept that as net disposable incomes contract, as recession bites, as the total of unemployed increases (or certainly seems determined not to fall) and as domestic budgets, therefore, restrict themselves more and more to just the necessities of life, many artistic directors have recognised the signs and are perhaps listening to market forces a little more readily than they used to."[Harlock:1983,p.3] Further on in this article Harlock described the multifaceted nature of the product and that there was "no unitary solution." to its marketing. [Harlock:1983,p.27] However, since 1983 some theatre productions have become more unitary, and particular formats for marketing have presented themselves. In Volume IV there is also a section on the merchandising of badges, T-shirts, records and tapes for sale at the theatre performance. "To my mind, merchandising, it must be remembered, is only one of the many opportunities theatre has to make profit from ancillary sales. Further, it may well have a beneficial public relations function, but primarily the public are interested in the merchandise as goods."[Lancer:1983, p.170] This use of merchandise has during the last twenty years increased and become a part of the packaging of the theatre product.

In this environment our ideas of 'success' have inevitably become linked to profitability, irrespective of whether the producing companies are of the public or private theatre system, or a combination of the two. For 'success' in theatre is measured by 'bums on seats' and as a consequence of this usually translates into box office return, which contributes 47% in box office takings to the income of a regional repertory.[ACGB:1993, p.19] However, Thelma Holt highlighted the difficulty of this, "I don't believe in the right to fail, but the nobility of it. Do you only measure success and failure financially? I didn't make money on <u>Tango</u> but it opened a lot of doors for people who don't normally go to theatre. Many of the audience came because they were Alan Rickman movie fans. They came round to the stage door afterwards and indicated very clearly that they will now go to the theatre in the future. So I see that as a success." [Rees:1992,p.256] This case illustrates how both the public and private sectors are ultimately affected by the audience's reception and the subsequent popularity of the work. It also suggests a production ethos which may be elicited through this reaction by the audience.

Theatre companies throughout the UK endeavour to produce productions which have the popularity and staying power which may give them a home in the West End. Some theatre companies use transfers to the West End to boost their revenue. These companies range from West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leicester Haymarket, Birmingham Repertory, Stratford East, Stratford-on-Avon, Hampstead Theatre, Watford Palace, the Lyric Hammersmith, the Royal Court and the Royal National Theatre. Whilst a West End transfer is not these theatres raison d'être, a transfer does provide income and prestige for the producing theatre, and as a consequence the extra income and prestige can often allow the theatre to embark on other projects. In addition the high profile nature of West End productions are an obvious way to attract sponsors for the theatre's future productions.

The use of the private sector to fund public sector work has been encouraged by the capitalist ideology of the 1980s and 1990s. However, once a theatre has transferred work to the West End and received the financial and social rewards of their work, there is a sense that they must continue to produce work which will sell in the West End environment. For example, Five Guys Named Mo, 1990, stayed in the West End and became a major revenue provider for Stratford East, without which they were struggling to meet their commitments. Nicholas Nickleby which performed in the RSC's London venue The Aldwych, not only produced finance and prestige for the RSC but helped the theatre during rather straitened times. [Rubin:1981,p.13] The presentation and style which proved successful for Nicholas Nickleby was used as part of the saleable product and was reincarnated in the RSC production of Les Miserables. The West End success was therefore reiterated. The innovation of both productions lay in their presentation of classic texts, via a large musical format, and in the actors portrayal of their environment in the story, on a unified set. These productions were innovative but the choice to be in the West End was provoked by the economic imperative.[1] The previous RSC production, Nicholas Nickleby ended its run in the West End prematurely, after only six weeks and another two short runs later in the same year, again at the RSC's theatre the Aldwych, "The entire run had sold out once again, and we received many letters expressing disappointment from people who could not get tickets".
[Rubin:1981,p.183] It could be running still if the theory behind the run had been more orientated towards the commercial market, which was the case for Les Miserables. Michael Billington saw the whole production of Nicholas Nickleby in 1980, as a "big bid for a populist audience."[Billington:1993, p.146] He felt this kind of work was compromising; "The RSC's biggest mistake has been to compromise its identity by presenting too many musicals. The motive has been clear enough: to make money. But, with the exception of Les Miserables,

none of them has turned into golden money-spinners. What they have done is to make people question the company's raison d'être. I believe passionately that the RSC should be concentrating on what it does best: classical work."[Billington:1993, p.329-330] Nicholas Nickleby was produced in 1980, and West End transfers by a public company were at that time, anathema to what was considered the role of a public theatre provider. A style of production which interested the public had been found with this production, the research and development which had been paid for by the RSC, a public theatre provider. Their techniques were later used by the public and private sector and the combination of physical theatre and spectacle produced a new theatre aesthetic for the late twentieth century. The work reincarnated those techniques which had become popular and interested the audience. The aesthetic used symbolism to express the concept, and as such, allowed the audience to collude with the presentation. However, the reiteration of these techniques for commercial success, calls into question the scenographic 'packaging' of West End shows. The cultural difference is expressed by John Napier, when in interview he discusses the different approaches to work for the RSC, Commercial RSC and West End productions. "For Napier, designing the show was a process of crossbreeding the flat-out glitz of his commercial work with his lower key RSC style. In the West End where design can virtually be an end in itself, Napier is known for the flash and the clever; that final twist as a show comes brilliantly together, as in the ascent of Cat Grizabella on her junkyard tyre to paradise. In both genres, his hallmark is massive, self-transforming sets: His design for Henry VI, which opened the Barbican in 1982, focused on four 25' high siege towers converging to form an elaborative inner court and village. But there is a qualitative difference in the way Napier works in the two situations. In classical rep., the design supports and intentionally recedes behind text and performance. It is also a context in which ensemble acting is of paramount importance, and Napier, Nunn, and Caird take advantage of it at the RSC by having the ensemble appear

to build their environments in view of the audience. Les Miserables successfully marries the two approaches: creating enough visual excitement to make it a West End sell-out, while sticking to the RSC's low hype, high-fidelity treatment of the text". [Haye:1986,p.33-34]

To suggest that scenography does not have an ability to package the product, denies the influence of aesthetics to sell anything in the late twentieth century. Directors and designers are encouraged to use techniques to seize audience attention. The reiteration of a successful technique as in Nicholas Nickleby, Les Miserables and The Woman in Black, reifies the technique. It makes it not less successful, on the contrary its success is related to the efficacy with which it includes the audience in the performance. However, latterly the use of a design concept and more significantly symbol, which pre-interprets the piece has begun to diminish the audience involvement which has been referred to as a performance ideal. This is most clearly illustrated in the design for An Inspector Calls . The Edwardian family is placed in a house centre stage, and as their deceits, conceits and hypocrisies are discovered the house topples dispensing its occupants and their belongings into the cobbled street below.   This visual metaphor encapsulates an interpretation of Priestley's text and suggests this as the primary reading of the literary text, thus diminishing the subtlety and irony of the play. The inclusion of the audience in such a pre-interpreted production is therefore also diminished. As new technologies have become more and more affordable, at least for big budget productions, scenographers have begun to interpret the work in a more formal way, so the symbols used rather than being associative have become statements of intent. In a constructivist sense, scenography has borrowed ideas of large pieces of machinery which expressed the design of the piece, not as celebrations of the machinery but in the Soviet sense as expressions of the essence of the text. Hence, revolves and roller skate tracks have become much more popular, as solutions to staging problems which may once have used

45

lo-tech answers. We are more and more relying on new technologies and machinery to become part of the scenographic language.

Consequently, the specialist areas, within theatre, are continually changing as a reaction to the needs of each production. Employment structures for particular projects have always been fluid and there is no one prescription for what personnel a company must have, on a full time basis, for productions, or as casual workers. The employment of staff relates directly to the nature of the product. As an industry that can 'down-size' or employ at will, this is a highly flexible method of working, but it also requires that there is a competent pool of possible staff, who can be employed when needed for specific, and specialist areas.

As more new technologies have been used in theatre productions, so the list of jobs has expanded. The requisite team of three stage management is written into actors' Equity contracts, for health and safety reasons, but apart from that, the constitution of the team will be dependant on the requirements, usually, of the designed scenographic areas of the production. This can be from the number of fly operators, on-stage electrics staff, stage crew and truck staff, Vari*lite operators, automated moving light operator, follow-spot operators, sound and lighting operators, dressers, scroller operator, radio mic. operator, revolve operator, animatronics operator, pyrotechnics operator, smoke and dry ice operator and so on. These are purely operators and do not include scenic artists, prop makers, cutters, carpenters, welders and electricians who contribute their skills to the final production.

The increase in the use and availability of technologies for theatre, requires a different set of production values, and these values, in turn demand specialist staff who have trained with specific skills. As each department has its own priorities the production becomes ever more collaborative between the technology and individual departments' requirements and intentions for the production. The attention to detail is

greater, and so is the degree of professionalism required. This professionalisation of technical theatre has in the US been recognised as an important part of the theatre industry's manufacture of the theatre performance, and this ideology is becoming more acceptable in the UK. Amateur dramatics societies have begun to replicate this employment structure as they endeavour, and more often than not succeed, in producing highly 'professional' productions. The nature of the jobs now available in theatre brought about by the changing roles of the theatre workers, which were in turn provoked by the use of a more computerised environment, has led to a specifically aimed professional training, which has raised the standards and the attention to detail of the various departments involved in theatre production. The packaging of the theatre performance within the available technology and through the present aesthetic of production values, requires a large amount of expenditure. Even minimalist designs need not be cheaper, and in fact can still be costly when they fulfil the rigours of professional designs under the scrutiny of the production departments. The cost of opening shows, has therefore increased, as our expectations from both within and without the industry have proliferated.

During the Christmas period of 1992, nearly all major shows used hydraulics as part of the scenographic environment - either bridges, traps, platforms or floating sections or more famously, a helicopter. In response, new technician posts were created such as Chief of Hydraulics. The National Theatre suddenly had a department of engineering as the use of the pre-interpreted set became de rigeur. These technologies were not innovative in themselves but were placed on the stage as a part of the entertainment and as such, the various mechanisms, became a feature of the production, and were exploited in the advertising of the production. The public were encouraged to see the revolve in _Cats_, the lasers, moving lights and hologram in _Time_ and generally the staging of shows became a leading point of criticism. The presentation of these large

West End shows began to have familiar features. In the case of <u>Nicholas</u> <u>Nickleby</u>, <u>Cats</u> and <u>Les Miserables</u> this was hardly surprising as the basic team of designers remained the same, led by Trevor Nunn as director. The style of production was therefore recognisable. It was highly successful and seemingly full of technology. The reviews for <u>Cats</u> reinforce this perception of the show, "<u>Cats</u> is the concatenation of multimedia theatrical talent...Trevor Nunn has lavished a fortune on dazzling effects, using enough shadows and fairy lights, masks, giant fans, smoke, hidden lifts, roving spotlights and conjuring tricks to turn the round stage into a three-ring circus."[John Barber:Daily Telegraph] and, "though the giant tyre on which the ascent is accomplished and the huge ramp lowered from the sky to meet it are reasons in themselves for seeing the show."[Francis King:Sunday Telegraph] In contrast, the use of technology in <u>Time</u> was not as welcome, "By the time of <u>Time</u>, opinion was starting to turn: for many, state-of-the-art computerised technology and lasers did not a musical make, and Napier seemed to have been hoisted on the very petard of an aesthetic which he helped beget".[Shaun Usler:Daily Mail] However, such works of scenic bombardment were few and in fact, Napier contributed to the success of design as a feature of productions. In the case of <u>Cats</u>, the scenic contributed to the dramatic; "Surely no auditorium can ever have been more effectively or dramatically used."[Jack Tinker: Daily Mail]

It was the success of the designed environment which has led to what could be termed the 'reification of scenography'. This has contributed to the sea-change in UK theatre design. The successive need to recognise the contributions of all areas which as designed features, contribute to the image received by an audience has placed Scenography in an important position with the respect of the role it plays in conveying meaning. Even more positive is the acceptance of technology which had for some time been used in Rock Concerts and similar entertainments, as part of the theatre's repertoire. In particular in the field of lighting

design, which had begun to emerge as a specific design area in the early 1970s, the lighting manufacturers were at pains to produce new innovative products, and to propagate a need for them within the theatre industry. Moving lights and lasers in the 1980s were influential features of a theatre show and stage devices gradually became more complex. The technology which operated the movement of scenic objects was not particularly relevant but the size and likelihood of movement was improved upon. Again, these features were used as part of the advertising for a show for example, the helicopter in Miss Saigon became a star in its own right as did the roller skate track and race in the transfer of Starlight Express to New York. The influence of the marketing of technological effects is described by Susan Bennett in her research on audience reception. "Clearly the success of the London production provided a starting point for the creation of audience anticipation, but the mass media were effectively used to increase public awareness of and interest in the show's opening. Filmed excerpts of the London stage show were similarly used to stimulate anticipation of a New York production of The Phantom of the Opera".[Bennett:1994, p.130] The role of such marketing is described by Hohendahl, "In consumer culture, in a logical extension of the capitalist system, the reception of art was drawn into the realm of marketing, with its system of controlled production and consumption....The sophisticated adaptation of calculated and manufactured needs to mass production compromised the bourgeois concept of autonomous culture." [Hohendahl:1982,p.74] The pre-interpreted scenic image was a natural development from the more subtle symbolism of the early part of the twentieth century. However, as soon as a symbolic concept is used to express *the* meaning of a performance, then the audience activity and involvement is diminished. In addition, the use of this aesthetic as a commercial enticement to the audience changes the meaning of, and the poetic of scenography. Productions which have been born from the commercial stable have tended towards the lavish and extravagant presentations of environment,

such as <u>Sunset Boulevard</u>. The need for such scenic expressions has been excused by the supposed belief that the audience want to be sure of what their money is spent on. However, this denies the efficacy of scenography which *includes* the spectator. Again, it is pre-interpreted, and as a consequence, it is often monolithic.

The technology, that is, the powering and mechanism of any particular effect, is not part of the entertainment, unless it is visible and used to achieve a particular audience response, but the use of scenic movement during the 1980s and 1990s was on a grand scale. Scene changes and set pieces gave way to extraordinary presentations, where the change of scene was not ushered in by stage management and stage crew but appeared, seemingly effortlessly, sometimes via air pallets, hydraulics, or motorised trucks. The culmination of these developments in technology to date is illustrated in <u>Martin Guerre</u>, with the use of the latest in radar control to operate the scenery. Thus inanimate objects are animated. Although the audience do not see the means of their animation, in having life, the scenic objects begin to perform on stage for the audience. The principle of this phenomenon is equal to the marionette which takes on a personality as soon as it is moved. We do not 'see' the operator in the darkness surrounding the real performer, the puppet. We applaud the marionette because we are touched by their presence, simultaneously we are applauding the operator. The technology performs, and so do its operators. However, when the technology becomes central to the performance, that is, it is one of the stars of the production, then the design has become central, and if successful, is 'reified' and the theatre aesthetic changes beyond what has been traditionally thought of as 'theatre'.

The motivation for scenic devices has traditionally been as an adjunct to create the place for the performance, whatever that may be interpreted to be. Successful theatre which includes the audience as an active part of

the event gives the audience a sense of themselves. Contemporary spectators must be not only involved but involved to the point of discussion; the process of intellectual wonderment at art and science, human endeavour and spectacle, with a raison d'être. Television has offered us this kind of debate with the unfulfilled ending and the planned sequel ending, allowing so many cliff-hangers; the result being that viewers en masse have the same discussion involving different interpretations of the same plot lines. The efficacy of theatre is enhanced by allowing the audience a sense of itself, as it is by its collusion with the making of theatre, that the movement of scenic objects in the theatre space is most effective. The audience is not tricked but understands, on a 'scientific' level, the nature of the devices and how they achieve a mutability. The scientific becomes their hypothesis or paradigm of how things change, in this way the audience recognise the power of their own perception and imagination, in the events they are experiencing. Therefore, the 'play-acting' of the theatre performance is a clever deception on the part of the actor but the audience is not really deceived, rather they admit or allow that cleverness. The production of The Secret Garden, for Theatre Centre in 1991, illustrates some of these ideas. The Secret Garden was an adaptation by Nona Shepphard of the novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett. The novel takes us on a journey from India to England. The story roves around interiors and exteriors, and it was Shepphard's idea to try and make the set as flexible as possible, through the use of moving flats on small trucks. These then formed different spaces and settings. Jenny Carey designed a picture-book style of painted set which offered an interior and exterior setting on opposite sides of the small trucks. A floor cloth which was light-green spattered, enabled the garden to be present throughout. Shepphard wanted there to be no pretence as to how the set was changed and as such stage management were not visibly involved in the role of stage management, instead they 'performed' in the piece as extra hands to move the trucks costumed and therefore indistinguishable from the rest of the acting company. The

51

garden was created by the acting company in a kind of body sculpture; what would now be termed physical theatre. The actors took up different positions as the trucks turned, appearing magically as the organic garden. As the play progressed the garden 'flowered' and more and more flowers appeared on the banks of the trucks and these flowers were supplemented by gobo projections of flowers onto the floor cloth. For each scene or journey to another place, the scenery was choreographed to a particular formation which would then reveal the new scene. In this sense the scenery was a performer, it worked as both setting and character for each form created. These reveals were similar to the *scena ductilis* designed by Jones, (Vitruvius's original device), to swiftly and silently draw aside to reveal a setting behind. The principle of the *scena ductilis*, was the ability to reveal.[Nicoll:1938,p.69][2]

The actors wore a base costume of light green, which was then supplemented with masks and small costumes to indicate change of character. A cyclorama was used with the lighting to create climactic effects. The sides of the stage were open, with simple black masking legs creating a black box. Two carts were used as a train, boat or stage-coach. A length of blue cloth became the sea, in the style of Japanese Noh Theatre. A mosquito net dropped from the flies for Mary's bedroom in India. These changes of set were functional and symbolic of larger environments. Mary's discovery of the garden was revealed in a similar way to the *scena ductilis*, she walked towards the locked door, looked around and seeing she was alone took the old key from her pocket and placed it in the lock. The door opened and another world was unlocked for her, a place of mystery, wonder and magic. She went inside and as she did the scenery moved and turned. It carried the audience into this special place, by turning into something else; something other than what it was. The chameleon nature of objects and scenic units was played upon, and the audience were invited to collude in the realisation of the setting.

In another example of the motivation of scenic devices, the designer of ENO's production Bohème, Thomas Höheisel and director, Steven Pimlott, solved the more traditional problem of the four act opera (and usually therefore four discrete sets), by devising a way in which the stage space could be imbued with such ambiguity as to be able to change in the mind of the audience, the different locales. The principle of revelation is exemplified in this production but through a different use of the stage space from that of The Secret Garden. The scene for Bohème is an artist's studio. It had long windows which the last light of day was fading from. It felt cold. The scene came to an end and people brought on tables and chairs. The stage filled with street life and the light that was fading became a warm strong glow, from what had now become the Café Momus. The interior that was, is now a street with snow falling. The transformation was as astonishing as it was real and magical, in the sense that the symbolism allowed the audience consciousness to fill in the gaps. In this way the symbols act as in poetry, as the initial provocation of thought, which is incomplete, and which can only be completed within the context of the homogeneous whole.

It is quite obvious that there is a method by which an audience reads effects and the scenographic image. What is more interesting is the influence of moving features on the whole theatrical experience, in terms of the audience perception. The fantastical is in fact, the audience's fantasy and imagination. The spectator becomes at once, both an active and passive participant in the drama. The audience's active collusion with these effects makes them successful and magical. It is this success that then becomes reified, and the reification of scenography results in the use of techniques which have proved successful. It is therefore, apparent that the scenographic must consist of poetics. These particular poetics have a relationship to the *scena ductilis* and the *scena versatilis,*

and an understanding of Craig's principles of movement which affect mood, but also to Brechtian scenographic techniques.

In the examples I have given, it is the 'movement' of the scenographic, the change in the nature of the stage space before our eyes, which affects a response in the audience. The transformation of the space in Bohème and the arrival in another world, in The Secret Garden. These events are all described as magical experiences, either that they are magic moments or that magic is used to achieve them. But what exactly do we mean by magic? The definition of magic is, "the supposed invocation of supernatural powers to influence events; sorcery", or, "tricks done to entertain; conjuring", or, "any mysterious or extraordinary quality or power", or, "unaccountably enchanting." [Collins:1992] This loose term, magic, explains the moments of theatrical experience which as theatre practitioners we are often trying to make, capture and re-capture. The audiences' collusion, that the same piece of scenery was able to transport the characters in The Secret Garden or understood the easel to be the table in Bohème. Consequently, the audiences imagination built some of the scene as indeed they did in Craig's Hamlet. These scenographic movements were created not only to instruct the audience as to the sense of place but to have less tangible effects, such as the quality of the moment and atmosphere, and a celebration of understanding, the evocation of these feelings and senses.

In Bohème, the Christmas Eve celebrations were transformed into the Barrière d'Enfers, the tollgate, in much the same way as the Café Momus had arrived. The company wandered off into the darkness of the street outside Café Momus and as they disappeared into the darkness the overhead lights became stronger and revealed the emptiness of the stage. The closed windows that had been Café Momus were now more muted in brightness. The easel that had become the table was now propped

54

against the wall and part of the street debris. The scene had the feel of after the party, about 3 a.m. The actual features of change were the emptying of the space and the direction of the lighting. The rest was in our imaginations. The colonnades were no longer part of the street cafe and an intimate place, they accentuated the length of the road and its emptiness before the tollgate. The movement of the people and scenic elements in Bohème created a magical transformation. In this production the audience were acknowledged and given a role in the changes of the scene and environment, they were active and critically involved in the sense-making process. The 'sleight of hand', is more of a wink at the audience to connive in the changes, rather than a conceit and deception, which might provoke, 'how do they do that?'. The recognition of the transformations almost occurs on a subconscious level, this is the abiding poetic of scenography. The complicity of the audience was required in both The Secret Garden and Bohème and it was our imagination which supplied the details. This acceptance of the mise en scène is precisely why Bohème and The Secret Garden were so effective; they exploited the significance making possibilities of the audience's acceptance of the convention of a mise en scène. The theatrical moment we are trying to describe does not involve trickery but an active collusion between audience and production. In this sense the audiences are perfectly well aware of how things are achieved. What they are admiring as magical is the collusion of which they are a part, which is required to make the magic and the moment understood. The communication is through the scenographic riddle and the scenographic exemplifies this. In practice this translates to the usefulness of what is seen, to communicate, in terms of *how* it is used and not in terms of *how* it is done. This critical awareness is illustrated by Brecht's understanding of how the theatre should work with an audience, and contemporary scenography has used some of his schema to communicate in this way.

In both productions the series of transformations which occurred were practical. These two operas, made 'use'of the theatre space, linking the space to the dramatic narrative. It is this 'usefulness' of the scenographic elements, which makes for the magic moments as the audience see the stage space change, either through the choreography of scenic units, as in The Secret Garden, or the introduction of scenic elements to 'move' the stage space in our minds through different locations, as in Bohème . In a practical sense the ideas of staging for both Bohème and The Secret Garden came from the creative solution to practical problems. In The Secret Garden, the important scenic features became the numerous trucks which were reversible as interior and exterior, the most important thing about them, that they could be moved with ease by one person per truck. This central practical answer to the presentation of location, produced a style for the piece which at once fulfilled the practical considerations, and created an internal poetic for the production. The utility of the objects and their symbolic resonance within the space made the transformations magical. They added a sense of wonder and drama to the scenes, and the audience were totally included in the process of understanding. There was no trickery; the audience were perfectly well aware of what was changing and how. The Market Place in India for The Secret Garden was a very quick scene seemingly created from nowhere, which left the stage as fast as it arrived but which was important to see as part of the narrative. A piece of material on poles raised high, gave us the sense of the hot market place; as Mary passed through it, so it disappeared. Thus, expedience becomes very attractive theatrically; we are drawn to features of design which are used and 'made,' by the actors, into something else, rather than a set which is there as a monolithic pre-interpreted structure or back drop.

The reification of scenography has become a major part of the late twentieth century theatre aesthetic. The staging of performance have been, and can be, changed by a number of methods, either by

56

symbolically presenting objects which indicate the nature of the place, or through the development of the objects as a complete representation of the place. The middle ground of this being a painting of the kind of place one wishes to present. The theatre techniques which use objects, as in classical and medieval theatre, or the use of the actual as in late 19th century performances, and the painted scenes of Renaissance and baroque theatre, all specifically used different technologies to create the look required for the performance spaces, using the technology that was available and expedient. In each period, the applauding of the set occurred at various times when the revelation of what confronted an audience, produced a particular response, and could be deemed to be successful. As such, the scenic devices performed and were part of the performance text.

However, when the technology 'stars' in a production it suggests that there is nothing else which is notable about the production and the technology is used as a way of decrying what is presented. However, the technology is not at fault. What is denigrated by the critics and audience alike, is the narrative within which the technology is used. The abhorrence of technology *per se*, is due to the technology having become a prominent performer both in terms of advertising and as an expensive star of a production. It is given focus by its economic superiority, in the same way that a tempestuous star performer may bring notoriety to a production. But either star cannot make a production a success, should it contain other flaws. Consequently, in the late 1980s technology was blamed for the quality of performance. [Mirren in The Guardian] Since then, in the 1990s technology has been more subtly used. The disasters of Time and Matador are now less likely to be seen, as scenographers and producers have realised that the audience is more sophisticated. However productions, particularly in the commercial sector, still try to provide fairground style productions which show off the operations rather than express a sense of the meaning within the performance text.

57

Hence, productions such as <u>Oliver</u>, slide St Pauls across the stage as the rest of Dicken's London looms in front of the audience, because the production *can* do these things.

The spectacular, placed contextually within the theatre event, is more difficult to give examples of, as ideas of taste inform our opinions, especially when the event is being described, rather than experienced. The most obvious dislocated production of the self-consciously theatrical, is perhaps best illustrated by rock concerts. This entertainment, pre-1980s, was a performance of unrelated songs and the whole event was not presented within a theme, or placed within a concept. However, the rock concert now needs to be re-categorised, as some of the work in the late 1980s by singers such as Madonna and Bowie, turned the rock concert into an art form, by simultaneously presenting the artist in a context for each song, which added meaning to the event. For example, Madonna performed within settings which were spectacular, as they informed the literary text, the song, in context with dance routines, moving lights, changes of set and costume. In contrast the earlier rock concerts of, for example Genesis in the 1970s, used new moving lights technology which they seminally required, as extra 'performers' with their own solo spot.[3] The lanterns contributed little to the sense or meaning of the concert but were an attraction. This transition of public taste has been due to the changes and developments in the sophisticated audience who sees popular entertainment in the context of other social activities.

The spectacular, when it is in context with any given performance, causes least offence and the musical theatre genre receives most criticism for the use of gratuitous affects. <u>Time</u> advertised itself through its various stars, Lord Olivier, Cliff Richard etc. but mostly through its use of lasers, moving scenery and the famous Hologram. All the stars of this production were there for gratuitous effect, which ultimately, did not

effect the spectator enough for it to be the success it had been hoped. There are, however, more subtle examples of this conflict of interests. Another famous star of the West End, Broadway and Tokyo is the helicopter of <u>Miss Saigon</u>. The helicopter in the context of the narrative, is the means of escape from Saigon, and as such its presence is very important. It is symbolic of freedom and literally the means of getting away from death and destruction. The need to 'see' the helicopter is negligible. As a design decision, it is possible, as given the right budget most things are easily presented on stage, but the need to present an actual helicopter to the audience results in a different affect. The emotional impact of the means of escape is necessarily a cliff-hanger. The hope is that the audience have reached a point of nervous anticipation, but the tentative means of escape is lost once we see the machine, because our attention is distracted from the tension of the moment, to 'how did they do that?'. The audience applaud the machine, not the moment when they were at their most empathetic. An alternative method or presentation, would have been to use the sound effect of the helicopter, and a wind machine to suggest the speed, and air disrupted by its arrival. The nature of the helicopter just out of reach enhances the notion of the tentative means of escape. The whole moment becomes spectacular because it is integrated within the theatrical event, and is not self-reflexive. The use of the actual helicopter in view turns the moment into a celebration of what can be achieved on stage, irrespective of where the audience is emotionally. These two methods of presenting the same scene may also be discussed in terms of taste. However, our taste is informed by our intention. In this respect the intention in showing the helicopter is that it is memorable, because it is extraordinary. The extraordinary nature of this moment, when the helicopter appears, dislocates it once more from the production and allows it to become the advertising moment and the attraction. These extraordinary moments may be of importance in terms of advertising and the economic imperative of late twentieth century theatre but they beg the question,

'what will they do next?' The need to present most extraordinary moments has led people away from theatre buildings, to places of other activity. The production of theatre in a shipyard or aircraft hangar becomes extraordinary as an event, rather than what is shown/performed in the shipyard/hangar. The theatre buildings in order to compete with presenting the extraordinary, will inevitably resort to blowing up their premises as part of their work; to demolish their playing space will be an act of self-reflexiveness. In 1996 this moment of self-reflection has been reached by the Royal Court theatre who demolished its premises during the course of their last production Lights, in the present building before it was refurbished. This self-awareness is the clearest feature of scenography, and the self-aware is part of the activity of play and in this case, the play.

So, the sound of exploding theatres could herald a return of theatre to the streets. A theatre that becomes homeless in 1996 might be an appropriate place for the theatre to find itself in the run up to the millennium. But as for the Royal Court, it will return to a new interior within the existing building rather than to the streets, where it might have enabled the community to strive to create a new theatre aesthetic. Through the 1980s and early 1990s the theatre attracted attention and popularity, and notoriety, especially when producers were able to use a feature of the production as part of their advertising campaign. The designs of productions have gradually become central to this advertising, as these are the images which can be used in different media to convey an attraction, which will manifest larger audiences for the performances. Schechner highlights the dangerously formulaic nature of this process, "The theatre follows the path of least resistance to its audience and even programs its campaigns to reinforce old patterns of theatre attendance". [Schechner:1969,p.35] Large casts and epic performances undertaken by the national companies have provided a particular aesthetic, which is controlled by those spectators who can afford to pay for that aesthetic.

The national companies have felt it expedient to produce work on a scale, illustrated by the epic new works of Brenton and Hare at the RNT. The danger for Scenography is that it becomes seen as a tool to market the production, which interprets the whole performance, and thus reduces the audience to passive consumers.

Bibliography

Brian Arnott, 1973, 'A Scenography of Light, The Architect and the Emperor of Assyria', The Drama Review, Volume 17, no.2 T58, June.

Arts Council of Great Britain, 1993, A Creative Future: The way forward for the arts, crafts and media in England, HMSO.

John Beattie and John Middleton, 1969, Spirit Mediumship and Society in Africa, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

D.E.Berlyne,1966, 'Notes on intrinsic motivation and intrinsic reward in relation to instruction', New York department of Health Education and Welfare.

Michael Billington, 1993, One Night Stands, A critics view of British Theatre from 1971-1991, Nick Hern Books.

Edward Braun, 1969, Meyerhold on Theatre, Methuen.

Edward Braun, 1995, Meyerhold: A Revolution in Theatre, Methuen, London.

Toby Cole and Helen Krich Chinoy, Directors on Directing: A Source Book of the Modern Theater, Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis.

Judith Greenwood, 1982, Am I Lit Here?, Leeds University.

Peter Harlock, 1983, 'The Product' in The TMA Marketing Manual, Volume 4, Edited by Glyn V. Robbins and Peter Verwey, Theatrical Management

Bethany Haye, 1986, 'Les Miserables' in Theatre Crafts, Vol 20, no.9 November, p.33-34.

Hubert Von Herkomer, 1895, 'Scenic Art', Architect and Contract Reporter, 54.

Herskovits, 1943, 'Dramatic Expression among Primitive People', The Yale Review.

Peter Uwe Hohendahl, 1982, The Institution of Criticism, Ithaca:Cornell University Press.

Jessmin Howarth, 1961, Jacques Copeau Apostle of the Theatre, Phd. New York University, Norman Henry Paul.

David Lancer, 1983, 'Appendix: The Merchandiser's Viewpoint', in The TMA Marketing Manual, Volume 4, Edited by Glyn V. Robbins and Peter Verwey, Theatrical Management

Rosanne Martorella, 1977, 'The Relationship Between Box Office and Repertoire:a Case Study of Opera', Sociological Quarterly 18 (summer), p.354-366.

Sheridan Morley, 1994, ' Spread a Little Happiness: West End Musicals', Contemporary British Theatre, edited by Theodore Shank, Macmillan Press Ltd.

J.E.Pinchen,1988, The Audience as Critic:A study of audience responses to Popular Theatre, Phd. Thesis, Loughborough University.

Leon Rubin, 1981, The Nicholas Nickleby Story: the making of the historic Royal Shakespeare Company production, Heinemann: London.

Rudlin, 1986, Jacques Copeau, Cambridge University Press

Richard Schechner, 1969, Public Domain, Indianapolis and New York:Bobbs-Merrill

Henri Schoenmaker, 1991, 'The spectator in the Leading Role, Developments in Reception and Audience Research within Theatre Studies:Theory and Research', Amsterdam papers.

Raymond Williams,1976, Keywords: A vocabulary of Culture and Society London, Fontana.

[1]Les Miserables is still playing in the West End 1996.
[2]First used in Oberon, 1611, and possibly used in Hue and Cry After Cupid, 1608, described in Allardyce Nicoll.
[3]Genesis paid for R&D to create what are now known as Vari*lites, as an innovative and new feature for their concerts. The group own part of the company Var*lite.

The Changing Scenographic Aesthetic

As I have discussed earlier the role of the director in British Theatre has changed quite radically over the last half of the twentieth century. The advancements in, and use of technology within the theatre, described in the previous chapter, has resulted in some changes in directorial practice. As these advances in technology have changed the emphasis of the process of theatre production, the prominence given to the director as sole 'auteur' of a piece of work has become diminished. The scenographic team is now more legitimately described as the 'auteurs' of a production. Another reason for this has been the changes in theatre practice influenced both by European and Eastern European performance theories. In this section I will explore the nature of these changes and influences, and discuss the theatre technology which has offered more scope for the manipulation of the stage image in particular the use of lighting in late twentieth century scenography.

The director is no longer a specialist in every area, 'a man of the theatre'. S/he has begun to work more collaboratively with the other artists in the production team, in a much more democratic process of production. Now more than at any other time the director works as another member of the team, not only because s/he lacks knowledge but because the technology has allowed considerable flexiblity, and the director's 'vision' can be translated into many forms, materials and theories. The contribution of scenography to these changes and changes in acting styles; of what is expected within a performance space, has transformed the way in which an actor uses that space. The importance which Brecht placed on Caspar Neher's designs for a cohesive performance structure, (based on his sketches of/for the rehearsal process), and the relation of the actor to light, (which Appia recognised as important), has resulted in stage technologies and scenography emerging as a partner of the actor and thus a new aesthetic.

At the most basic level, developments in technology have changed how we actually 'see' in the theatre. Lighting design in particular, has affected the direction of a piece, and led to certain precepts in the actors/directors mind, as to where on the stage, is a good place to stand or be blocked.[Greenwood:1982] The technological development of the lighting rig in the late twentieth century has fundamentally affected the acting style of western performers. The importance of the actor's position on stage, prior to the middle of this century, had been determined by where that actor could be lit from, consequently, they were directed in relation to those instruments. Actor's entrances on the diagonal were lit by side lighting which illuminated the sets and screens, whilst the strength of the down stage position as the brightest part of the stage, was due to the proximity of the footlights and the throw of the follow spots, or limes. Modern technology has meant that the acting style can be a more intimate experience for actor and audience, as the technology allows the actor to be clearly seen anywhere on the stage from the auditorium. The lighting acts as a very strong medium for directing the audience's reception of the whole event, a role which has traditionally belonged to the director. As such the lighting of the actor's work on stage has changed quite fundamentally, not just with reference to a theory of performance but also as a part of an aesthetic of the design and therefore the all embracing scenography.

Lighting - a part of the changing aesthetic

Lighting can be defined as a deitic, as has been revealed through the discussion of aspects of scenography by the theory of semiotics, however its deitic qualities have become more apparent and useful in the theatre as the technologies used have also improved. Most of these new lighting technologies have been developed to aid their usefulness as deitic

features.[Esslin; Elam] However, the manufacturer rarely considers this theory. Consequently, the direction, focus and indexing of significant moments in a production has been transformed by these developments. The rewriting of recent developments in lighting technology must be rooted in its deitic quality and in the developing importance of scenography for the presentation of the commercial product. The commercial product of scenography can be clearly seen in some cases as simply packaging. However, the importance and effects that lighting can create, can now be quantified as a necessary part of a top quality production. As the technology has increased and become more and more specialist, so the expert has entered to take over this extremely influential and powerful role of directing the audiences' attention on stage. The obvious power of lighting has become recognised both by directors and the theatre industry. Where directors have designed their own lighting, they have had to have a lighting consultant to act as an interface between them and the equipment, for instance, directors such as Terry Hands in the UK, take on the task of lighting their own productions, with the prerequisite lighting consultant. In addition the theatre industry has begun to award the aesthetic of lighting. Twyla Tharp, as a director and lighting designer, received the first Olivier Award for lighting design in 1992. The link between her as not 'just' a lighting designer but a director who undertook the lighting has advertised the idea of the lighting designer as 'director' of the visual images which can be presented to an audience. Directors understand the amount of control that is possible over the audience's viewing and therefore their perception of the event. A position of control which has evolved due to the advances made in the technology used to light productions.

For Appia the 'creative' light was a light that interpreted and expressed the inner rhythmic movement of the drama, its musicality. The developments of dimmers have enabled a vast range of possible transition in terms of the movement of light through intensity.

65

Sophisticated lighting equipment can fade on or off using instruments not only as groups of actors but also as an isolated actor, and lighting in the theatrical space has responded to changes in the spaces of performance. Simultaneous stages can be made to work due to the 'directing' of the lighting. We have begun to get closer to the *über marionette*, not due to the director as auteur but because lighting can pick people out and silhouette others allowing the montage to become more sophisticated, as light is used in a more expressive way. Different locales can be located on the same stage and identified to the audience through light. As scenic design of the late twentieth century has begun to use architectonic forms it has become necessary for the lighting to sculpt the images presented and in a greater sense to affect the audience through symbolic design, and therefore, to become part of the dramatic performance text.

The complexity of theatre lighting is highlighted by Judith Greenwood, "Lighting works on two levels: It can present one mood on stage which may produce a second complimentary or contradictory mood in the audience, as when a garishly bright lighting state, seemingly festive and indulgent, may provoke apprehension in an audience which senses rising hysteria beyond the lights' unreal edge..... for light can induce in people common states of happiness or sadness as well as more complicated attitudes of resentment, conviviality, introspection or unreasonableness." [Greenwood:1982] The naked face can reflect the psychological course of events, appearing in quite another way than was possible in the unfocused general light of the nineteenth century.

Over the last twenty years lighting design has become part of the scenography of any stage production. In his article 'A Scenography of Light', Brian Arnott describes both elements of light and movement as an integral part of The Architect and the Emperor of Assyria by Arrabal. This production was performed at The National Theatre of Great Britain

in 1971. The play was directed by Victor Garcia and designed by Michel Launay, (Arnott describes him as also creating the scenography) he then refers to David Hersey as lighting designer. The title of this article suggests surprise at the malleable and flexible way in which lighting is not merely a single element to be later attached to a production, but is in fact an imperative for the scenography of the theatre production. He goes on to describe, "Garcia's basic scenographic outlook", rather than that of Launay or Hersey or the team. This example of a theatre production as early as 1971, illustrates the use of moving lights before the automated systems we now have available, "the constant presence of the four black-clad mobile light operators who also worked on stage in full view of the audience throughout the performance."[Arnott:1973, p.74] It also illustrates the belief that the creator of the visual images is Garcia the director and that the designers facilitate this.

The performance arena was defined by light, and light determined the method of performance. "The overriding visual image into which Garcia set these basic scenographic elements was both stark and disquieting. As the audience seated themselves, they looked into the open box and saw the dark back wall and wing spaces. Above, five electric pipes hung visibly. A long, highly polished metal floor stretching away from the audience was banded by bars of light emanating from two-hundred and fifty watt Reiche and Vogel beam projectors. These instruments were overslung four feet apart about a foot off the floor on castered pipes that ran fence-like up and downstage just off the metal deck. The effect was vaguely reminiscent of an airport runway." The lighting instruments are not only placed to effect a look and style but in themselves become part of the scenography. "This was Garcia's principal scenographic image, and the metaphor was that of the theatre itself - the naked, unadorned proscenium stage with its mirror-finish floor proclaiming the triumph of theatricality over illusionism". In this production we also have an example of lighting operators, who are coached to achieve the desired

effects. "In accordance with general guidelines established by the designers, the lighting operators had to respond improvisationally to the movement and values of each scene from day to day. Adaptation to this format was made possible by the use of hand-held five-hundred-watt sources. These highly mobile instruments provided the experimental basis for that part of the lighting plot that was concerned with facial and focal emphasis for the actors. The lighting operators were also provided with other raw materials in the form of prisms and pulsating and rotating mirrors. The main body of the three-hundred odd instruments of the Old Vic rig, however, remained unavailable throughout the rehearsal period, and effects to be achieved from it had to be plotted on paper in the usual manner, then set aside until the technical run-throughs." The need for an improvisation period and a period of experiment for all the scenographic elements was not only integral to the process of production but also to the method of performance; the lighting designer as a performer, in the same relation to the composer of a score that is later to be played. This choice of production aesthetic did not emanate from a lack of technology but it was prescribed by the production style, a similar experience could not have been created by automated systems.

Ultimately, for the Garcia project, this method of production provided an organic platform for performance, allowing the actor's total freedom of movement, "without fear of not being lit. The movements of these instruments onstage toward center also tended to reduce the cavernous empty stage house to a space of more intimate dimensions." [Arnott:1973,p.75] Again, the lighting was used as part of the scenography of the production. The most interesting and perhaps innovative technology was the use of a Polychromatron, which is a sound activated device. It can convert audio signal into a power surge within a lighting circuit, "Thus when the Emperor had cast off the parachute and switched to violently flailing the floor with a large piece of hide rolled like a wet towel, there was a pulsing burst of light in

response to every smacking blow on the metallic stage." In addition Hersey used a light curtain, and sodium, mercury and Compact Source Iodide specials. "At floor level from the open wings and proscenium door areas, large wattage ellipsoidals, fresnels, and sky pans on castered stands had taken the place of the smaller hand-held sources formerly used in rehearsal experiments." Along with these were numerous reflective surfaces, pulsating and rotating mirrors, the improvisation of rehearsals began to become controlled for the plotting period with, "the operators wearing transistorized earphones through which he directed all lighting sources that were not part of the console-controlled rig." [Arnott:1973,p.76]

During the last twenty years in the theatre, through the medium of light, the lighting designer as part of the scenographic team has become a director of the action. This fluid and almost symbiotic relationship of roles between the scenographic team, is most clearly realised in this production, although not realised by Arnott. It is the lighting designer who conjures for the audience and directs our sight to the moment of importance. It is the lighting designer who frames the moment in a similar way to the film and television editor, "the rolling follow-spots dollied in like TV cameras until they came to a stop only inches from each side of the actor's face." [Arnott:1973, p.78-79] Arnott speaks of graphic lighting effects by which I believe he means, those that are a literal translation of the actual event presented, "Another graphic lighting effect was achieved during the war scene. The stage went suddenly black while the sound effects speakers delivered a fully dimensional battle score with voice-over harangue. Augmenting the noise of the gunfire, the follow spot operators shot tracers of light obliquely through the house." [Arnott:1973, p.76]

We perhaps need to redefine the performance in terms of the lighting technology. In the last twenty years, there has been a trend in theatre

productions other than those of the West End, towards low technology productions. Where designer and director have no desire to hide the illusion, and lighting rigs have been totally open to the scrutiny of the spectator. This rather hackneyed but effective metaphor for the theatre, originated as part of the aesthetic for studio spaces, where the mechanisms of performance are harder to hide. Gradually the acceptance of this aesthetic has become a part of many theatre environments. If a spectator sees the equipment in some theatres why not in all and when does the designing of the position of the lighting rig apparatus, become a piece of environmental design which is more intrinsic to the production than simply illuminating the stage? This 'environmental' use of lighting equipment was most effectively achieved by Jean Kalman for Richard II at the RNT. In this production Kalman placed rows of parcans either side of the stage, which formed the actual environment of the action. They metaphorically suggested battlements, searchlights and barbed wire, by the use of the cabling etc. They were scenographic and functional and we saw both the poetic, and metaphorical statement of the objects as well as their more functional use to light the show.

Similarly, Rick Fisher created a rig of 40 par 38 lamps, some of which were also on pulleys, for Shared Experience's production of The Bacchae, in 1989. The oppressive nature of the rig, amplified the oppressive nature of the production. Single lamps were lowered onto Bacchantes, spotlighting and literally closing in on the performers. Both the movement of the light and its changing quality as it came nearer a performers face, or the floor, enhanced the atmosphere for the production and the whole rig was a substantial part of the setting. As such the lighting was used as a mystic force.

Lighting, when used as in these examples, extends the palette of what is possible through the use of traditional units, in an innovative way. It also calls into question the 'innovations' which the manufactured goods can make and the possible dramatic affect they might have on the final

product, the performance. As can be seen from these examples, these aesthetic changes are designed by the lighting designer and involve innovative use of units and apparatus rather than innovative specification by the manufacturer. The open stage settings and changes in production aesthetic, which rely on concept and metaphor, have enabled lighting to perform within the scenographic context of productions. Through the use of a different aesthetic in Assyria by Arrabal, in Richard II with traditional units as a visual image and in The Bacchae with non-theatre lights as part of the scenic and kinetic, lighting has not only been used as a source to illuminate but as a form and metaphor. In these examples the actual units of light have formed part of the scenographic aesthetic.

The most obvious use of light as a scenic contributor is through projection and this technology was used to produced naturalistic effects. The kinetic stage was first produced through projection in 1640 by Athenasius Kircher and the use of projection instead of scenery was used by Edward Fitzball at the Adelphi in 1827, to present a ship. This image was projected onto a surface called union, a glazed calico.[Fitzball:1859] Subsequently, complete sets of effects slides became available commercially and the beginnings of moving pictures at the end of the nineteenth century meant that moving slides and dissolves formed part of the optical host available for scenic design. "I do not want to depress our scenic artists...but it sometimes seems to me that as stage lighting develops more and more the scenic artists will become superfluous. I grow more and more convinced that lighting has hitherto been in its infancy and that it is rapidly taking its place as by far the most important of all the ancillary arts of the Theatre."[1] The importance of painted sets has subsequently diminished in the sense of naturalistic painted scenes. Whilst the kinetic use of light and projection are not new, the use of such effects for a non-naturalistic purpose is. Svoboda experimented with the use of kinetic forms on stage, " Svoboda has understood more than anyone else, how to employ projectors in order to

create a kinetic stage in the rhythmic movement of drama."[Bergman:1977, p,365] Late twentieth century lighting has evolved beyond the presentation of moving 'filmic' scenes, to a nature of light which contains metaphoric meaning within the production, the nature of which the audience must interpret. The change in aesthetic has been due, in part, to the popularity of open stage settings which have altered what can be achieved through lighting for a production. As a consequence lighting can be used as a more expressive contributor to the scenographic aesthetic. The style of modern theatre lighting has become sophisticated and often emblematic, it uses old and new technologies in a 'playful' and experimental way.

In the late twentieth century the importance of lighting has been contiguous with its use in both public and domestic life. In the home we fit dimmer switches in order to control the level of light in particular rooms, enabling us to change the mood of our environment. The revolution in the entertainment in clubs, where lighting is one of the deciding factors for which club to go to as it generates a particular experience, suggests that an audience is aware of the evocative nature of lighting. Light shows have popularised lighting and in particular lighting technology. Consequently, the audience is more aware of these aspects of production, as the technologies have become more visible.

Whilst Appia and Craig theorised the importance of light within the theatre, the late twentieth century has provided the apparatus by which theories of lighting have been able to be applied. The technology that has been developed for lighting design has, however, not necessarily been determined by theories of plasticity but has been more orientated to theories of the market place, in particular, the use of other entertainment equipment for use in the theatre, rather than the development of specific theatre equipment. Theatre practice in the UK and the US reveal many similarities of theatre production and the kinds of developments which

have changed the aesthetic of lighting. The following section discusses the market response to developments in equipment and working practice.

Lighting - control and personnel

UK practice and technology has been influenced by US practice, for example, in the use of computers, and Computer Aided Design systems. The 1980s computer control had become a form of technology that all theatres either used or aspired to. As such Lighting Design is a very specific area of design which has been wholly influenced by a particular standard and type of operator control. There are few other areas of scenographic work which are as beholden to the influence of technology; materials may change and new weaves and plastics can be formed, chemical mixtures of paint and resin can be manufactured but the application of the work of a set designer, is not directly influenced by where they sit, or who works with them. In the case of the lighting designer, the operation of lighting movements and effects, are a major part of lighting's contribution to the theatre performance. Therefore, the development of modern lighting techniques has followed hand in hand with developments in the technology of lighting design. Whilst historical accounts clearly map the actual light source changing from candle to low voltage, more integral is the apparatus which is used to control the lighting changes. It is in this role that the human contact of the operator, with the act of performance, defines the use of light on stage, and how it directly affects the nature of the production. The technology of control has not been defined as part of a theory behind a practice but is rather a part of an engineering evolutionary process, as such, the manufacturers have not taken into consideration the role of the operator of lighting control systems. Nor has the aesthetic changes brought about by the technology and practice in theatres been clearly documented.

The importance of lighting control is illustrated by the work of Mario Fortuny. In 1902, the first attempts at coloured sky effects were installed

by Fortuny at La Scala Milan, Opera House, "It is not, however the precise electrical form of the dimmer that is important but the facilities for variable group control the panel or desk may provide."[O'Dea:1958,p.33] This suggests that, from early experiments, the use of new lighting units was thought to only be effective when the control mechanism was equally adventurous in its use of technology and expression of ideas. Lighting as an accompaniment or score, which has a similar place in the hierarchy of artistry to that of music, was first mooted by Adolphe Appia and realised in 1923, at La Scala, Milan for a production of Tristan und Isolde. He referred to the "living work of art", and in his 'Mise en scène Wagnerian' emphasised the importance of the "through-lit" or what might be termed, underscored production.[Volbach:1968, p.50]

The development of control technology influenced the nature and time scale of a performance. In lighting terms, this is measured by the lighting operator as a series of static states, as this is how the images of light are plotted; not as a fluid movement of light throughout the piece, but as something which is selectively pictorial. This is how modern control technology has interfaced with the act of performance. Solid state technology and later computer technology is able to memorise the individual states, and this terminology is a part of lighting practice. However, as lighting has progressed, the possibility of 200 cues in one hours worth of performance has become more likely, as the computer technology has enabled it, and as such, the lighting has been able to keep pace with the performance as a fluid feature of the scenographic. "Light , in fact, is no longer about unity but about transition. *How* we get from one place or moment to the next has become more important than what it looks like when we are there".[Aronson:1993,p.57]

The technology of lighting has gradually worked towards providing a system of control which allows instant access to all levels of operation. However, computer use in other areas of production has raised questions

74

about a standardisation of product, which can operate on the lines of a p.c. terminal, rather than as a dedicated lighting computer. This was illustrated by the electrics team for Miss Saigon on Broadway in 1991. The p.c. offers programmable memory but does not offer a performance level of operation.

The aesthetic of lighting for the theatre and the relationship between this technology and its operation must also consider the changes made to the visual environment of theatre production. Whilst the roles of the scenographers have become more specialist, the method of control for lighting has become more standardised and less specialist in the qualities required for theatre performance. However, modern theatre lighting has been influenced by what manufacturers have produced at a reasonable price and this has often been hardware which contradicts both the flexible nature of the medium, and the theatre practice of experimentation and improvisation, so central to modern performance. This point is crucial both for technical training and more particularly for the role of the lighting operator.

Pilbrow suggests that the opportunity for mimicking nature is only the property of the twentieth century lighting designer. "For centuries men have written into their plays the light they have experienced in their lives; now this light can be 'manipulated' on the stage. Its visual and emotional effect can be used to accompany and influence the action: its dramatic potential, as new horizons of technique appear, is boundless".[Pilbrow:1992, p.10] The relationship of open staging to this is undoubted. The aesthetic of the scenographic metaphor has, to a certain extent, obviated the need for closed scenic environments and lighting has been able to contribute a three-dimensional atmosphere of light around the actor, as illustrated by the examples of The Emperor of Assyria, The Bacchae, and Richard II. Appia realised, light has the ability to communicate meanings and feelings directly to an audience

like no other element of a production can. Lee Simonson comments on this phenomenon. "Appia's supreme intuition was his recognition that light can play as directly upon our emotions as music does. We are more immediately affected by our sensitiveness to variations of light in the theatre than we are by our sensations of color, shape, or sound. Our emotional reaction to light is more rapid than to any other theatrical means of expression, possibly because no other sensory stimulus moves with the speed of light, possibly because our earliest inherited fear being a fear of the dark, we inherit with it a primitive worship of the sun...."[Simonson:1964,p.365-366] The artistry of the gas man lay in the ability to set and reset the flames of gas to burn at the right colour, to affect the scene. Similarly, the limelight man influenced the production, "we have to follow the story in a descriptive song introducing different shades to illustrate it. And the dramatic effect helps out the singer immensely."[Rees:1978, p.128] It is increasingly apparent from accounts such as this, the important role which lighting operators have always played in producing the appropriate effect for the atmosphere of a drama, and in the whole process of dramatisation. It is the action of 'play' which has always been of primary importance.

For rock and roll, lighting control boards are designed in order to offer unlimited access to all channels and units. Light is 'played' as an instrument and its beams keep time with the music of the band. Theatre lighting control, on the other hand, has not been conceived as an instrument to be 'played' in this manner. It has the means, provided by technological advances, but the design of the control equipment does not easily allow it. The very fact that theatre lighting control has now moved away from this area of 'play', again highlights the strength of the p.c. compatible system in technological developments, rather than to the nature of lighting for theatre. The technology has distanced the designer from the experimentation process and the palette by which she creates. There has been no realisation of the effect of this distancing of the

operator from the production; namely, the potential loss of that sense of 'play', which in other areas of theatre we value as a vital part of the process. The lighting designer is rarely afforded the opportunity for experimentation, improvisation or creative space, for which the design of control technology is partly to blame, as this technology has been created in order to repeat sequences of information again and again.

In the discursive comments received from designers about their production process, the majority complained of a lack of collaboration with lighting designers, which was usually due to the production process and employment practice. Generally, lighting designers are employed after the design process has begun. The lighting designer's contribution is therefore, a response to the design, rather than a response to the literary text and concepts discussed by the scenographic team. This practice has begun to change but often only for the larger budget productions. The status and employment of set designers is often based on a previous relationship with the director. In their response to the questionnaire, set designers always hoped that the process would be a collaborative one, where egos did not have to get in the way of the working relationship. However, some designers felt that certain directors believed that the employment of the set designer was all part of ordering the set. They were simply buying the set and the technical expertise of the set designer, rather than embarking on a partnership of artistic collaboration. [Appendix B]

In some respects this feeling of 'buying up' expertise from various professionals is what actually happens to a lot of lighting designers. Some set designers mentioned their dismay at directors who worked in this way and the set designers expressed sympathy for the lighting designer in this situation. They also mentioned the way in which directors are obstructive to lighting designer's ideas, and the availability of the lighting designer was commented upon by the set designer. They

felt that often the pre-design meetings were too late for the lighting designers input to be taken on board by the set designer. [Appendix B]

Lighting Control or 'Play'

The most useful adaptation of lighting boards in recent years has been the introduction of the designer's palette and/or the ability to move the board into the auditorium from the control room. Manufacturers seem to think the marketable parts of a board are the number of buttons on it, when an overwhelming response from lighting designers suggests that the ability to move the board or to plot from the auditorium is of most value. The more computer orientated boards have been able to achieve this most easily, simply because their technology is more compact. However, with the potential changes in the nature of the plotting session, they will soon be an unnecessary piece of hardware.

This is the most controversial area of the discussion. Many lighting designers do not welcome the introduction or use of 'computer' speak, in lighting boards, perhaps because of the influence in the UK of 'Strand logic'. Almost an equal number of replies to the questionnaire, either suggest that they are aware of the need to get rid of their prejudice towards QWERTY keyboards, or in fact that they are pleased to see the computer terminals in the control room. It would seem a logical process, however, and this was expressed by the results, that computer based control is where the future of control is headed.

Computers have little to do with theatre but as a tool represented in the right box, they can add far more than simply illumination. The choice of an organ console as the appropriate layout of keys for such an instrument, links the visual image, more directly to music. The lighting console and Bentham's colour music sessions, for Strand Lighting in the 1930s, were originally intended to illustrate the flexibility of the lighting console and the many changes of image possible on this type of equipment. It was the equipment which was being sold not a new theory

78

of lighting practice. These son et lumière sales room techniques, used light and colour to move in relation to particular pieces of classical music. However, Bentham did not transfer this technique to more conventional theatre performances.

What has become more important to the lighting and its use in a production has been the positioning of the control equipment. As soon as we place the lighting console behind glass and out of the way, we need another pair of eyes to see the effects and modify them within the actual theatre space. Sound engineers work from within the auditorium, as we realise it is essential for the sound operator to be totally involved in the performance space, able to hear and see the same object of attention as the audience. The operator has become a 'player' in the same event and can modify levels and effects to suit the size of house and the performance given. They therefore, can interpret the 'moment' and do not simply produce a fixed and predetermined text. Meanwhile, the lighting operator is divorced from the event, often not interested in the piece nor aware of how s/he can alter the performance by her/his own mediation. The computer board remembers the interpretation and there is no need for human involvement. The 'mind' of the computer has been programmed to cope with all eventualities; either, the lighting has to compromise in order to cover a large area enabling the actors freedom, or the actors compromise to be within a tightly lit area, or be in darkness. The computer has the information but will not be altered to keep pace with the production dynamic. A great deal of the structure of lighting design in Britain is revealed by the way in which personnel from different areas refer to the problems and challenges of the job. Few lighting designers are concerned about the manufacturers dealings and future products. The lighting designers are more concerned with a new response or look which has, to date, been created by specific design oriented products, such as gobos and projection equipment, rather than lantern units and control boards. It is the theatre technicians who have

most complaints about this type of equipment as they are closest to it. Lighting designers complain about lighting boards in terms of very specific functions, as that is their most particular unit of operation, but even as their modus operandi, they are still very divorced from it. Even though designer's palettes have been in operation for many years now, few shows are plotted on them by the lighting designer experimenting during a lighting session. Still rarer is the use of the palette as an instructional tool to the operator by which the lighting designer could show the kind of feel and mood to a cue as an expression of what the operator should try to achieve. This would be closest to the transposed idea of the operator as the instrument player, and the lighting designer as the composer.

The advent of computer control systems started a revolution in lighting design of far greater significance than that of the thyristor dimmer. Although the mechanics of theatre lighting, as in the specific method of dimming, did ultimately affect the technology of control, it is the structure and operation of access to particular lighting systems which has the greatest impact on the final look of a piece of theatre, in that, the control equipment is responsible for the level of performance. It is not just the hardware of the control but the layout of the control board, and the organisation of the lantern stock, which changes the nature of the lighting design, and the role of the lighting designer. Richard Pilbrow's belief in saturation rigs of a similar nature to those found in television studios meant that the lighting designer became a lighting engineer similar to television's opposite number.[2] Pilbrow instigated these ideas at the National Theatre in 1976, which had very particular requisites, one of which was to cut down on the use of labour. Scenic units were to be shifted with as little breakdown into components as possible and the main theory of the machinery was to facilitate the playing of productions in repertoire. The lighting control board was designed as a piece of technology for this venue which allowed the recording of information,

and its replay, again and again, as precisely as it was played for the very first performance. This enabled quick and efficient turn rounds of shows in repertoire, for little expense. The structure of lighting and the method of thinking about the process in this environment, meant that the lighting designer had to become an executive. This ultimately meant that the trend of control board design was based on this practice and was market led, in that it was a cost accounting method of advancing the technology and the implications of this process on the aesthetic were not considered. The National was to run on the basis of a saturation rig. This meant the bulk of the equipment was permanently focused with only a small amount refocused between shows.[Pilbrow:1992, p.130-131] Richard Pilbrow who was the consultant for The National felt that this was the beginning of a new era for stage lighting, "Unlike at any time in the past, light can be created at a distance from its actual source."[Pilbrow:1992,p.10] The technology was the hope for a future where continual rigging and re-rigging in respect of each show's requirements would be a thing of the past. This was especially important in venues such as the National Theatre, where a repertoire system left little time for specific rigging.

The use of a computer system similar to that used for word processing was thought to be the answer to the continual changes required by a repertoire structure of performance, however, a p.c. would reduce the ability to run a multiplicity of activities from one system. The need for the operator to have a form of access through the technology which allows instantaneous changes, and therefore a level of 'performance ability' in the equipment's design, depends very much on how we see his/her role. If they are to load a series of commands to later be executed with a single button push, when cued, the use of the qwerty keyboard is quite adequate. If they are to be involved in the design on a performance basis, then the equipment needs to have instant access to every level and not involve a series of coded commands but as on the

rock and roll boards, provide the operator with a keyboard to 'play'. This problem of 'play' is exacerbated by new technologies, such as moving lights.

However, in order to program moving lights we also require more specific commands but with flexibility, so the designers may have any configuration to design with, rather than a series of choices. As soon as more effects are required other terminals or control boxes are needed. The argument that if control was from a standardized QWERTY keyboard, any additions to the normal lighting rig could be added and commanded from one station would seem to be the way forward for the technology. John Letheridge, Chairman of Cerebrum Lighting Ltd, felt that the number of features on control desks is increasing and the demand for this is created by bigger touring rigs and installations. As prices of these systems drop, they become more available to various places of entertainment. Products like the Sirius Zero 88 and the Pulsar Masterpiece offer excellent functions and channel numbers for a small price. The sophisticated functions of dipless fades and memory stores, external protocols and chases are not often used by operators of rock or club lighting, as they usually play the board in terms of flash buttons. The arguments for bringing the boards down in size - are not really viable in the rock and roll market, where size really does matter, in order to be able to play the board. The conflict of markets with studio, theatre and club spaces, where space is at a premium, becomes obvious. Manufacturers have realised the difficulty of covering all markets with the same type of control and this has lead certain companies to be more popular depending on the entertainment field they specialise in.

Control systems' communication between various pieces of equipment is where a conflict of protocol can cause problems. Integrated packages to control numerous devices from one operator is what prove most saleable, even if from the technological point of view the protocol chosen is not as reliable or effective. Once more this leads to the need for the universality of control, in the form of QWERTY keyboards. Exactly

how much designers concern themselves with protocol, depends on the amount of staff and money available to them. If they have a large team and large budget the problems of protocol control will be solved by one or the other. In that it will become the chief electrician's headache and not the designers, or the designer can buy a number of units to interface, control, and thereby solve the problem. Low budget and low staffing usually makes this kind of work prohibitive both in the time needed to plot the complex information and in the cost of linking up a number of FX and automated systems.[3]

This question of play or control has been influenced by the choice of control equipment. The advent of computer technology has reduced the skill of operation, certainly in theatre performance, but has enabled the electrician to be the lighting designer. Whilst this is an admirable democratisation of the role, the contradictions which the technology has created do not seem to have been challenged, and yet they are fundamental to the art of the theatre and its artifice.[Pilbrow:1992,p.144] [4] Would this condition be changed if the lighting designer were more like the composer? If we were to take the nature of lighting to its natural end and recognise it as a fluid form then this practice might be appropriate. The notes may be laid down, the style of playing even the instruments used are very particularly chosen, but the orchestra at any given concert hall can interpret. They can treat a note as a fortissimo or a diminuendo. The operator is responsive to the changing production dynamic. In this arrangement, the operator becomes a player, a performer in the whole piece of theatre that takes place and not simply a facilitator with certain technical expertise. Furthermore, as the pace of a performance changes in speed and dynamic, so the lighting can be altered to suit.

However such a vast change in the role of the operator would have to be facilitated by financial inducement, for the operator to want to play this part, a degree of trust on the part of the lighting designer and time to

train/coach the operator in the ideas of the design. I have achieved this only once and the experiment was forced by the situation rather than through choice. However, as the lighting designer for Bed of Arrows by Nona Shepphard, a trilogy based on The Mahabharata, for the episode which played outside at Lincoln Castle, (1997) I was able to design and focus the rig, and then give instructions to the operator for the cueing and progression of the light for the production. As the production and performances progressed we discussed changes of dynamic as they were appropriate. In this instance, such a working practice produced a strong aesthetic and an 'involved' operator.

The most influential hardware and software lighting developments are in the area of Computer Aided Design, which also suggests new methods of creating the theatre product and the possible manufacture of units, very specific to a lighting designer's requirements. This implies that manufacturers have nowhere else to go unless they develop in the area of use, that is, *with* the lighting designers, rather than with the theatre technicians. CAD could revolutionise the design process, not only of the individual lighting design but the manufacture of new lanterns, to solve particular problems. CAD for theatre use offers the facilities to pre-program lighting and flying operations before going into the theatre. For example in the production process for Martin Guerre the Technical Manager and Deputy Stage Manager pre-plotted the scenic moves of the revolve before going into the theatre and due to this specific software for theatre has begun to be developed. ShowCAD was launched in 1993. This software allows show data to be prepared in other PC programs and brought in to ShowCAD. It also allows a full computer operated lighting board for over one thousand circuits and can operate moving lights in addition to traditional lighting units. [Halliday:1993, p.36-37]

Computer Aided Design systems, with the computer terminals in the control room would allow designs to be created, altered and updated.

Luminaires about to be added to the rig, could be checked out in side elevation on screen, perhaps saving unnecessary rigging time. This has in part, already begun with some of the big West End and Broadway shows. The process would involve the lighting designer in drawing the design via CAD and then rendering the ideas for the work. The scenographic team could then meet to discuss the ideas around the work. If an angle did not produce the desired affect then the system could instantly change the positioning, and give a view of the affect. This would also extend to the use of particular pieces of equipment. Having loaded a database of lantern specifications, the correct tool for the job and its specific degree of focus could be noted. CAD, rather than instrument design, will be the greatest advance and change for the production process of lighting design. However, Jane Head of Production Arts New York believes this technology is more likely to be used by technicians rather than designers, as designers are less likely to, "trust the data sheet". [5] The production line philosophy is enhanced by the actual theatre practice which becomes necessary, in the US this involves the generation of masses of paperwork. The training of lighting designers in the US, involves the production of numerous plots and diagrams, focus plots and cue sheets, before the work in the theatre. The practice in the UK is to produce the basic paper work and from the experimentation and work in the theatre itself, cue sheets and focus plots emerge as necessary. However, these differences are gradually becoming less, as the praxis of production requires further information about the production's lighting, should it tour, be sold abroad, or be revived a year or years later. The marketing of the product of theatre, has impacted on specific practice in lighting design for theatre, and this practice, is generally, to follow the pattern of the more commercial US theatre. Production in the US is geared to cost cutting and profit making, which means that the time actually spent in the theatre in the production week is precious and requires planning. Consequently, the clear paperwork and keeping of up to date records of changes in the plots as they occur,

becomes necessary. The lighting assistant may light the show again and again, referring to the clearly set down perameters of the design.
Jane Head suggests, that the use of the technology should not limit creativity. Again, she suggests the idea of 'play' has to be encouraged in the training, as it is only through this and a free expression, that a sense of creativity exists. Automated lighting, she feels at the moment, (1991) is still too noisy and has drawbacks in terms of the complexity of plotting the moves of the units, in moments when noise would not be perceived. In an article from L.A. Opera, this problem is highlighted. At a rock concert or in Opera and Ballet the noise does not impinge, due to a louder ambient performance level, and this is where the majority of effects of automated lighting have been successful. Although in initial plotting, the moves and technology is complex, the need to repeat the show exactly is possible because of the precision of this technology: the same presentation in lighting terms can be achieved again and again. In this respect the way in which moving lights are being used for theatre immediately contradicts the opportunity for 'play'.

Research and development by manufacturers has lead to specific types of product, which are cheaply made and therefore, attractive for theatres to purchase. Designers such as David Hersey and Andy Bridge import UK equipment into their US shows, and David Hersey popularised his own manufactured goods through his work on transfers such as Miss Saigon. For Aspects of Love, the Strand Lighting Power Assisted Lighting System(PALS) made popular automated lighting on Broadway. The computer logic of control which is different between US and UK computer boards was not an issue. Larry Kellerman, an agent for Strand Lighting US explained, "you can run a show on practically anything, a matter of taste is all we're talking about". Kellerman felt that the engineering led companies hindered real progress, the market was asking for a general progression of ideas, and the manufacturing industry was not pushing forward with the same enthusiasm. "Certainly, into the

next century, each unit will have an in built dimmer and there will be cable-less control".[Kellerman:interview 1991] However, the manufacturers do not take leaps of imagination unless they can sell their products and the kinds of technological changes Kellerman discussed would not affect the designer, rather they were advances which would change the working pattern of the technician. In contrast David Hersey Associates (DHA) directly influence the palette of the lighting designer. DHA produce equipment which enhances the aesthetic of lighting design and consequently, the scenography this company researches and develops for a specific lighting designer, David Hersey. The company specifically relates technology to the artistry of lighting, as most products from DHA feature projection patterns in the form of gobos or the transitional use of colour, therefore these developments of technology enable changes in the aesthetic possibilities of lighting.

Naturally, artistic expression is conveyed through colour mediums, and the original colour temperature of light sources, that is, the temperature at which the bulb burns, would be the most straightforward area to change. Moving light technology has produced a slightly different light quality, especially relating to colour. The dichroic filter has enabled the source to change. In real terms, there is more money in automated lighting, especially as film and t.v. companies can use its flexibility. The development of the dichroic filter in these units has meant that the interest has moved from light source to colour. The dichroic filter can mix quite startling colour densities and these units are using low voltage sources.

There is a definite market interest in the theatre industry for low voltage equipment, and the development of such equipment would be backed by lighting designers if the equipment were flexible enough, that is, most importantly if it dimmed easily. The theory being, if designers ask for the product the technicians will buy it. If Philips, one of the largest manufacturers of bulbs and lamps, were interested in manufacturing a

low voltage bulb with finer elements this would facilitate the request for easy dimming for low voltage units. At present low voltage equipment does not dim easily and therefore, aesthetically it is limited. There is also a need for low voltage equipment to be flexible for example having shutters, masks and barn doors.

In the questionnaire responses 80% of lighting designers replied that they would like to be able to use more low voltage equipment. All the lighting designers from the questionnaire were referring to luminaires. The most popular unit is in fact a Birdie - basically an M16 bulb in a mini-parcan. The reason for its popularity with designers is its convenience, by which we mean it is lightweight and small, and can be easily attached to the set or stage in often very tight corners. The reason for its unpopularity with chief electricians is the difficulty in being able to place the cumbersome transformers necessary for dimming close enough to the luminaires, so as to avoid voltage drop. However, of particular interest for lighting designers is the quality of light. As with all low voltage light, it is much brighter and could be described as a 'whiter light'. However, low voltage lanterns do not work well with dimmers and yet every theatre application requires this flexibility. If a designer were presented with lanterns that could not be dimmed much of the skill of design would be lost, for it is the juxtaposition of light with darkness which enables the designer to highlight or effect subtle changes in scene, atmosphere and locale. So why is low voltage equipment, which is difficult to dim and impossible to 'snap out' effectively, so popular with designers, the people who require most flexibility? Could it be fashion? To some extent it is, as with most innovations they inevitably become overused to begin with. However, the use of these units has stabilised and enabled lighting designers to place sources of light in very tight spaces. They have allowed therefore a discrete use of light but also a variety of angles which bear no relation to naturalistic presentation. In particular the use of M16 battens has allowed the designer to include banks of footlights which do not impede the vision

of the audience and do not so severely separate the audience from the actor as has been the case in the batten lights from the 1960s. However the opportunity for the use of such units and the wish to use light in this angle to the actor has developed mainly from the interest in the light source and its effect. In this respect, it is the fashionability of low voltage sources.

In recent years developments have been made in architectural and domestic lighting that have led to a more 'hi-tech' look. Homes are designed with dimmers for each room, modern offices have a variety of light sources in many styles and it is here that low voltage units have excelled. As with most developments that reach theatre, the technology has usually been developed to apply to another more lucrative area. The bulb manufacturers create a product for a known market which will pay for the development. Many lighting designers wished theatre equipment manufacturers would take hold of the low voltage technology and adapt it to theatre. Tim Burnham developed the T.B.A. Magic Lantern as a low voltage luminare. The name the Magic Lantern was no coincidence as in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was a very popular form of projection. "In the eighteenth century it became more sophisticated in that it could be synchronised with other projectors cross-fading and over-lapping the images". [Walne:1995, p.9] It is this synchronisation which was similar to Tim Burnham's Magic Lantern. Burnham's Magic Lantern was advertised either to be used without external dimmers, but with dimmer per lamp flexibility, or to be used in an existing 240v rig, but without heavy transformers. The electronics in the lantern converted the dimmers output to low voltage "even at barely perceptible levels". Tim Burnham Associates went bankrupt before his equipment could be proved in the market place. He had obviously felt that low voltage was the way to proceed and his market research into product popularity seems to have been correct. However, no other manufacturer has taken up the challenge left behind by the collapse of his company.

The lighting designers' response to the questionnaire which I sent out in 1992, suggests that what is really being asked for is a new light source and manufacturers like Philips and Thorn must develop this technology. We now use sealed beam units in theatre lighting but these originally were designed as aircraft landing lights. Where are the next theatre bulbs going to come from? For the bulb manufacturers, theatre practitioners are small purchasers and hence provide a low profit margin. The manufacturers need to have a profitable market for their products, hence the cross-over of products like the M16 bulb from domestic and architectural lighting, to theatre. However, lighting designers are searching for a new look and low voltage is popular as a different light source, which will partially dim and can be used in compact units, unlike Compact Source Iodide and Halogen Mercury Iodide. Ultimately, designers are itching for a different light source as revolutionary as electricity was in the 1880s and low voltage fills this gap. If it is the light source, we as designers are interested in then it is the lamp manufacturers who have to be convinced of the market and need for the product.

There is, however, a comparison to be drawn between the introduction of gas and electricity, with that of low voltage into the theatre. All these sources were first introduced to illuminate exteriors, public halls and foyers before they were allowed onto the stage or into the home. It was in fact the invention of the incandescent bulb which ensured that electricity would be adapted for theatrical purposes. This trend seems to suggest that given time and the development of the lamps, low voltage could follow this pattern and find a home on stage in a flexible unit.

Mass production has been part of an economic growth and the constant need for the new and different. The need to create moonlight, sunlight, lightning, rain has led manufacturers to design certain products, geared to naturalism and the presentation of it onstage. As naturalism has

declined in all the other arts of the theatre, so lighting has sought other methods of expression. In this sense the new gadgets are superfluous, as the means of communication through light is determined by an emotional kinetics which will not be created by the objects, but the use of them. It is the light itself, the colour temperature, density and shape, and not the instrument which is important; the player and not the recording. The light produces an accent, in the way that music does, and as such it is part of the poetic of our time. The aspect of play in terms of the whole process of theatre must be re-invoked, play as performer and play as experimental. However, play and mass production of the theatre product are conflicting aims.

A demand for performance relativity in lighting control, also begs the question of how much a production changes every night. On tour this is particularly pertinent but developing the kind of flexibility needed for one night stands also demands a universality in the equipment found in every theatre. Would the operator be briefed by the lighting designer on the concept and ideas behind the lighting, the basic necessities for the production? Or would they do the production in the same way an actor performs a piece, after being coached by the director - as I have suggested for <u>Bed Of Arrows</u> ? Is this in fact close to the practice at present at the National Theatre, where each lighting designer has an assistant who understands the 750 dimmer rig and can call up a relevant capacity lantern, at the kind of angle to the stage that the lighting designer has required, with a colour changer with the nearest colour to that requested? Is it not what most touring lighting technicians and stage managers do when confronted by a new space - they endeavour to re-create within a given environment ? It is less a case of the lighting designer designing for a specific show, rather for the 'general purpose' rig being used for innumerable productions. The infinitely adaptable rig. Do we need to rig and re-rig for every show from the very beginning? The development of PALS and Vari*lites would seem to suggest not.

However, the latter were developed for rock concerts and the former to allow an infinite number of permutations that one rig could achieve. These advances are exciting in their own right but where do they leave the studio space and multipurpose venue with little finance? These more complicated technologies also take more time to program, which leads us into the use of CAD for the process of production. Through CAD, the set design can be loaded and the lighting designer can light the show on screen, making it transferable to the theatre by disc and to the lighting control board.

The Art of the designer is confined by the technology available and the technology is produced for a specific technical function. Many members of the profession feel they are often presented with new technology, and it is assumed that the technology leads the Art. However, no matter how exciting the technology it is not until the imaginative skill of the lighting designer has taken hold of it that its full potential, intentional or otherwise may be fully realised. At the point when the designed lights are rigged, lighting designers require a high level of flexibility from luminaires, not to avoid making decisions on the drawing board, but in order to avoid imposing limitations on the design at this relatively early stage in the production. This technology is not determined by the spectacularly gratuitous but needs to be viewed as an instrument of expression. Expression of the visual poetic interpreted from the literary text. The advances described above in terms of angles possible to the stage, the use of colour and projection mediums, comparisons of control equipment, the luminaires and sources, and the advent of computer aided design, have all radically changed the nature of lighting for theatre. They offer specific tools for the lighting designer to use and have both created and reacted to the fundamental differences in theatre aesthetic which have occurred in British scenography, not least in terms of the role of the director and the nature of Text.

Directors and Texts

The separation of the role of the actor from that of the director was not consistently practised in this country in the early twentieth century. Many directors still took part in the plays they directed. Edward Gordon Craig's The Art of the Theatre (1911), became a rallying point for British directors, as Craig debated the concept of the theatre as an art, as opposed to an entertainment. From this period the word 'art' was increasingly used in connection with the stage, and a division between commercial theatre and art theatre became more apparent. Although it is debatable whether the overall mastermind and single view controlling a production has ever been totally realised, Craig's publications contributed to the downfall of the actor-manager. This division between commercial theatre and art theatre again presupposes a distinction which is based on nothing other than the commodification of that art. It is a difficulty which has become insuperable in the late twentieth century due to the need for some patronage of the Arts in general, and the dominance of a capitalist funding system based on market forces. These contradictions can be seen in the theory that the audience is a major creator of meaning, as this suggests that any art of the stage does not exist without them. The sense of the audience as the major creator of the mise en scène is discussed by Appia, "Our eyes ...determine the staging and always create it anew...we ourselves are the mise en scène, without us the work remains a written piece".[Volbach:1968,p.103] This expression of the audience as creator of sense and therefore meaning voiced by Appia has become a central feature of recent theatre theory and practice. In practice it has enabled the scenographic team to provide suggestions, symbols and references. In theoretical terms it is crucial to an understanding of theatre theories, in particular deconstructionist patterns such as semiotics which will be discussed later. The ideas of Appia and Craig have reinforced both the nature of the visual and the importance of the audience as viewer, and therefore creator of meaning in the stage space. The influence of the visual has become paramount,

and thus, as this realization has seeped into mainstream production so the importance of the scenography has been given a sense of place. "In philosophy, psychology, and the like, we give such phenomena technical terms. This does not alter the fact that all could be reduced to the term 'to imagine', for all of them imply an image before their realization. These facts are well known, yet we do not utilize them in those phases of our existence where imagination could be of great service. This indifference distorts and lowers our scale of values; for, in order to evaluate, the object of evaluation must be understood or invoked by imaginaton....One wonders whether it is not urgent to admit imagination as a specific branch of academic instruction or, at least, to encourage it by pointing it out and conferring upon it a very high value."[Appia:1922, p.364-5] In one sense this is exactly what degree teaching in drama and theatre admits. Here, Appia preempts interest in audience reception by suggesting that it is recognised as a necessary part of the theatre experience.

The involvement of the audience in the theatre experience has also come to affect the separate role of the director, as the manipulator of the art. In the former hypothesis of the audience as creator of meaning, the audience should be admitted free, for without them what else exists? The latter belief of the director as the manipulator of the art, suggests that they have come to view genius in the form of the director's vision. The problem in the late twentieth century has been to get the audience to go to the theatre at all and this is where the use of technology has been successful in marketing the product, whether it is one purporting a director's vision or not.

The dominance of the Oxbridge trained director in the UK, who is rooted in an academic tradition of the literary text, and the subsequent diversification of the training for the actor, has provided a break from an actor's theatre. The director's theatre had reached its height during the

late 1970s and actors have tried to reassert their power. Actors have begun to take directorial roles in an attempt to wrestle back some control from the authoritarian practice of some directors, for example Kenneth Branagh, Ian McKellern and Simon Callow, the latter writing particularly scathingly about the profession of director in the theatre. The demise of actor-manager, director and actor as the author of theatre, has only recently occurred, partly as the complexity of theatre production vis à vis scenographic images, has been realised. Directors are no longer required to interpret the literary text and reveal some great insight. They must now revise their role as being one which co-ordinates numerous messages to the audience beyond that which is laid down in any interpretation of the literary text. Independently, directors may have learnt to lace their productions with concepts that show their skill and cleverness but this approach has been mediated through the director, with the lighting designer, set designer and others who form the scenographic team. As a consequence the meaning of a given performance has been played out in the rehearsal room rather than prescribed by the literary text. Latterly, directors have used rehearsals to explore rather than define a production. Director Sam Mendes: "Going to the RSC at that stage in my career completely changed my perception of what it is that you do in rehearsal. It became about the collective consciousness of a lot of very intelligent, sensitive people, and the imaginative exploration of an empty space."[Edwardes:1995,p.211] This change in understanding and aesthetic has changed the practice and production of theatre. "In the eighties, directors were getting too big for their boots. But now there is a new generation of directors who have tried to hark back to the Peter Brook experimental era and away from the empire building of Peter Hall, Trevor Nunn and John Dexter. They want something that is more studio based and unconventional and that also takes on board a great understanding of the actor's desires and their needs as human beings rather than as pawns in a master plan."[Edwardes:1995,p.212] It was not just actors who felt they were simply a part of the director's grand plan.

Designers from all fields felt that the ideology of the director's vision was outmoded and egotistical. In Alison Chitty's production of The Rose Tattoo which she designed and Peter Hall directed, her approach was to create "moment drawings to express the tension and relationships in the text....Peter Hall is a strong advocate for naturalism and if it says it in the text he has to have it."[6] Hall wasn't keen therefore on the idea of transparent walls, so Chitty designed in what she described as, "a heightened realism, extracted out of naturalism."[interview with Author 1991] However, in this example we have an illustration of the designer setting the performance aesthetic rather than the production being the result of "the imaginative exploration of an empty space". Mendes's ideal is always at the mercy of economics and working practice and the question must be raised as to *who* is allowed to experiment? In the responses I have received from designers through the Society for West End Theatre, the lack of time for experimentation was continually highlighted. In large institutions it is no better, as the RNT and RSC have schedules tightly planned around the demanding repertoire system which defines when designs must be completed, irrespective of the process.

A further change in the directorial role is the signature which is used to identify a piece of theatre. In the 1960s and 1970s literary texts were known by their author, the playwright, and dramatic texts were described, either by the playwright, the producer, or the director. Generally the naming of the product depended on who was the most famous name to use in relation to the production. Although in the case of Peter Brook's A Midsummer Nights Dream one would expect Shakespeare to get top billing. In this case however it was the extraordinary nature of the production, most notably in terms of the scenography used. However, as Iain Mackintosh points out the creator of the striking scenographic image, Sally Crabb is rarely mentioned in relation to this production.[Mackintosh:1992] In the 1980s and 1990s there has been a more homogeneous tagging of the authors of the

production, irrespective of whether that production has been a success or a failure. The employment structures of the latter period have also altered this naming, as directors, designers, lighting designers, choreographers, composers etc. now work in teams, to produce the work together and are recognised as teams in the market place. As such the individual's signature becomes less relevant to the means of production. Therefore, the scenographic team has become the auteur, because of changes in the means of production; the specialist departments in the theatre; the importance of image to convey meaning and the involvement of the audience as maker of meaning. These modes of production brought about by the changes in technology have facilitated a rise in the presence and significance of scenography, as part of the a new text which we could call the 'performance text or dramatic text'. The making of image on stage is recognised as highly significant and the departments have focused on the detail of production, rather than a broad stroke and potentially 'poor' theatre look of previous generations. For, if the audience is to make meanings of the experience called theatre then this form of presentation must naturally become more complex , layered and provocative. The sophistication of audience perception has in many ways provoked the complex signification. However, this can also be perverted in the market place to mean ostentation rather than image for the audience to engage with. An example of this in the early 1990s was the subcontracting of specific areas of design in the set of <u>Sunset Boulevard</u> at The Adelphi Theatre, London. The attention to detail here is hardly noticeable from the back of the stalls and the intricacies of the work can only be appreciated in photographs as seen in theatre design catalogues. In addition it was photographed and reproduced in the programme giving the audience a closer look at what their ticket price has been spent on. The detail on the part of, in this case scenic artists, provides a job but not a role within the creation of the theatre production and its process. The set became merchandise for the audience to wonder at. This practice differs little from the nineteenth century, it encourages

the applause of the scenography as object and not subject. In effect such precise detail becomes insignificant to the audiences' appreciation or response to the performance text. The scenic art is part of the commodity and little else.

The directors and designers of the late twentieth century, try to find an angle for modern drama and for classical pieces in particular, in order to make the performance relevant to our time, but also, and perhaps more importantly, such practice reinforces the perception of the scenographic team as the interpretative artists and has done some damage in distancing the actors from the process of creating.[Appendix A]

However, different stagings have also caused changes in the fashion of visual stimuli. As Louis Jouvet wrote in Mise en Scène des Fourbières de Scapin, "The art of the director is an art of adjusting to contingencies. It isn't a profession, it is a state. One is a director as one is a lover. The varieties are infinite."[Cole:1962,p.69] The importance of scenography as a text within the performance text has enabled scenographic teams to assimilate techniques from a variety of discrete sources, often combining techniques of presentation which at one time would have been restricted to a particular constituency. One of the most notable areas of this type of assimilation is the work of alternative theatre companies and in particular, what has been termed, physical theatre. By the end of the 1970s there were around 70 groups in opposition to mainstream theatre. Studio theatre companies influenced by innovations in film, developed more complex scenarios and the new theorizing of theatre as a degree subject, "led to a virement of intellectual and performance ideas: post-modern, post-structuralist and complex mise en scènes - a mix of social and theatrical conventions".[Kershaw:1992, p.141] This 'alternative' theatre had a subculture which was often contradictory, and so similar to other subcultures.[Hebdige:1991] The study of theatre theory suggested the replication of style could be achieved by following

the tenets of any one theatre theory. It was this import of theory which many alternative theatre groups were experimenting with. Many of the companies working in the 1970s chose to meet the ideological challenges of production, "with performance projects designed to activate every dimension of the theatre transaction in the interests of efficacy", in conflict with the literary theatre. "This emphasized theatre as cultural production rather than as aesthetic event".[Kershaw:1992,p.148] In the 1970s the Arts Council realised that a younger audience were enjoying more multimedia work of a 'non-establishment' nature, and so the Arts Council of Great Britain in response to this demand, decided to fund more of this work, thereby encouraging it. In addition post-modern theories that, "performance as text in which all codes are of potentially equal value."[Kershaw:1992, p.103], led to a diminution of the literary texts value, or rather the raising of prominence of other theatre texts which join together to form the performance text. Consequently, groups explored the development of texts through performance and improvisation rather than beginning with a literary text. Issues within any one group became a focus for performance texts and consequently particular constituencies of audience were formed. The 'unionisation' in the form of the Independant Theatre Council, Theatre Writer's Union, Association of Community Theatres, put pressure on funding bodies to increase subsidy. This increase in subsidy included theatre buildings, whose administrators could then afford more sophisticated technology with which to mount productions. The influence of computers and multimedia components, led building based companies to believe they needed new equipment, such as computer lighting boards, and this led to the re-structuring of the means of production, through the personnel required to manage the new technologies. A national touring grid funded by the Arts Council provided companies with performance spaces which were equally well equipped. The consistent components which companies could rely on were then sound, lighting and projection facilities in these spaces. These were popular scenographic features not

only because they adhered to European theoretical theatre practice but also because in terms of lighting and sound rigs, they were already provided and therefore cheap and easy for a touring company to use to transform the space. As a consequence the scenographic choices made by these companies, based on what was expedient led to a new aesthetic for the performance text. "It is conceptual in framework and realistic of selected detail. It is a poetic approach." [Rees:1992, p.234] The gap between West End and Alternative theatre was then both financial and aesthetic. The West End in the 1970s were still playing on box sets for drama, with the occasional exception such as <u>Jesus Christ Superstar</u> which used rock concert techniques in the form of lit up floors, podium levels, disco rig and the principal characters wandering around with microphones on leads. The re-staging of <u>Jesus Christ Superstar</u> in 1997 offers this view of the 1970s.

The assimilation of these techniques can be seen in <u>Les Miserables</u>. It is the scenography combined with physical theatre techniques which has been developed. "<u>Les Miserables</u> successfully marries the two approaches: creating enough visual excitement to make it a West End sell-out, while sticking to the RSC's low hype, high-fidelity treatment of the text."[Haye:1986,p.33-4] The development of such a distinct position on these forms by artists who work across a field of theatre institutions has its heritage in the theatre of the 1960s and 1970s, and influences from Europe and America.

The beginning of the 1980s was difficult for the West End producers. Many performances opened and closed in a matter of weeks. This provided a variety of viewing but in terms of the commercial ethos of the West End, it was a disaster. America was having more success on Broadway by producing best selling work, and the import of American productions to the West End, musicals in particular, meant that in the early 1980s one could see more or less what was showing on Broadway,

on Shaftesbury Avenue. "What the commercial theatre sends across oceans are the easy spectaculars: New York gets Starlight Express and London gets another 42nd Street. The fact that we learn more about America from Merrily We Roll Along, or that they could learn more about us from Blood Brothers or The Hired Man, is alas irrelevant to the men who do the financial estimates."[Morley:1994, p.84] The theatre workers of touring theatre, had provided a training for new talent for many of the Royal National Theatre and Royal Shakespeare Company's main house and expensively funded productions. The writers and directors from the small-scale have all come from a touring and fringe, or 'alternative' theatre background. This separation of style and to an extent economy, has led to divergent scenographic presentations. The larger establishment companies, and much of the mainstream thinking, suggested a philosophy of theatre, and of scenography, which established 'spectacle' as a means of getting the audience into the theatre, whereas the serious drama was still achieved on a shoestring, and with limited use of 'spectacle' presentation. In the last ten to fifteen years, this aesthetic has changed the nature of the theatre product, a spectacle, political and arts style of theatre has been combined to produce work such as, An Inspector Calls, Machinal, and Les Miserables. Whilst all of these originated as subsidized theatre product, they all have transferred to the commercial sector or have been made with a view to commercial profit. They combine the scenic need of visual excitement, engaging the audience's imagination, with high-fidelity to the literary text - the combination of separate ideologies and rationales, as expressed by Napier. Consequently, the scenography has presented an aesthetic which has begun to be rationalised by particular market values.

The success of these techniques has become reified and as these techniques use scenography as part of the dramatic text the engagement of the audience becomes ever more complex. Our idea of verisimilitude

is adjusted and considered in the light of the audience's involvement in the process. The scenographers must consider the scenographic text as the audience might perceive it. The reality of the environment both in terms of its suitability to the literary text and to the performance text makes the initial interpretation by the scenographic team complex, especially in terms of realism. The presentation of which must now be regarded as a travesty as the whole stage space is recognised as symbolic. However what is accurate or veritable to any given period of history, will depend on an audience's attitude to the realism which in turn will be mediated by conceiving realism in terms of a particular artistic method and conceiving realism in terms of a particular attitude towards what is called 'reality'. One of the complexities of realism is that it transcends period and history, and can be used as a term of description at any time. Raymond Williams (lecture on realism) draws our attention to what we may consider realism to be. [Williams:1977] Williams suggests realism has three stages, 1) secular 2) contemporary 3) socially extended. The great majority of contemporary drama is still concerned with the re-production of everyday reality, in relation to the interaction of human beings. During the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century the presentation of a room on stage, presented the natural centre for dramatic action in terms of social extension and an emphasis on the contemporary and political. This particular space reflected and displayed the characters within it. In its later development there was an indissoluble relation between character and environment; the room became a character, and became a performer. The recognition of the room as a significant maker of meaning has evolved into stage scenography. The nature of realism for the stage has evolved and the texts which were being presented have an altered perspective with distinctions of different kinds of reality becoming pertinent to the process of the production of theatre. This is very important for any kind of discussion of a theory in design and scenography for the late twentieth century. Williams' proposed

distinction of Realism, in particular of a specific room, has been dealt with more realistically by another medium, television. Therefore in terms of the commodity, television can produce a high-fidelity to realism in the form of Naturalistic presentation. However, even in Naturalism, considered a stale scenographic form which results in designers decorating rooms, through Williams' theory of realism, we can see that the scenography has always performed as a significant player to the audience. The history is complicated further by technical advancement and a history in terms of the psychological relationship of character to environment. The social and ideological, as highlighted through scenography, developed from this understanding of realism; the values which contemporary society place on the objects presented. Thus abstractions of realism presented to an audience rely on the involvement of the audience if the presentation uses metaphoric means to communicate with the audience. As Peter Bogatyrev, in his essay on Folk Theatre suggests, "on the stage things that play the part of theatrical signs...acquire special features, qualities and attributes that they do not have in real life."[Bogatyrev:1976,p.35-36] These stage vehicles can obtain a secondary meaning for the audience, relating it to social, moral and ideological values operative in a community of which performers and spectators are part. The methods by which we foreground specific references, for example lighting, sound and set, however distinctly complete in themselves, are not simply the mechanics of illusion but allude in themselves, to an atmosphere and style which is socially significant to the present day, therefore they are realistic to that audience. Fore-grounding is essentially a spatial metaphor, and thus, well adapted to a performance text, but foregrounding does not hold the essence of performance, more a section of the mechanics of performance. The need to see the scenographic components as important, becomes relevant when we admit that the environment 'performs' alongside the actor because of its metaphoric nature and Williams' indicates the need to deconstruct that environment. The loading of the scenographic in this

way has necessarily changed the creation of the scenographic aesthetic and therefore the performance text's aesthetic, and the reception of it.

Therefore these cultural changes in production and changes in the scenographic aesthetic with features from alternative theatre forms, have been assimilated and have become a part of the mainstream theatre aesthetic. "Theoretically, it relates to Gramsci's idea that folklore and the popular arts could form the basis of counter-hegemonic cultural activism." [Kershaw:1992,p.153] However, these ideas have become a form of self-conscious presentation for theatre companies, especially as, and when they have been used by mainstream companies. They have not represented an afront to mainstream activities or involved a political takeover from the grass roots to the élite theatre institutions. The ceilidh, where there is an informal social gathering with singing, dancing and storytelling which results in the empowerment of audiences through a new theatre aesthetic, has been used by the national theatre companies. In the assimilation it has no political meaning, it is a technique and performance choice. For example, in Cheek By Jowl's As You Like it, 1991, the actors wandered through the auditorium getting to know the audience, as themselves as actors, before they showed their characters and therefore their skills of performance. This is a theatre-in-education technique, most often used to make the young audience comfortable with the stangers who have arrived and very often have disrupted their school day. It is a method by which the nature of drama and storytelling is shown. The techniques of production whilst established in a community base have a particular purpose, of setting an audience at their ease, or introducing people who they will ultimately become involved with through the performance, and later in workshops and after show discussions. When these techniques are used as an aesthetic the purpose is distorted. The technique applies a distancing attitude to the audience, and asks them to separate the performers from the production. In this way, the method has an overt political purpose. However, when this is

absorbed as a method of production in mainstream theatre that purpose is diluted, and the meeting of the actors becomes a novelty feature, and an attraction which has become commodified. These changes in the aesthetic of production have been used as an advertisement for the production and a gimmick which is very often commented upon by theatre critics. It therefore generates publicity.

The subversion of the practice and politics of the alternative theatre companies of the 1960s and 1970s, lies behind many of the techniques used today. The anti-naturalism that has emerged from a generation rather more cynical about the presentation of 'fact' on television, and the gradual disintegration of the authenticity of political life, has left us with a theatre of fringe, based in the more highly surreal. The 'cartoon style' typified by CAST has reverberated in the work of companies such as Complicité, and younger companies like Talking Birds Theatre Company.[7] The work of the fringe had stirred up theatre activity from the grass roots, which has now entered the repertory theatres, both studios and main houses.

The theatre of Welfare State Theatre Company and any theatre of community action is now under threat from recent legislation on public order, which limits the number of people who may gather in an open space. The legislation was made initially to stop disturbances, particularly those caused by 'Travellers' and rave parties, but also more insidiously this legislation can stop protests and site specific performances. Welfare State's theatrical practice has involved using predictable visual images and transforming them, for example, a black crow becomes a bomber, then a cross. This type of scenographic mutability has become a strong part of the mainstream theatre aesthetic. This technique has been used by a wide variety of companies such as Cheek by Jowl, where the changing nature of a single object has been used both as an aesthetic feature of the work presented by the company,

and to facilitate an easily transportable production for touring. Whilst this technique is not owned by companies such as Welfare State, in their hands it has a political motive rather than simply an aesthetic one. In mainstream work it is a clever contrivance. Welfare State's work has very overt politics where, "the 'artist' merely serves (not leads) the community in a functional capacity and that necessary images and archetypes naturally and inevitably reveal themselves. It is only because we allow so few people to Dream profoundly in our society that we set up the specialist ARTIST...."[Coult:1983,p.21] This assertion concurs with Appia's belief in the need to provoke the imagination and recognise the use of it as a skill. "The form of the communication becomes part of the problem. Didactic and literal illustration can be counter to a more poetic, intuitive and sensual approach. False polarisations can be induced by the method of simply demonstrating."[Coult:1983,p.22] This description of poetic is very helpful in relation to late twentieth century theatre and scenography which aims to provoke the audience to imagine. It also relates to Brechtian theory of theatre production in terms of the aesthetic presented, although not to a theatre of politics. Welfare State list their aims as the, "Power of spectacle whilst not being an opium; working from a painterly perspective; openness of image and music to allow the audience in; ideas of magic and the associated energies of audience and performers - the use of a circle for a performance rather than a square;"[Coult:1983,p.25-28] These features have been previously lauded as part of the touring theatre's brief, but travelling theatres no longer need consider the politics of their work, now they must make a saleable product. As a consequence of the pressure to find and make a saleable product the type of aesthetic mentioned above has encouraged a wider use of these features of production and they have begun to dominate the market. This has inevitably caused problems for companies like Welfare State and touring theatre companies who originated from a decade of experiment and artistic endeavour into the market place of commercial theatre. The problem for touring companies

106

is that modern theatre buildings are closed systems. Welfare State express some of the problems for their work within this system, "Our research is into nascent ritual (using theatre) as part of a way of living rather than a repeated dramatic production, where theatre is an end in itself....Really we don't make theatre, we use theatre to make magic." [Coult:1983,p.29-30] Welfare State's international intentions are, " To analyse the relationship between aesthetic input and its social context..." "To develop theatre of a poetical and mythical nature that is popular and relevant to communities today."[Coult:1983, p.219] The closed systems of theatre buildings do not provide companies with opportunity for poetry, the context for theatre production in the late twentieth century is the market for that product. The general audience and not the particular. The 'spectacle' theatre of the late twentieth century has aimed to create magic through technology and has diverted from the poetic aims which Welfare State suggest is the end result of spectacle. I will discuss our rather troubled relationship to spectacle in the next chapter. However, as Welfare State imply, the use of technology alone to achieve spectacle, is a vacuous attempt ruled by finance and not an internal aesthetic, which enables the participation of the community and/or audience. The poetic features of scenography and physical theatre that engage the audience's imagination, when repeated in the commercial environment for reasons not relevant to the performance text, move the aesthetic of the late twentieth century away from audience engagement and the ideals of Appia.

The frequently fraught relationship of actors and scenography should also be considered. Through the performance theories of the late 1980s, and in the early 1990s Physical Theatre was coined as a term, which was a backlash against large scale technologically created scenography. This form of performance used contemporary dance and mime to produce often non-verbal theatre which was scenographically simple. Whilst one can see the reasons why there should be a reclaiming of the stage from

some of the worse cases of technological clutter, in general, theatre technology should not be seen as a negative attribute, simply because in some respects, it has been used badly for the last ten years. The power of the machine when it is placed on stage to effect, can be a powerful performer, alongside the actor. The actor whilst able to respond and possibly ascertain a level of performance stability, by the reaction and feedback of their audience, cannot estimate the effect of the environment on that audience, and in turn the implication of those effects on the actor's performance. Therefore, the effect of the animating technologies with the actor must be explained and understood for its potency, in order for it to be a useful device.

Ideas of progressive harmonies of the stage space in which the human spirit can be expressive, may be defined as Feng Shui, ad quadratum, or Corbusier's modular system, but the central discipline is that all shapes are modulated by the human body. The harmony and exchange of energy which occurs in these spaces can inform the experience and enable the performer. The exchange of energy can help the actor to respond to the audience, and empower the performer to use the captive energy of the audience, for their performance. [Mackintosh:1993] Irrespective of whether this philosophy is noted in the theatre building's structure, spaces can be changed to aid this kind of confluence through the use of scenography. A sense of the space may be defined by a mystic sense or common sense, depending on our point of view, but it is always designed and the physical theatre of the 1990s has added a new dimension to ideas of verisimilitude in theatre performance.

Physical theatre may be more clearly defined as a theatre which endeavours to portray the inanimate. The heritage of this work comes from such productions as Nicholas Nickleby and An Arabian Night where the actors formed the stage coach from tables, chairs and wicker baskets and an Arabian souk, from material and baskets. This definition

of physical theatre animating the inanimate, more clearly juxtaposes it as a form, with the technology of spectacle, which similarly animates the inanimate.

In The Lady Dragon's Lament by Nona Shepphard, the performer was in control of the scenography and of what was required for the performance, in association with the designer, Marsha Roddy, who tailor-made everything to fit the performer. The design evolved over a rehearsal period of three weeks, and followed the actor's preparation and needs through to performance. Roddy and Shepphard who have worked together on many occasions, in a much more formal design process, had to arrest their desire to complete a design before the actor had found what was needed. The scenographic ideas ranged from a large set comprising of the costume of the Lady Dragon, and therefore her body, which would have formed the set and the environment, to a much more organic and simple use of two stage boxes in which the whole play is stored, transported and performed from. These boxes gave the audience the change of perspective necessary for the huge dragon and her world. The rest of the set comprised a floor cloth, and screen reminiscent of Japanese Noh theatre, which was not used to hide the actor but to present the actor in the space. This was a piece of physical theatre which required the performer to use body shapes and postures to convey activity, location and atmosphere, the literal reality of which was not present. In this form of theatrical performance the audience is engaged as in a poem. The imagination contributes far more to the dramatic text than in a more literal presentation, as a consequence theatre scenography has responded to this change in aesthetic. The similarities between the approaches of physical theatre and the scenography of the late twentieth century to their audience, can be seen in the way both texts encourage the audience's imagination. The culture of physical theatre has been absorbed into mainstream presentations, and in addition companies which were formed from that perspective, like Théâtre de Complicité,

are noted for their use of this aesthetic. They can be contrasted with companies from the 1970s, who came to prominence for their politics of performance.

As the RNT and RSC, our leading theatre companies, become more and more commercial (Les Miserables, A Little Night Music, Guys and Dolls etc.), they have two choices; to provide a heritage, that is, do the classics, or to have innovative ideas which must attain high production values, as the company must warrant public funding and a commercial standard. Alternative theatre (so called because it was an alternative to mainstream theatre) and its original intentions and features of production, has itself become mainstream; and as a basic intention, alternative theatre companies of the late twentieth century wish to achieve mainstream status. As alternative theatres present work in new ways, the form changes, but they do not challenge our established views of bourgeois theatre. The companies and performers invariably are looking for success in their personal meteoric rise to stardom. The trend towards minimalist design has come from poor touring theatres - poor, that is, in economic terms; groups and individuals, which once they develop and become part of the mainstream theatre and part of the establishment, take with them their visual ideas of what theatre should be, and how it should be designed. Mainstream theatre is now reaping the benefit of workers who learnt their aesthetic in a plethora of young and vibrant companies. Nick Ormerod's 'poor' theatre aesthetic at Cheek by Jowl is the primary aesthetic in the presentation of Martin Guerre (1997) as it was in his design for Peer Gynt (1990) at the RNT. In many ways Martin Guerre is part of Cheek by Jowl's house style. The irony of this low tech scenography used in the West End, is that it has in fact the most sophisticated operations system to manipulate the scenic elements to date. [Halliday:1996] In this sense the aesthetic has formed a continuum from alternative to mainstream and commercial theatre production, and

the techniques and apparatus of operation, in this instance, perform, as part of the spectacle of presentation.

The assimilation of theatre practices has now combined to form a rich tapestry into which the audience is woven, as Appia suggested, in order to create the mise en scéne. This attitude to the audience involvement has now become significant, as the literary text has taken a more abstract view of human nature. Scenography is often the crucible for performance but the deconstruction of the place of performance through modern theatre theory, has raised the value of the scenography. The importance of the scenography to the production, has then emerged from the need for a language of significance, particularly originating in the small performance spaces and the variety of touring venues used by the companies of the 1960s and 1970s. As such scenography is now seen as a necessary part of the production process. As Tanya McCallin, one of the designers who worked for Foco Novo suggested, "Design has changed from being the after-thought to being the essential element, beyond the text and sometimes beyond the performance....Design was grossly undervalued before. But now it has taken on such a sophisticated level that the reason for it is not 'felt'. Its there only for its own purpose."[Rees:1992, p.246] In my belief it is there to communicate meaning to the audience, however when it is used badly and without relevancy, it can be a meaningless design used for the sale of the goods, usually advertising the production.

The mainstream subsidized theatres used 'spectacle' to sell theatre during the 1980s and spectacle became synonymous with the large musicals and in particular high technology spectacular productions. The use of such technologies was enabled by the prosperous 1980s, when theatres invested in hardware. It was also aided by directors like Trevor Nunn who moved into commercial theatre from the subsidized sector. This movement of publicly subsidised professional designers into the

commercial sector, such as, John Napier, Tim O'Brien and Ralph Koltai (all of whom had developed an aesthetic at the RSC), meant they were able to use their ideas on a larger scale. The late 1990s have left a vacuum for new ideas and methods of theatre production as techniques have been repeated resulting in poor 'spectacle', and the production of poor literary texts, which have been hung around technological features. The establishment chose to go for 'spectacle' presentation in order to provide them with much needed finance. However, physical theatre had proved to be highly attractive as a saleable product, for example in productions like <u>Nicholas Nickleby</u> which achieved a number of short runs in the West End all of which sold out.[Rubin:1981] This I believe was a turning point for British theatre which had thus far maintained a clear distinction between the commercial and subsidized 'styles' of theatre and therefore scenographic practice. [8]

It is the combination of physical theatre techniques and spectacle theatre in the late twentieth century, which has diminished the status of the literary text, and replaced this with a scenographic text that combines to form the dramatic text, or performance text. There have been attempts to capture the dramatic text in literary form with the recent RNT publications of plays they have produced.[9] Although it would be impossible to give a full account of the scenographic activity within the literary text, the fact that the RNT have begun to express the text in this way suggests a recognition of the scenographic as part of the dramatic text. This change in the publication of theatre texts, also signals a recognition of the democratisation of the process of production, which has gone on during the last twenty years.

In trying to evaluate the role of the performer in the relationship of the performance to the audience, we must not deny the influence of designed images, even when they seem insignificant. The process of performance is perhaps the area of most relevance rather than the final product. "The

intellectual, by contrast, is interested in the road as an activity, but he cannot evaluate it because his imagination fails to show him the goal clearly; he has to wait for it. When the goal is reached, he evaluates the result but loses sight of the road that led to it."[Volbach:1989, p.365] The evaluation of the process and the product through new theories of theatre often imported from other art forms, has a relevance to scenography and aspects of its production but not its poetic value within the context of a piece. Having established some of the important changes for the scenographic aesthetic, it is now necessary to analyse how the audience engage with the product in order to create the mise en scène.

Bibliography

Adolphe Appia, 1922, 'Mechanisation', Part 5, in W.R.Volbach, 1989.

Peter Ansorge, 1975, Disrupting the Spectacle:Five Years of Experimental and Fringe Theatre in Britain, Pitman.

Brian Arnott, 1973, 'A Scenography of Light, The Architect and the Emperor of Assyria', The Drama Review, Volume 17, no.2 T58, June.

Arnold Aronson, 1993, '100 Years of Stage Lighting: Why We Cannot Light Like Appia', (p46-58) OISTAT Nederland, Lectures held on the occasion of the symposium: Aspects Of Theatre Lighting Since Adolphe Appia, Amsterdam, November 27th. Published by Vereniging voor Podiumtechnologie, Opleiding Theatertechniek (OTT) Hogesschool voor de Kunsten, Amsterdam.

Peter Bogatyrev, 1976, 'Semiotics and the Folk Theatre', Matejka & Titunik, pp33-50.

Edward Braun, 1969, Meyerhold on Theatre, Methuen.

Edward Braun, 1995, Meyerhold: A Revolution in Theatre, Methuen, London.

Toby Cole and Helen Krich Chinoy, Directors on Directing: A Source Book of the Modern Theater, Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis.

Tony Coult and Baz Kershaw,1983, <u>Engineers of the Imagination:The</u>
<u>Welfare State Handbook</u>, Methuen.

Jane Edwardes, 1994, interview, in Shank, 1994.

Edward Fitzball, 1859, <u>35 years if a dramatic authors life</u>, London

Judith Greenwood, 1984, <u>Am I Lit Here? - An historical survey of the</u>
<u>theory and practice of lighting the actor on stage, from the age of gas to</u>
<u>the age of electricity</u>, M.A. thesis Leeds University.

Dick Hebdige, 1991, <u>Subculture:the meaning of style</u> , Routledge,
London.

Robert Halliday, 1993, 'ShowCAD: The PC Takes Control', <u>Lighting</u>
<u>and Sound International</u>, February 1993, p.36-37.

Rob Halliday, 1996, 'C'est la Guerre', Lighting and Sound International,
August, p.33-40

Bethany Haye, 1986, 'Les Miserables', <u>Theatre Crafts</u>, Vol. 20 no.9.

Ian Herbert, 1995, 'Asleep in the Stalls', <u>Lighting and Sound</u>
<u>International</u>, Richard Pilbrow

Baz Kershaw, 1992, <u>The Politics of Performance:Radical theatre as</u>
<u>Cultural Intervention</u>, Routledge, London.

Iain Mackintosh, 1992, Architecture Actor and Audience, Routledge.

W.T.O'Dea, 1958, <u>A Short History of Lighting</u>, HMSO.

Richard Pilbrow, 1992, <u>Stage Lighting</u>, Nick Hern Books.

RNT, 1993, <u>Platform Papers: 4. Designers Bob Crowley, Jocelyn</u>
<u>Herbert, John Napier.</u>

Roland Rees, 1992, <u>Fringe First:Pioneers of Fringe Theatre on Record</u>,
Oberon Books, London.

Leon Rubin, 1981, <u>The Nicholas Nickleby Story: The making of the</u>
<u>historic Royal Shakespeare Company Production</u>, London:Heinneman.

Rudlin, 1986, <u>Jacques Copeau</u>, Cambridge University Press

Theodore Shank, 1977, 'The Welfare State Theatre', <u>The Drama Review</u>,
T73, p.3-16.

Theodore Shank,1994, <u>Contemporary British Theatre</u>, Macmillan
London.

Lee Simonson The Stage is Set, Harcourt Brace Jovanivich, inc. Rev Ed. N. Y. Theatre Art Books 1964, p365-366. &92.92

William Toynbee,(ed.), 1912, The Diaries of W.C. Macready, Chapman and Hall, London. Walther R Volbach, Adolphe Appia, Prophet of the Modern Theatre : A Profile, Wesleyan University Press, 1968, edited and translated by Richard C. Beacham.

W.R.Volbach, 1989, Adolphe Appia, Essays, Scenarios, and Designs, edited Richard C. Beacham, UMI Research Press.

Raymond Williams, 1977, 'Realism', in Screen, Volume18, No.1.

[1]Alan parsons Daily Mail, 18th August 1931, antedated by J.B. Fagan in 1919, in a paper given to the I.E.S.

[2]A memory controlled computer board was first used in Television at Central Rediffusions television studio. The first computer memory board installed in a theatre, was at the Palace Theatre in 1955. See Applebee, 1935 'A Cavalcade of Stage Lighting' - paper to the Illuminating Engineering Society.

[3]The linking up of units was illustrated to me for Miss Saigon on Broadway in 1991. In the control room a p.c. was used to linked the control for the Vari*lites using an Artisan control board with the Light Palette which was controling the traditional units.

[4]Pilbrow talks of the German's finally catching up with the argument in favour of the specialist lighting designer, rather than simply having the director relay wishes to a chief electrician "and is striving to introduce the concept of lighting design".

[5]interview with Jane Head, Production Arts, July 1991

[6]Interview of Alison Chitty by Christine White 1992.

[7]The company comprises of graduates from Warwick University, 1995.

[8]In evidence from questionnaires to designers and lighting designers, they expressed a difference in approach when working on commercial, rather than non-commercial productions.

[9]For example, The Skriker and The Hare Trilogy

Reclaiming Spectacle

The popular critical use of the word 'spectacle', in theatre criticism, is misguided, and is not representative of the nature of spectacle in the theatre. Whilst 'spectacle' has often been used to describe the gratuitous use of technology and/or performances, to highlight the self-conscious and self-reflexive nature of theatre, such a description is limited as it views these affects, as having added little in terms of meaning, to such productions. The implied lack of integrity suggested by the term spectacle has ignored the fact that such self-reflexive work is part of a separate genre which has in the late 1980s and 1990s been a part of, what may be termed historically, the post-modern aesthetic. Spectacle requires a response from the spectator, as part of the planned event and the expression of the 'theatricality' of theatre, has in recent years, blurred the nature of spectacle, as theatricality and spectacle have been thought to mean the same thing, but the self-conscious and self-reflexive are not necessarily the spectacular. In popular criticism, theatricality is a recognition of the practice of theatre, whereas spectacle is an invitation to lose oneself in the event and be affected by the presentation; one is self-conscious, the other requires the spectator to abandon their critical faculties. I will argue that this use of spectacle, to describe a form which is soporific and inert is inaccurate.

In 1993 David Edgar made the observation that there was a dearth of freelance writers, commissioned by theatre companies to write new works. However, in the 1980s and 1990s many theatre companies were using a variety of processes to produce new work, including devising and writing through workshops. These production processes have changed the theatre writer's profession. Edgar suggests such processes erase the writer from the production of theatre. [Edgar:1993] However what he is articulating is yet another change in the way theatre is made. One of the most pertinent changes to the process has been the technique of devising,

and the performance style of physical theatre. However the scenographic and the physical should not be seen as opposite practices as such a perception equates scenographic theatre to a means of production related to financial means, rather than to the efficacy of what is presented. Nor does this binary presentation of the two forms take into account the emotional impact of physical theatre, and the size and spectacle possible. The work of Mike Alfreds on <u>Arabian Nights</u> and the subsequent use of physical theatre techniques for <u>Nicholas Nickleby</u> and <u>Les Miserables,</u> illustrate this. The latter, a conflation more clearly relating to the scenographic, not just the means of technological production but to the contribution of the physical in terms of an ensemble company, and thus to the spectacle. These examples all use designed space and have a scenographic content. Whilst <u>Arabian Nights</u> as a precursor of the physical theatre style which has been adopted in the West End, had a minimum amount of inanimate objects, the environment was still designed as a scenographic whole to evoke a particular style of production and have an emotional impact on the spectator. This technique was used in <u>A Woman in Black.</u> At the beginning of the play the act of storytelling is used to present the tale. The techniques used are similar to those used by Shared Experience, where objects change their significance dependant on the context of the story. It is only later in the play that we actually go to the literal house where the murder occurred. We spend the first part of the play watching two actors recount the tale in a dressing room, with a coat rail and a costume basket. This aesthetic enabled the spectator to 'see' the image created by the actors, who were creating the inanimate; the lights, costume and environment hold the actors activity in suspension in order that it is experienced by the spectator. It is these moments which are spectacular.

Efficacy of Spectacle

The efficacy of spectacle is based on its ability to manipulate our emotions and thus our emotional attachment to, and de-tachment from,

theatrical events. An attempt to find a register to discuss the affects of particular theatre experiences is difficult, especially when the nature of the event can be so varied. The effect of spectacle and the spectacular cannot be defined without first trying to determine what we mean by spectacle, and what we use the word 'spectacle' to describe. Spectacle as defined by the dictionary can mean 'strange and interesting', 'an impressive, grand or dramatic show', 'designed to impress', 'magnificent' and 'important'. The word 'grand' suggests large, and the use of 'dramatic' refers to a sense of the 'striking' or 'effective', that which has some kind of 'emotional impact' or is 'performed in a flamboyant way'. A theatre performance may be striking, or large and have an emotional impact on the audience or a variety of these attributes, and all, or some of these features constitute spectacle. However, the specific spectacular moment, need not be large or flamboyant but it frequently does have an emotional impact on the spectator. The emotional impact of a performance or a moment of performance, is the most tangible response that the audience has to an event. The impact of the emotional reaction a spectator might have to the spectacle, determines the spectator's attachment to the event, and a lack of emotional impact will induce an attitude of detachment on the part of the spectator. In describing the customers of a theatre event I have used the term spectator, and I will use audience to describe customers who are less involved with the visual impact of a production. For example, in this sense an audience would be present at an orchestral concert.

The events of theatre are to be viewed strictly in conjunction with what is heard, and the efficacy of what is heard, is related to what is seen. What is seen is often spectacular, or, spectacle theatre, although whole performances need not fit into the category spectacle, but may shift between spectacle and non-spectacle. These fluctuations require the customer to oscillate between being a spectator and being an audience member. The efficacy of the spectacular on the spectator is a very

individualistic moment, whilst the audience listen, often giving a unified reaction. "While audience homogeneity would seem to be most likely, it is worth remembering the vulnerability of that united response. That audiences generally concur as to what is a good play and what is bad merely evidences aesthetic codes as culturally determined". [Bennett:1994, p.165] The customer has to become a spectator by allowing themselves to see an element of the theatre performance or the performance as a whole, as striking or dramatic. Alternatively, the customers might not find the piece spectacular and so remain as part of the audience, passive; they are not involved in the events, as involvement requires some emotional activity, they are observers. The spectacular, whether it is a moment or a whole performance, is specifically 'designed' to have an emotional impact and to be dramatic. In this respect, it uses methods of evoking such reactions in the spectator. More crudely, the makers of theatre know what will work, or can make an educated guess as to what will produce the desired reaction in the customer. The makers are all working as actors do, in the knowledge of how to evoke in individuals particular responses, and as with actors, some of the makers of theatre are more subtle than others at concealing the mechanism for provoking reaction in the spectator. The techniques of acting, as with the techniques of production, can be crude cliché or an art form. The lighting and stagecraft of the last twenty years has been used to "heighten the theatrical experience for the audience." [Bennett:1995, p.119] However, it would be inaccurate to see this heightening as purely gratuitous. Bob Crowley highlights some early problems which occurred with the sudden explosion of stagecraft, "I think what also happened is that in the 80s designers had the responsibility for turning rather dodgy musicals into pieces of theatre. These musicals weren't inherently theatrical and they depended for their lifeblood on the designer, because nothing else was happening. What's happened since has probably been a bit of a backlash...I was worried that

all we'd done in the 80s was to replace one boring set of clichés with another set."[RNT:1993, p.19-20]

This highlights the need to determine the nature of the theatre event, clarifying that which is spectacle, and that which is technological. The use of spectacle to describe technology which is not integrated into a theatre production corrupts the use of the word spectacle and does not accurately describe the experience. Technology is a means to an end and spectacle is the end effect created, as such they are very different from one to the other. To speak of technology as being spectacular is inaccurate in terms of what spectacle actually means and what the technology is able to achieve. A customer's attachment or detachment to the event is determined by the choices which theatre makers elect to follow in producing theatre. Such production processes suggest manipulation on the part of the theatre makers, which is a part of their skill. When the technology, and therefore the means of production, is revealed and not integrated into an event it is not only badly designed within the context of the event but removes the potential for the spectacular to be experienced. The efficacy of the technology to produce an emotional response in the audience is only possible if the technology is combined with other features of the production and creates a cohesive signal to the audience. There is no excitement in watching a lift going up and down, unless the lift is in the context of other activity within the performance or if it is set within a landscape where it is given a context. The technology which moves the lift is of no interest whatsoever, therefore, technology must not be linked with ideas of spectacle and the spectacular must be reviewed in the context of the theatre event.

Theatre which is flamboyantly manipulative has frequently been judged as a lesser form of art, not because anyone can produce these works, anyone can't, but because the production does not disguise the means of manipulation. Puccini was regarded as a populist composer and in many

120

"serious musical circles the subject of Puccini was held to be no less than taboo....His art was dismissed as *kitsch*."[Carner:1958,p.ix] He directly manipulates the listener's emotional response through the dramatic use of music. He aimed at *Gesamkuntswerk*: "He insisted for example on the utmost clarity of verbal enunciation and on lighting effects following closely the musical changes and being regulated 'with a most attentive ear'".[1][Carner:1958,p.266] He knew exactly what worked emotionally in terms of the libretti and the score for his operas, even to the point of how the curtain rose or fell. The effect of Aida at Earls Court, one of many extravagant events staged there in the late 1980s which at varying moments exhibited spectacular effects, cannot be discounted as an art form simply by calling it 'spectacle'. This use of the word 'spectacle' in modern criticism has been used to suggest that the work is limited in its relation to human being's experience, but the effect of spectacle is to illicit an emotional response from the spectator. It is the difficulty in describing that response, which critics have avoided. Louis Arnaud Reid expresses this difficulty, "The thoughts which are expressed to me by a piece of music which I love are not too indefinite to be put into words but on the contrary too definite. And so I find, in every attempt to express such thoughts, that something is right, but at the same time something is unsatisfying in all of them." [Reid:1969, p.198] Human beings have often recorded the emotional affects of theatre but those effects have rarely been accorded status. Our emotions and feelings have been given lower status than our intellect. The means to manipulate the intellect has, since the Enlightenment been considered to be literature and literary texts; works of art which take the form of the visual or ethereal, have manipulated our emotions. A visceral response to the visual is very difficult to articulate, and our lack of articulation compounds the problem and the status of spectacle. We therefore have an art form which is hard to describe, which appeals to our emotions and manipulates them, and if we give in to this phenomenon, we are not in control of our emotions, we are out of control. One fundamental

problem for spectacle as a whole event or as individual moments, is that it requires us to lose self control. This concern about the way in which theatre has in the last twenty years worked, is expressed by Bob Crowley, "I think there's a basic puritanism. I think Oliver Cromwell has a lot to answer for, and when he closed the theatres something seeped really deeply into the English psyche. Its beginning to loosen up, but its taken the 1980s, when we were beaten over the head by design. You couldn't open a magazine without reading that its got to be black or its got to be chrome. It became an onslaught in the 80s, which I think has just loosened the corsets a bit." [RNT: 1993, p.18] Throughout the 1980s and 1990s ideas of 'spectacle', and theatre which is spectacular, can be linked to the changes in the production processes. The process of production includes a number of complex concepts. Firstly, the nature of production has taken processes from other industries, such as mass production, which have inevitably affected the manufacture of the product. Secondly, the product has then been marketed as popular theatre and therefore mass culture, both of which require definition as to what is 'popular', and what is distinguished as part of 'mass culture'. The control for what is popular in any market is related to how it is marketed. For the theatre industry such popularity is not necessarily affected by the intrinsic efficacy of the theatre performance. The use of spectacle or components of what we may term spectacle, are inter linked with the financial expenditure to produce a marketable product and are not necessarily considered as part of the efficacious nature of the product. In short, theatre critics discuss the use of certain techniques of production which involve technology and neglect the efficacious nature of the spectacle presented. The reclaiming of the word 'spectacle' as a non-perjorative term to describe theatre which is striking, dramatic and emotionally compelling, is an important part of the ownership of the art form, as it helps delineate the work from the process, and its possible manipulation by the market. If mass culture is a created commodity made for profit and to a certain extent the audience expect to be

122

manipulated and exploited emotionally, [Strinati:1995, p.12] then mass culture and spectacle are linked, as both use techniques of manipulation, however, for the theatre industry in the UK the dissemination of the product is not to a mass audience, in the same sense as it is for other forms of communication. The link between the production of spectacle in the context of theatre with a mass culture which is deemed to be of 'low quality', which manipulates our emotions, highlights the prejudice of an intellectual elite against such a culture. The emotional content of the theatre product and the involvement of the spectators in that emotion, has as part of mass culture theory been denigrated as feminine: "one major reason for the critical dismissal of mass culture arises from its allegedly 'feminine' qualities. For example, mass culture, like the cinema or the soap opera, is denigrated because it is sentimental and plays on our emotions. Hence it can be dismissed because it evokes reactions associated with the feminine."[Strinati:1995, p.47] This would explain the suspicion and negative criticism that has always surrounded the presentation of spectacle.

If mass culture is a threat to high culture and the avant-garde, then the result will be as MacDonald pessimistically states, "bad stuff drives out the good, since it is more easily understood and enjoyed".[MacDonald:1957] This explains some of Edgar's fears. The simplicity with which mass culture is viewed is explained by the feminist analysis of popular culture. Modleski argues that "our ways of thinking and feeling about mass culture are so intricately bound up with notions of the feminine that the need for a feminist critique becomes obvious at every level of the debate". [Modleski:1986, p.38] The feminist critique of mass culture suggests that women are responsible for mass culture and men are identified with high culture and art. The effect of the implicit criticism of the theatre writing of the last twenty years illustrates the abhorrence of spectacle, a part of mass culture and the

123

means to create it, and this underlying principle of the feminine nature of emotional rather than masculine, intellectual theatre.

The more commercial the operation of theatre production, the more controlling its market and the more manipulated the product potentially becomes. The product becomes a repetition of elements which have worked before for this market. The variety of produced theatre styles in the UK, would not suggest a standardisation or an homogenised popular culture and so mass culture theory must be rather carefully considered in relation to the theatre product. However, the clarification of the theatre product which is specifically profit led, must take into account the changed dynamic of theatre production across all genres. Theatre has achieved a form of mass communication through the new production processes which have changed its nature. The technology has made transfers not only within a country, for example to the West End possible, but the new production processes have enabled the same production to be transported around the world and re-mounted. These identikit productions do not require specific performers to bring a new interpretation but require the repetition of the successful event for the paying audience. The success of the product enables an extended life for it. More pertinent to current funding for UK theatre is the *potential* for standardisation with this method of production. It is also true for theatre, as Strinati points out in the case of mass culture, producers can, "at times make use of standardised formats, this is not unique to it *(mass culture)* but can equally be found in elite culture." [Strinati:1995,p.41] These standardised production techniques become part of an accepted practice.

As central funding cuts challenge theatre companies to remain in production, the nature of the product, the theatre production, becomes a commodity for consumption which will attract the largest audience. In the past twenty years the intellectual arbiters of taste and theatre critics, have not affected people's tastes. This is illustrated by the continuation

of productions by popular demand which have been very negatively reviewed. Strinati suggests this is due to the wide variety of mass culture which is available and the dismissal of intellectuals for the definition of pleasure associated with theatre products. Distinctions between popular culture, art, mass culture, high culture and folk culture become blurred and have to be redrawn, almost for each product. Ultimately, all of these distinctions must take into account shifting power relations and taste, which are at stake when making these distinctions. Politics are at the centre of these discussions, not just of production but also of consumption. The idea of the soporific mass, passively manipulated, is as inaccurate as the active critical participant, within theatre audiences. "Populism has clearly figured in the ideologies of the producers of popular culture as a way of justifying what they produce - 'giving people what they want' - and it can equally be an ideology of audiences". [Ang:1989. Strinati:1995,p.257] Culturally, the production rarely challenges the society as this would alter the market dynamic. This theatre can be dismissed as manipulative, feminized performance which feeds a capitalist habit, and is produced by technology which is taking over our society, but more pertinent is the dismissal of a theatre which produces these reactions in the élite. The relationship of critics to the theatre product and in particular the definition of this as either feminine or masculine, raises a more complex topic of criticism for the theatre than there is time to discuss here. However, I think it is worth noting that spectacle falls into a potentially dangerous and easily dismissed area, as Modleski suggests is true for other areas of our culture. The need for a feminist critique of theatre is indeed a fruitful area for research. In respect of my argument, I feel it helps to illustrate the way in which many aspects of the feminine in human behaviour, are trivialised.

Theatre which can manipulate the spectator must be recognised as being successful in its purpose. The techniques of theatre production are

accentuated through spectacle, as it utilises all production methods available to affect the audience. In the late twentieth century theatre, one of the methods by which the emotional, dramatic and flamboyant can be achieved has been through the technology of scenographic components, however, the technology of change and transformation has always been a part of the theatre event. In Medieval theatre, trap doors and flying pieces were used; the Renaissance and Baroque theatre effected changes which were dramatic and flamboyant in their own right and the applause for the means of production is best illustrated through the work of Inigo Jones. His work encompassed the role of director, designer, architect and production manager, and through the means of production he conflicted with the writer of the literary text, on his journey towards the performance text. Jones pre-interpreted the literary text and packaged it for the consumption of the Court. Jones's use of scenographic elements to 'produce' the narrative of the text, meant that the Stuart Masques were interpreted literally by Jones into scenographic components and as he was architect, designer and engineer of the masques it was his vision which directed the audience's reception of them. The masques and their content were used allegorically, for the kinds of virtues which the King wished to encourage at Court, such as Platonic truth. These virtues were then realised in the harmonious use of spectacular visions. The Court society was confirmed in its wisdom and strength, by the theatre. These intentions and the text itself clearly affected the masques' production, as Orgell and Strong point out, "Illusionistic machinery for the dramatic stage first comes fully into its own, logically enough, when the drama becomes not only overtly philosophical but directly Platonic." [Orgell and Strong:1973, p.10] The pre-interpreted metaphoric set is one which fits easily into the late twentieth century aesthetic. "There's a text and it's delivered, but it is not evaluated and not coloured and not interpreted either, it's just there. Then there's noise, and that's there too and is also not interpreted. I regard this as important. It's a democratic concept of theatre. Interpretation is the work of the spectator and is not to take

126

place on the stage. The spectator must not be absolved from his work. That's consumerism...capitalist theatre".[Muller and Ortolani:1985] In this sense Jones did not expect the spectator to work at the sense making process, however, a great deal of what he presented was allegorical and as such required the spectator to work towards the meaning of the poetic presented. This contradiction between pre-interpretation and the poetic of scenography is very pertinent to the efficacy of late twentieth century theatre production and defines the work that becomes reified. "If the curtain goes up, its a play about anarchy, the stage is at a ridiculous angle, the walls are falling in and there's a pile of masonry on the set, you think well so what? We might as well all go home. All you've done is to give the audience a metaphor for what's about to take place."[RNT:1993, p.18] The taste of what makes good theatre for the late twentieth century very much depends on how one views the process of production. As set design has evolved into an activity which no longer requires just a background, the scenographic team endeavour to present a poetic, which is as affecting as the literary text. A belief that new technologies are used in productions simply because one can use such technologies, ignores the way in which productions are 'designed'. However, the use of technology to present a metaphor for the experience that will unfold for the spectator is an apparent aesthetic of late twentieth century theatre. It is the success of the poetic which has helped reify scenography. An example of a cohesive scenographic presentation which can be praised for its inherent poetic and damned for its simplicity, is the RNT production of An Inspector Calls. The play itself deals with the hypocrisy of the Edwardian middle-classes and through the course of the play we see their deeds revealed which culminates in their downfall, shame, and bankruptcy. The scenography for this production embodied these themes. The open stage of the Olivier had at its centre a ¼ sized Edwardian house, which stood on an hydraulic mechanism, the rest of the stage was a cobbled street with potholes and puddles. A false proscenium arch had been created which was swagged with tattered red

velvet. Outside of the proscenium was a red GPO telephone box. The opening of the play took place in the house. The spectator saw the comfortable family, whilst outside in the street the poor working classes peered in at their wealth. This extended metaphor culminated in the literal collapse of the house, which rocked forward dispensing the china and glass and other worldly goods of the Birling household. Now on the street, it became apparent that the older members of the family were going to have difficulty coping with their changed circumstances and society, whilst the younger members were more able to adapt, as they owned up to their hypocrisy. The scenography of this production exploded the myth of this play as a rather dusty drawing-room drama and it was the production which was reified, not the literary text of Priestley. One interpretation of this production and its reception by the audience is that this presentation enabled a better concentration on the politics of the piece as it was continually before us encapsulated as a poetic in the scenography. This can be countered by the concern that the use of scenography in this instance, patronised the audience because of its simplicity and on the contrary, distanced the spectator from the politics of the piece. It is hard to prove one result over another but the aesthetic presented is particular to British theatre. This representation of a concept can result in the success of the production of a play which needed a face lift. The excitement around this production was due to the use of the scenographic and its subsequent transfer was advertised as such. In Post -War British Theatre Criticism , John Elsom, discusses the first effects of the production of The Inspector Calls by J.B. Priestley. The play was first produced in 1945 in Moscow. When it was first produced in Britain at The Old Vic in 1946 it was criticized for being a slight play or an over polemical one, either way it was thought to be an unlikely fantasy. "Can the Birlings stand for that complacent world of 1912, tottering blindly to its fall?" J.C.Trewin wrote, "It is an indication of the play's lack of theatrical truth that its author was obliged to put it into an Edwardian scene and costume". Stephen Potter of the New Statesman

wrote, " the best coup de théâtre of the year".[Elsom:1980] Visually this metaphor was encapsulated in the scenography, it was the pithy extract of Priestley's text. The RNT production extended the play beyond the period piece, as a set text for examinations and placed it in the 1990s as a deconstructed truth for the spectator to see quite literally. The efficacy of the spectacle was to reinforce the idea of the Birling's downfall. The spectacle was not without emotion, or critical awareness of the relation of the scenography to the literary text. If the legs on which the Birling household toppled had been manually dislocated it would not have changed the result but the use of technical means when seen by the spectator can leave scenography open to the criticism of the gratuitous and gimmicky which may further the sale of the performance. Even though the use of the image comes after the production has been deemed a success.

Alison Chitty referred to the 'lift and tilt' school of design, best illustrated by Richard Hudson, which Chitty sees as a trend and fashion in design. "Visual values becoming exploded for spectacle. In this sense the result is over-designed under-scripted work."[2] Now that the production team take an equal interest and responsibility for the presentation or concept of a production, the scenographic team have to find out what they want to say. The use of allegory and metaphor becomes relevant to their working practice. The student of scenography is asked to think about a production in these terms. The radical aesthetic of the Royal Court which Jocelyn Herbert describes as being "more interesting to evoke the mood of the play in a less naturalistic, less heavily decorative way, and let the play speak for itself".[RNT:1993, p.1], has been a starting point for the change in aesthetic but rather than the play speak for itself, scenography has provided another voice. The pre-interpreted performance can then be judged by the spectator. This method of production lends itself well to literary texts which are produced again and again. The production processes of the RSC for

example, which involve producing the same literary texts for production, require reinterpretation. The interest in the performance becomes in what so and so will do with, for example, A Midsummer Nights Dream. As most theatres in the UK use established literary texts as the main proportion of their work the need for reinterpretation is an imperative of production. The practice of reworking texts through the scenography presented, impacts on all theatre as a method of using stagecraft, lighting and technology.

Having accepted that scenographic components can have an emotional impact on an audience, critics have felt that an excess of such emotions may be detrimental to the theatre as a form and the more frivolous manipulation of the spectator will give the art of theatre a bad name. Alternative forms of performance that abhor the use of technology to create spectacle, deny it meaning. Although this meaning is perhaps not universal, it must certainly obtain some strands of familiarity for the spectator, as aspects of productions are recognisable as the triggers which produce specific responses in the spectator. In an attempt to explore the poetic nature of scenography we must inevitably grapple with a number of theories of scenography.

Bibliography

I. Ang, 1989, Watching Dallas, London, Routledge.

Susan Bennett, 1994, Theatre Audiences A theory of production and reception, Routledge, London.

Mosco Carner, 1958, Puccini A Critical Biography, Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., London.

David Edgar, 1993, 'New State of Play', The Guardian, 1st March.

John Elsom, 1980, Post-War British Theatre Criticism, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

D. MacDonald, 1957, 'A theory of mass culture', in B. Rosenberg and D. White (eds) Mass Culture, Glencoe, Free Press.

T. Modleski, 1986, 'Feminity as mas(s)querade: a feminist approach to mass culture', in C. MacCabe (ed.), High Theory/Low Culture, Manchester, Manchester University Press.

Heiner Muller and Oliver Ortolani, 1985, 'Die Form entseht aus dem Maskieren', Theater translated by Elizabeth Wright, 1989, in Post-Modern Brecht: a representation, London Routledge.

Stephen Orgell and Roy Strong, 1973, The Theatre of the Stuart Court, volume 1, Sotheby Park Bernet, University of California Press.

RNT, 1993, Platform Papers: 4 . Designers, Bob Crowley, Jocelyn Herbert, John Napier.

Dominic Strinati, 1995, An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture, Routledge, London.

[1]This is from 'Puccini. Interprete di se stesso' by Luigi Ricci, Milan 1954. The book is a record of first hand observations made by Puccini during rehearsals. Ricci assisted Puccini in the supervision and production of his operas.
[2]Christine White, 1992, interview with Alison Chitty.

An Analysis of the Theatre Comprehension Process

A language of significance has, as yet, been illusory but such a language must take into account the means of production and its efficacy, and it is this which has thwarted most modernist and post-modernist theoretical applications, to the Scenographic. In the first instance I should explain what I mean by efficacy. The efficacious is that which is used for a particular purpose and which is a means to have, or usually having the desired effect. It is therefore that which can effect changes of perception on stage and in relation to scenography; a particular feature, for example light, set structure, object or sound which proves to be a means of communicating the desired effect to the audience. It has meaning perhaps beyond the obvious interpretation and within the dramatic text.

The majority of moments remembered by an audience throughout their theatre-going career are non-verbal moments, that is, subtle movements of an actor, a look or a gesture, and quite often the movements and activity of set pieces or lighting effects. The scenographic movement forms a major part of audience memory.[1] Carlos Tindemans, discusses the subject of an inner perception as a replica of original perceiving. As he puts it, "When people put fragments of information together, the appropriateness of a result often depends on the ability to focus attention toward 'one' aspect of the information. Different elaboration's result from different shifts in focus." This principle, I believe, is the poetic of the piece and the principle of this theory is the mutability of an object within the dramatic text and relates to Appia's assertion of how meaning is constructed by the audience. In the instance of the mutable object, it is the surrounding narrative and other connotative information which aid the communication of information to an audience. This suggests, that in theatrical presentations we should be placing information for the spectator to interpret, understanding that no single interpretation will be forthcoming. Theatre performance therefore, is a practice involved in the

dissemination of a poetic, or supposed universal truth. As Tindemans points out coherence focality, "becomes an action which one can and has to direct oneself".[Tindemans:1984] In this way, the audience becomes the director of the interpretation, in the same way that the reader is the interpreter of lines of poetry. No matter how they are interpreted, the lines of poetry always lead back to a homogeneous whole and this is how scenography is 'read' and received, as a part of the whole event.

In respect of late twentieth century theatre, the dominant impression is of the theatrical experience as an aesthetic object, which is enjoyed and contemplated. The critic and audience may use contextual analysis, historicism, that may sociologically define and psychologically determine their own opinions. They may even look at the artists' biography for knowledge of the product, but of more importance will be the works intrinsic nature. Therefore, only the audience 'know', as individuals if a poetic has been achieved. Thus, an aesthetic can be read and understood by an audience, and certain aesthetics in terms of performance style, have become recognised as both successful, and reified methods of production. Modern theories of the comprehension and the reception of theatre avoid the problems of reification, and the reception of the scenographic as a part of a whole, as a poetic, because theories of reception and comprehension do not take into account, either the means of production, or the prevailing market value of the theatre which is created. Meaning and significance, as part of our sense making interpretation and criticism, when discussed through these methodologies, lead us to an essentialist point of view. As when a method is placed on a text in some vain attempt to crack a code, or to find the ultimate truth about a piece of literature, or as in this case, the performance text. Observations of the interrelationship between societal processes and artistic activities or aesthetic forms, and the ways in which they are interpreted, converge with the changing attitude of Western

133

artists and audiences to the performing arts, during the twentieth century. Modern theatre theories lead us no closer to the essential meaning received by the audience but they do allow us to review the texts from different perspectives. Richard Rorty discusses the esoteric urge, "to crack codes to distinguish between reality and appearance, to make an invidious distinction between getting it right and making it useful."[Rorty:1992, p.108] The attitude of interpretation in the late twentieth century has become more fluid with the general acceptance of Appia's precept that the audience is the maker of meaning. This has meant that there is less emphasis on, "getting it right", and more importance is placed on, "making it useful". Theoretical approaches have provided copious material, which supports the broad view, that there is almost unlimited potential to generate different modes, techniques, forms of performing arts, and theatricality, in many different cultural contexts. The interpretations which such theories provide, Beattie suggests, should make us abandon traditional sterile attempts to establish and find exclusive formulas for drama and theatrical performances, and formulas which can capture the fluid nature of these phenomena, only in a very narrow, reified sense.[Beattie:1969, p.147] In addition attempts to gather material responses from the audience of a theatre event are indispensable but the gathering of such responses is often difficult given the discursive nature of such responses. "An aesthetics of theatrical reception, a genuine phenomenology of audience competence founded on empirical research (...) is an indispensable, though so far neglected component of any proposed theatrical poetics". [Eversmann: 1980, p.121] However, empirical proof of audience competence is complex. It requires study into the social structure of the audience as well as an understanding of individual psychological processes.

Traditional forms of analysis

In the light of the changing scenographic aesthetic for Western drama, questions about our understanding and reception of various aspects of the

production become pertinent. "The essential character of hermenuetics...consists in making successive additions of other analogies to the analogy given in the symbol.... This procedure widens and enriches the initial symbol, and the final outcome is an infinitely complex and varied picture, in which certain lines of psychological development stand out as possibilities that are at once individual and collective. There is no science on earth by which these lines could be proved right they are not right".[Jung:1966, p.287] [2] At base, all interpretations are reliant on existing cultural codes but according to Jung there is something which could be defined as the universality of image, which relates to the collective consciousness. If one attributes semantic significance to our imaginations, according to hermeneutic conception, and treat them as authentic symbols, then they provide the directive signs we need in order to carry on our lives, in harmony with ourselves.[Jung:1966,p.286] "Between the conscious and the unconscious there is a kind of uncertainty relationship because the observer is inseparable from the observed and always disturbs it by the act of observation. In other words, exact observation of the unconscious prejudices observation of the conscious and vice versa".[Jung:1968,p.226] The psychic process, like any life process, is not just a causal sequence but has a teleological orientation. Dreams can give us indicia about the objective causality as self-portraits of the psychic life process. Jung writes of the ability of a person to put together images, or ideas that have a parallel meaning, which they themselves are unaware of. Therefore, the creation of a poetic is particularly relevant to the creation of images, especially when the scenographic team, working together, can juxtapose information which may not have been discussed in infinite detail, or teleologically created to give the actual meaning which is later discussed by audiences and critics. The unconscious must contain not only personal but also impersonal collective components in the form of inherited categories and archetypes. This becomes most pertinent when we try to explain the complex super-highway of

135

information which is conveyed through images during a theatrical performance. One interpretation is that this information is put together through the use of the conscious and subconscious activity of the scenographic team. In The Creative Malady, George Pickering discusses the whole mind occupied by the subconscious and conscious mental processes from which the great idea emerges.[Pickering:1974] He suggests that the driving force, and the urge to be creative are therefore probably the most important, although we don't understand why. A sense of self and humanity must be transmitted somehow for these works of art to have resonances to human experience. This suggests an almost self-conscious and self-reflexive view of humanity. This relationship of the consciousness to our processes of artistic creation seems most relevant to post-modern theories of our culture, theories which refer to the culture of the 1980s and 1990s but which do not refer to a universal practice of image creation or comprehension. Again, Jung found it interesting that, "the unconscious processes of the most remotely separated peoples and races show a quite remarkable correspondance,...which displays itself...in a well authenticated similarity between the themes and forms of autochthonous myths. The universal similarity of the brain yields the universal possibility of a similar mental functioning. This functioning is the collective psyche." If we think of the primitive as a control for general human behaviour, the former regards himself as part of the collective and the collective psyche is dominant, and is therefore, part of the unconscious. It seems when we achieve consciousness we become less able to believe in the collective psyche, and, according to Jung, the contradiction of the collective occurs when the development of the personal psyche begins. Laws of similarity, of contact or contagion, involve an imitation and both laws are the association of ideas, either association by similarity, or by contiguity. These laws can be called 'sympathetic magic', as both assume to be able to effect and act on each other at a distance, through secret sympathy. This is unexplained but it is how we can describe

moments which physically affect each other through a space which appears empty. It relates to Welfare State's preoccupation and assertion that they use theatre to make 'magic'. This would seem to explain the phenomenon of comprehension but does not really explain the process, although it does reinforce the idea of a poetic within an artistic field, in this case scenography. Comprehension processes which rely on distance are outlined by Ben Chaim and the quality of seeing in the mind is explained by Rupert Sheldrake's theory.[Ben Chaim:1984; Sheldrake:1995]   The theory in physical terms, has been that the eye receives light and the place where one sees an object is therefore in the mind. However, it is also apparent that most naturally we describe the point of viewing to be the position of the object, 'I see you over there', not the place inside the mind where the seeing actually takes place. Whilst this may be a semantic difference in terms of perception, it radically changes the nature of the object, if we consider how we react under the gaze of the observer. If, therefore the observer can actually transmit in a paranormal sense, then each spectator may in fact be transmitting onto a given image, situation or person. This fits in with a Quantum Theory of non-local connections.[3] It also helps describe the nature of the live event as an ever-changing experience, which nightly, depending on the audience has an individual energy. Again, this reinforces the poetic and suggests the contributory power of the audience as the creator of meaning and significance.

Whatever doubts science may entertain as to the possibility of action at a distance, magic has none and faith in telepathy is one of its first principles. "By code switching between symbols and signs we are able to persuade one another that metaphoric non-sense is really metonymic sense".[Leach:1976,p.17] Such code switching and the permutations of sense are complex. The metonymic in scenographic terms can either be conscious or subconscious, the comprehension by the audience is a high risk occupation, if the metonymy requires active participation of the

audience to make sense of the images presented within the context of other information. Even when the signs given are more naturalistic and therefore less open to hermeneutics, the process requires a certain amount of exertion on the part of the audience. It is this nature of modern performance that has become more dominant, and, in scenographic terms, this style of presentation is recognised by the audience as part of their role/job, during the performance.

Audio Stimulus

The suppositions made in regard to the theory of audience reception or any proposed theatrical poetics can be viewed through our understanding of radio and its efficacy for the audience. "Radio is capable of carrying far more degrees of dramatisation than the stage or screen because of the extreme flexibility of the medium and its wide powers of imaginative suggestion". [Sackville-West:1982] It is this imaginative suggestion which has become a dominant feature of scenographic imaging. The antecedents of this kind of presentation can be found in the developed medium of radio. In 1958 the establishment of the B.B.C. Radiophonic Workshop led to works which explored new ways of relating sound, music and words. For example in, Frederick Bradnum's Private Dreams and Public Nightmares, and Beckett's Words and Music. However, the new sounds of radiophonics and the dimensions of stereophony were generally employed to embellish a coherent and intelligible piece of verbal communication, in much the same way as the earlier 'features producers' had used specially written music to heighten and flavour their scripts. Although an abstract form for radio was looked for, as in other areas of art, in radio where spectacle in the mind has to be conjured into being wholly by the meticulous use of words, the idea of a play employing some abstract form of language was quickly seen, for example, Krapps Last Tape by Beckett. The technological advances of the last twenty years have allowed technicians to produce synthetic

sounds of a recognisable outside world. It, the radio play, becomes a technically dazzling piece of aural mimesis. This made its apotheosis in The Revenge, which was a sequence of wordless noises. "Twigs crackled, lumps of earth crumbled underfoot. A great deal of heavy breathing. Doors opened and closed. Footsteps on stairs, a rattle falling from the table - the noise of a boot being painfully slid from a swollen foot. The medium was exploited to the full."[Roban:1981] The characters in The Revenge were limited to the pursuer and the pursued. The plot was a chase but made by a collection of evocative noises.

The possibility of sound allows aural puns and the pretence is revealed. The sounds do not make us blind, on the contrary they make us see in our imagination. The noises, voices and music are unraveled in terms of our own memory and experience and so the listener is invited to use all their senses. The characters have room to grow in the space between the listeners ears and the pattern of coded symbols transmitted. However, one must be careful with sound not to create a naturalistic setting for every play as this is limiting. The listeners capacity for imagination is withdrawn if the producer aims for a hi-fidelity of realism and nothing is left to their imagination. The producer makes icons; the writer, symbols. In this respect the process and production of these symbols is similar for the theatre production. One requires a witness, the other a share in the creation. Before the technology became so sophisticated, the radio was a writer's medium as the word was the only object that was transmitted clearly and sound effects were essentially symbolic. They allowed reinvention and elaboration in the listener's head. The advances in technical expertise, have meant that radio has now manufactured its own iconic version of reality and so the technician not the writer has become an important creator of the drama. The parallels here are obvious. All the above principles for the conveyance of drama have been explored now through the new technologies of the stage. Questions about the success of this technology and a similar handing over of control from the writer to the technician, have changed the nature of contemporary

theatre. However, the impact of image in theatre is related to the whole event and as such must be treated holistically, in the same poetic sense as the radio presentation. In searching for an explanation of image as it relates to the impact of scenography on the theatre comprehension processes, the late twentieth century theorists have compartmentalised interpretation, thus avoiding what Eversmann suggested was necessary for our comprehension of the poetic, namely a discussion of the audience's reception.

A perception of the scenographic in terms of simply a reflection of society is contradictory. It must be representative but the imitation must be within the context of that represented and it must be recognisable to the audience. Whilst we individually react to an imitation, and to the verisimilitude of presentation, the comprehension process is quite different when a collective, such as the scenographic team, re-present images for an audience. The presentation is no longer one individual's response, previously the director's vision. It is made by a team response and critical awareness of the product they are making. The presentation is again changed when the audience is asked to undertake some of the visual presentation through their imagination, as in the context of the radio play, and as such the audience generate some of what is re-presented. The audience's consciousness is affected, as is their collective unconscious, because the method of construction of the theatrical event, and the process by which the scenographic team have created the product, becomes a similar event in terms of the perceived interpretation. However, this should be understood as not a simple provoked reaction in a linear fashion but an experience involving the layers created by a team of people who also react to subject and stimuli in terms of their own collective conscious and unconscious.

The deconstruction by the audience takes place after the event, after the activity of performance and the performance text is not built from a

formulaic construction. The perception of the event has become, however, an echo of its construction. The collective recognition of the experience created during the process of production becomes relevant to the theatrical experience created by the performance text. The relativity of theatre is related to that percieved relativity of the production to the individual. In the process of production the scenographic team have provided experimentation within the context of metonymy used in theatre presentation, and their creative process is extended through this and thus the comprehension process becomes extended. The construction of image is not constructed in a deconstructionist sense, rather it is perceived, and the 'act' of perceiving is engaged in by the audience. The production of La Boheme, by the ENO in 1995, retitled Bohéme, used the audience perception to directly create the mise en scène.[Appendix C] The images presented in each act illustrate the use made of particular objects and scenic structures and their subsequent mutability within the context of the performance text. Audience involvement and theories of the collective conscious help us to describe the nature of reception and to some extent give us an understanding of the initial interpretation of the literary text into a performance text by practitioners.

A semiotic deconstruction of theatrical experience, relies on relativity, and is not a simultaneous deconstruction process, that is simultaneous with the performance, it continues to exist as a method of taxonomy of effects and methods of presentation, rather than as a broader understanding of the total experience. Whilst semiotics is useful, a need to find a method by which we may describe scenographic techniques, beyond the practical, comes from a post-modern theoretical culture, which needs to describe all that human beings do in terms of a theoretical code. The psychology of human perception during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, was dominated by associationism. It was assumed that perception could be analysed in

terms of its component sensations, and that complex ideas were the result of associating together simpler ones.[Bruce:1987,p.97] The associative process is similar to a semiological practice. Each sign and index has a potent relevance to the whole, especially when described as part of character and as a distinct indicator for the performance text. In describing the effects of particular moments of scenography, the semiotic refers and names each aspect as an object. This cold objectification of an effect or moment, does not take into account the aspects of efficacious scenography which may be present, the nature of which I have described above.

However there are other problems with semiotics as a theory to analyse the comprehension process of theatre and of scenography in particular. In a universe governed by similarity and the endless progress of it, the interpreter may suspect that what one believed to be the meaning of a sign, is in fact, the sign for a further meaning and the topic of a given discourse, can be re-interpreted dependant on the semantic isotopy. Greimas defines 'isotopy', as "a complex of manifold semantic categories making possible the uniform reading of a story".[Greimas:1979,p.88] It is important for an audience to perceive a performance as a network of meanings that is, a text in its own right. This text can be discussed in terms that were used by the Prague Structuralists as mobility, dynamism or transformability, complemented by the mobility of dramatic functions that a single physical item fulfils. This mobility is reminiscent of the work of Neher and that which has become a part of the late twentieth century scenographic aesthetic. The duality of objects on stage can also be transferred to actors. Veltrusky gives an example of the duality of the actors role, "soldiers flanking the entrance to a house. They serve to point out that the house is a barrack and here the actor functions as part of the set".[Elam:1980,p.15] The complexity of the text created in terms of a performance text is useful from the Prague Structuralist deliberations.

142

Structuralism does admit that the underlying and often unconscious patterns in thought, behaviour, social organization, and literature is closely allied to the nature of conscious and unconscious thought processes. Semiotics developed out of this as a method of breaking down an object, subject or concept into units belonging to different co-operative systems.[Zich:1931], and Pierce distinguished between three classes of icon, image, diagram, and metaphor. For example by representing the Forest of Arden as cardboard cut out trees, he mixes the literally iconic with the blatantly schematic in contemporary theatre, however, "to say that a certain image is similar to something else does not eliminate the fact that similarity is also a matter of cultural convention".[Eco:1977,p.204] Consequently, identifying an absolute meaning of a particular image is impossible and these theories return once more to relativity and the relationship of the individual's conscious and unconscious reaction to what is presented. Jindrich Honzl identified scenic metonymy as the representation of a battlefield by a single tent, of a church by a Gothic spire, as Veltrusky had. [Honzl:1940, pp71-93] These techniques have become part of the scenographic repertoire, as methods, or conventions of representing meaning. These techniques of design could be termed a synecdoche figure, of putting part as a whole. However, even the most naturalistic sets only present a part of the dramatic world where the action takes place. So how accurate is the term synecdoche? Twentieth century stage design has latterly used this technique of synecdoche. However objects on stage, by their very nature, operate as a synecdoche, and so to describe scenographic components as a synecdoche (which is a linguistic term), can describe the mechanics, but it does not extricate the essence. This caprice for naming is futile if the thing in itself is beyond identification.

Martin Esslin suggested that, a texture of performance can be determined by lighting, as an icon and symbol determining day or night, climate and

time; "as a de*c*itic, directing and focusing the spectator's
attention".[Esslin:1987,p.77] However, the shades of uncertainty and
inexactness that spring from the presence of involuntary and
unintentional signs, highlights the very special situation of dramatic
performance, as an object for semiotics. Esslin describes the grammar
and syntax of the interrelation of different signs as most important but
this, once more, reduces the visual sensations to a linear narrative and
deconstructs these sensations in the same way as a literary text. These
terms continually refer to the image in terms of a linear narrative but
image is not read in a linear fashion in the theatre because generally the
form allows the viewer a plethora of signs and the exact direction to each
one is not achieved as in the nature of film, through editorial control.
Indeed, the ability to edit theatre is only possible through specific
lighting and high-lighting as Esslin suggested.

Whilst semiotics helps identify components it does not suggest an order
of reception. In fact semiotics can lead to a justification for the élite
theatre goer and critic. Esslin discusses the need for connoisseurship on
the part of the audience, in order to appreciate the sophistications of any
given performance. However, this assumes a knowledge, and by
implication excludes an audience and in this way performances become a
literary text for practitioners and theoreticians, instead of sophisticated
experiences full of meaning to be found by any audience. Esslin
suggests that the semiotic approach to a dramatic performance is a
worthwhile methodology which establishes how a production emerges as
a combination of all different sign-systems present.[Esslin:1987,p.51]
However, such a system placed upon the method of production is rooted
in the deconstruction of that production, and not in the performance.
Can such a methodology be relevant to a deconstruction of the theatre
performance, if it was not present for the construction? By identifying
the building blocks we imply the use of the same blocks to make the
performance and this does not take into account the creative process. As

I have suggested above, far more goes on in the creative process on an unconscious, subconscious level where often productions are peppered with involuntary signs. Ultimately, the image presented is infinitely open to the significant's own interpretation. A semiotic theoretical reading is therefore meaningless for a definition of theatrical poetics. This is illustrated further by Umberto Eco, who coined 'excess of wonder', as an excessive propensity to treat as significant elements, which might be simply fortuitous. (This is often the claim of most theatre practitioners, certainly some of the ones I have worked with and interviewed.) If the fortuitous is the best description for the process of creating wonder in theatre, then the best way to describe such creation is through aesthetics and not a naming system such as semiotics.

Whilst the authors must be allowed their invention the audience must also be allowed theirs. We have to respect the text, and not the author as a specific person with intentions, "the intention of the text is basically to produce a model reader able to make conjectures about it, the initiative of the model reader consists in figuring out a model author that is not the empirical one and that, in the end, coincides with the intention of the text."[Kaynar:1995] Are we looking for a model spectator for our model theatre ? A model theatre which is created by many authors and which is a beginning for interpretation, rather than the end, and therefore the answer? - away from "getting it right" and more close to "making it useful". If the basic premise for performance is that there is an intention of the text, as well as one of reader, and of the authors, translated this means that the juxtaposition of items on stage, though not necessarily possible as an explanation of the author's intention, can become a text intention; as an interpretation is made based on that which seems most tenable. It is not necessarily merely the interpretation of the spectator but what lies in a disruption of actual words/things/symbols that effect meaning in a probable way. "To understand the creative process is also to understand how certain textual solutions come into being by

serendipity, or as a result of unconscious mechanisms." This is the strongest basis for the creation for most art but the deconstruction of serendipity eludes us, as all of this occurs focused in the mind and not on the object. "Between the mysterious history of a textual production and the uncontrollable drift of its future readings, the text qua text still represents a compatible presence, the point to which we can stick."[Eco:1992, p.88] This is interesting for its closeness to Jung, and in particular, an explanation of Crytomnesia. The creative process which the author does not directly dictate, or interpret, comes later with the influence of the spectator. It is the audiences' perception of a textural production, a perception in 'their' mind and not on the object, the scenographic and performance text, which is important. Therefore, a theory of objectification like semiotics is an inappropriate methodology for the definition of the performance text, if we are trying to determine the poetic nature of that text and the reception of it by the audience.

If everything that is presented is a sign and metonymy is the dominant code on the stage, how might we differentiate those which are artificial or unintentional signs, from those which are natural or intended? This area of deconstruction illustrates the inexactitude of a semiology of image for theatre. As a meta linguistic discourse with homogenous categories it blithely labels the mise en scène, as Umberto Eco does in the Semiotics of Theatrical Performance, "The very moment the audience accepts the convention of the mise en scène, every element of that portion of the world that has been framed (put upon the platform) becomes significant".[Eco:1977,p.112] However, we may understand the conventions of the mise en scène, and thereby understand the performance text, but this is not the same as understanding the poetic of that performance text. The acceptance by the audience of the conventions of any performance allows the staging to work. This acceptance of the mise en scène is precisely why Bohéme and The Secret Garden were so effective; they exploited the significance making possibilities of the

audience's acceptance of the convention of a mise en scène. This does not relate to any semiotic theory. Once the risk of the convention has been accepted, the comprehension of signs within that frame enable the audience to engage in the comprehension process whilst limiting the potential of each sign to a relevance within the mise en scène but it does not elucidate the poetic of scenography. In this respect, semiotics offers another language to discuss convention. Semiotics also implies that theatrical performances are instances of everyday life, when it is social life that is designed as a continuous performance. This method of deconstruction presumes an analysis on the lines of sociological impact, and generally returns again and again to principles of armchair psychology and analysis. It is the interplay of interpretation and misunderstanding in reading the signification, which is the form of communication most common during the viewing of a theatre performance. Semiotics is not sensitive enough to be able to describe this interplay, as from misunderstanding may come a further idea, or interpretation, and similar reactions may occur in an audience's reception. Semiology does not account for this effect and phenomena.

However, through semiotics Appia's thesis of the audience involvement and importance has been given credence, as the properties of the theatre only become significant when an audience is watching. The mise en scéne only exists as a full system when received and reconstructed by a spectator for the production. It is this important point which semiotics has helped elucidate. Patrice Pavis suggests that, "The performance takes the position of constituting these materials according to the laws of the unconscious itself, placing the spectators, in the minority despite themselves, in a situation of psychological dispossession so that, when they leave the theatre, they do not know which pertinent element has escaped and what its meaning is: something has happened and I am the witness only after the fact."[Pavis:1991,p.87]

Elam further articulates these codes, as sub-codes, because theatre is parasitic on the cultural codes which operate in the real world, consequently, there is an interdependance on both, and from the written to the non-written elements of text. However, modern theory is not able to articulate this interdependence further than an objective labelling. This type of theoretical discussion of meaning originates in linguistics. The inappropriateness of this theory for scenography is highlighted in, 'The Dramatic Dialogue - oral or literary communication' by Erika Fischer-Lichte, which illustrates the problems of conflicting definitions. The questions raised by this paper are whether the scenographic language when described as parasemantic, or as a parapragmatic problem, is never more than a reinforcement of the verbal, or shapes and the 'turn-taking' system of communication. Fischer-Lichte recognises that within this discourse analysis, non-verbal signs can be predominant and exist without verbal signs, but her actual use of linguistic description is irrelevant to the study of the scenographic, if it only allows for the exchange of semantics.

When two people are on stage their mutual distance means the space establishes the possibility of associating a given meaning to their mutual distances, we therefore have a problem of proxemics and kinesics which cannot be satisfactorily described by a method which is derived from linguistics and literary texts. Literary theory for theatre has two basic tenets. The first describes the theatrical process in terms of the delegation of knowledge by an author to a scenic mechanism directed to the spectator. A second hypothesis would reverse the transaction of the contract. The spectator entrusts the scenic instance (and the author) with a spectacular power consisting in communicating to himself, the image of his own desire. In both cases, there remains the double bind of a logical interaction: one of the interlocutors has first-hand information enabling him to manipulate the order of communication. This blatant circularity is undoubtedly highly debatable because of the sharp

distinctions and mediations it brings about [Helbo:1987,p.64] and the circularity has Platonic parallels with the circularity of the Stuart Masques. However, the attempt to define a discourse through a linguistics of scenography, leads to paradox.

In 1973 Lyotard grasped the wider energetic devices involved in theatre performance. However, he suggested that the construction of the scenic references were as akin to the oxymoron: the reality of the spectacle and its verisimilitude. This antilogy simply presupposes conventions. Landowski more correctly referred to the nature of performance as, "an imaginary instance invested with a semiotic existence, but deprived of any reality outside the spectacular frame which generated it, which guarantees the reality of the spectacle".[Helbo:1987p.65] The context of the specific, guarantees any sense of spectacle and the poetic as a form that fits the sentiment. Again the spectacular frame refers to convention as the most important significant of meaning. Two discourse moments are involved , 1) the assertion of a convention of deceit, 2) the pseudo-assertion by the character/spectator within the possible world, determined in this way. The spectacular event is a flux of contents in constant mutation and the critic can only pinpoint a few moments of these exchanges: "i) opening, ii) expectation, iii) recognition and presumably those conventions s/he recognises". [Helbo:1987,p.66] It is this flux of the spectacular event which defies theorising.

The spatial arrangement on stage has implications for the timing of the performance and thus, effects the basic rhythmic structure of the performance. The directing and organising of stage space may deliberately vary the recipients time and or energy consumption, their 'spectatorial energy'. If it occurs within the theatre framework, it produces a stronger coherence potentiality. [Tindemanns] Unusual segment constellations, that is juxtapositions, bring about an unusual mobilisation of focal energy and depending on this focus the same

performance may possess very different structures and consequently, different meanings. The obvious function of the set and decor is an informational and iconic one; it pictures the environment, against which the action is set. The extent to which this is a 3D verisimilitude varies from *trompe l'oeil* to total abstraction, but throughout aspects of scenography perform a significant part of the comprehension process. The dynamics and structure of performance can be altered and adjusted through scenographic elements, for example the speed by which scenic components move and become orchestrated perhaps with music, and choreographed with performers, as in Boheme, Secret Garden and Les Miserables. In Boheme, the scene is the artist's studio. It had long windows which the last light of day was fading from. It felt cold. The scene came to an end and people brought on tables and chairs. the stage filled with street life and the light that was fading became a warm strong glow, from what had now become the Café Momus, the interior that was, is now a street with snow falling. The Christmas Eve celebrations were transformed into the Barrière d'Enfers, the tollgate, in much the same way as the Café Momus had arrived. The company wandered off into the darkness of the street outside Café Momus and as they disappeared into the darkness the overhead lights became stronger and revealed the emptiness of the stage. The closed windows that had been Café Momus were now more muted in brightness. The easel that had become the table was now propped against the wall and part of the street debris. The scene had the feel of after the party, about 3 a.m. In The Secret Garden, Mary's discovery of the garden was revealed in a similar way. She walked towards the locked door, looked around and seeing she was alone took the old key from her pocket and placed it in the lock. The door opened and another world was unlocked for her, a place of mystery, wonder and magic. She went inside and as she did the scenery moved and turned. It carried the audience into this special place, by turning into something else; something other than it was.

Esslin places scenographic elements in the category of signs and symbols, yet in his listing for the literary text, style, structure and rhythm are alluded to, all of which, as I have illustrated above, directly impact on the performance and are often determined and led by the scenographic elements of a theatre performance. They are textural and part of the performance text, not verbal.[Esslin:1987] The sender and receiver need not be totally knowledgeable about the language/codes used in order to communicate. It does not matter if the communication cannot be directly understood or if it is re-interpreted. As long as a reasonable area of common knowledge is present and that the receiver has time during performance to become familiar with the context, so signs become clearer as the performance continues. Again, this is the scenographic frame, the convention of the performance text. All scenographic elements, through semiotics are seen as metonymic accessories but they also work within the performance, as their presence becomes clearer and as the play progresses. The ultimate refutation of semiotics as the final method of deconstruction for theatre, is the truism that theatrical performance does not fit into structured ideas of semiology, which imply that units are not intuitively recognised by spectator and performer.[Hall:1969] It is the intuitive nature of much of modern scenography which defies theoretical clarity, as much of it is based on perception.

However, the analysis of perception into discrete sensations, overlooks important aspects of form and structure. The artist M.C. Escher exploited the principle of perceptual reversibility when he produced etchings in which there is figure and foreground ambiguity.[4] Theatrical scenes exploit the ambiguity of object, nuance and image, particularly in work which may be described as 'poor theatre'. This object ambiguity and perceptual reversibility is an important part of twentieth century theatre practice, for example in the work of Cheek by Jowl. The rise of a minimalist approach to scenography has led directly to the multiplicity

of use for objects within scenes, with the resultant discrete scenographic presentations resonating with other meanings. This is also illustrated by the work of Foco Novo whose director Roland Rees had a preference for a raw look. "It is conceptual in framework and realistic of selected detail. It is a poetic approach". [Rees:1992] The company's designers Adrian Vaux, Tanya McCallin, Ariane Gastambide and Sheelagh Killain, all had opinions about how they should work in this environment. McCallin, "the space you have to fill is often bigger than the idea actually is". [Rees:1992] This transformation of objects was referred to earlier in the work of Welfare State. Its heritage comes from the theatre of Brecht.

The importance of perception in the reading of scenographic information is therefore vital and gestalt theory suggests that the essence of the perception of any event, or object, cannot be predicted accurately from the knowledge of the perception of the elementary parts of the event or object. Putting pieces together and establishing causal connections, and filling in missing information, are therefore two necessary tasks in theatre comprehension that depend on the generation of inferences. In order to produce appropriate elaborations for information retrieval from the theatrical activities shown, it is necessary to determine what the theatre maker has been interested in. Again, the deconstruction has to be the reverse of the construction of the work of art. This can be difficult, and often impossible, if one has no reference point. When one encounters a new situation, or makes a substantial change in ones view of the problem, one selects from memory a structure called a frame. This reference to M. Minsky or E. Goffman's frame theory can be productive and influential for the analysis of theatre performance comprehension processes. The focus and coherence of a theatrical production become very important factors for the spectators deconstruction of the events. The focus being the concept to which all other concepts are associated; knowing what the focus is for a production gives the spectator another

152

DNA - 'DNA'. I am using this as a metaphor for the nature of scenographic construction.

frame of reference and narrows the number of possible meanings available to the spectator. The focus is a concept through which the package of the production may be viewed and the focus indicates the co-referents. But aren't these simply theatrical conventions by another name? In this context signs are instruments of mediation, and coherence is understood as an action which one can and has to direct oneself as the spectator. Theatre does not occur to somebody, "somebody makes theatre occur to himself".[Goffman:1975] Goffman here reiterates Appia and Esslin in the importance of the spectator. This is simply another description of using and understanding theatrical conventions. This theory recognises the importance of the spectator's contribution to the event but can no more describe the essence of the event than semiotics or linguistics. The value of the spectator to performance events is reinforced by the theory of perception in the mind, as opposed to the way in which we normally describe the plane on which we see. It is within the mind of the spectator that theatre occurs and that is therefore where the work is focused. If that has already been done by the exterior realizations of the director and designer, then the work which the spectator undertakes is already covered with coherent markers for comprehension, which signpost the work through the vision of the director and designer's minds. The focus could be called a cybernetic circuit. However, discussing the circuitry does not produce a clear understanding of the essence of performance and its relation to the scenographic.

The continuity relied upon by gestalt theory and the inter-relation of icons with respect to the reading of the image in semiotic definition, and the linkage of psychoanalysis to perceived knowledge and collective responses to society, suggest that in terms of a scenographic deconstruction *all* of these theories rely on the systematic use of features in order to read the whole. In this respect these features and references form a 'DNA' of scenography. The genotype and phenotype of the cell

can be altered by the deoxyribonucleic acid, DNA. The genotype refers to the entire genetic constitution of the individual and in theatrical terms can be related to convention. The phenotype is the entire physical and biochemical and physiological makeup of an individual as determined both genetically and environmentally. In addition it refers to any one or group of such traits, in this sense the mass of referents and co-referents.

Bibliography

Roland Barthes, 1977, <u>Image Music Text</u>, essays selected by Roland Barthes, translated by Stephen Heath, Fontana, London.

Roland Barthes, 1970, <u>S/Z</u>, Seuil, Paris cited in <u>Interpretation and Over-interpretation</u>

John Beattie and John Middleton, 1969, <u>Spirit Mediumship and Society in Africa</u>, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

Daphne Ben Chaim,1984, <u>Distance in the Theatre: The Aesthetics of Audience Response</u>, Ann Arbor, UMI Research Press.

Vicki Bruce and Patrick R. Green,1987, <u>Visual Perception Physiology, Psychology and Ecology</u>, Lawrence Eribaum Associates Ltd.

Robert Buckhout, 1973, 'Psychology of Perceptions' in <u>Psychology:the science of mental life</u>, George A. Miller, 2nd edition, Prentice Hall.

Jonathan Culler,1992, 'In defence of overinterpretation', in <u>Interpretation and Over-interpretation</u>, eds., Stefan Collini, Umberto Eco, Cambridge University Press.

Umberto Eco, 1977, 'Semiotics of Theatrical Performance', <u>The Drama Review</u>: Theatre and Social Action Issue, T73, March Volume 21, No.1.

Umberto Eco, 1977, <u>A Theory of Semiotics</u>, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, Macmillan, London.

Umberto Eco, 1992, 'Between Author and Text', in <u>Interpretation and Over-interpretation</u>, eds., Stefan Collini, Umberto Eco, Cambridge University Press.

Umberto Eco, 1992, 'Hyprereal', in <u>Interpretation and Over-interpretation</u>, eds., Stefan Collini, Umberto Eco, Cambridge University Press.

Kier Elam, 1980, <u>The Semiotics of Drama and Theatre,</u>

Martin Esslin, 1987, 'Visuals and Design', in <u>The Field of Drama: how the signs of drama create meaning on stage and screen,</u> Methuen, London.

Peter G.F. Eversmann, 1980, 'Basic Problems in Reception Studies: Some Methodological Remarks', in Elam.

A.J.Greimas, 1979, <u>Du Sens,</u>Seuil, Paris, cited in <u>Interpretation and Over-interpretation</u>

Jurgen Habermas, 1985, 'Neoconservative Culture Criticism in the United States and West Germany: An Intellectual Movement in two Political Cultures', in <u>Habermas and Modernity,</u> Richard J. Berstein, Cambridge Polity.

Andre Helbo,1987, <u>Theory of Performing Arts,</u> Amsterdam Philadelphia:Benjamins Series:Critical Theory,V.5

Johansson, 1973, in Bruce, 1987.

Edward T. Hall, 1969, <u>The Hidden Dimension: man's use of space in public and private,</u> Bodley Head, London.

Jindrich Honzl, 1940, 'Dynamics of the Sign in the Theater', <u>Semiotics of Art</u> Ladislav Matejka and Irwin R.Titunik, pp74-93.

C.G.Jung, 1966, 'Two essays on Analytical Psychology', <u>Collected Works</u>, Volume 7, 2nd edition, revised and augmented, translated R.F.C. Hull,ed. Sir Herbert Reed, London:Routledge & Kegan Paul

C.G.Jung, 1968, 'The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious', <u>Collected Works</u>, Volume 9, translated R.F.C. Hull,ed. Sir Herbert Reed, London:Routledge & Kegan Paul

Gad Kaynar, 1995, 'The Implied Spectator', Montreal IFTR Conference, paper given to the Performance Analysis Working Group.

Tadeusz Kowzan, 1968, 'The Sign in the Theatre', <u>Diogines,</u> 61,pp52-80.

Edmund Leach, 1976, Culture and Communication: an introduction to the use of structuralist analysis in social anthropology, Cambridge University Press.

Patrice Pavis, 1991, Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture, translated by Loren Kruger, Routledge, London.

J.E.Pinchen, 1988, The Audience as Critic:A study of audience responses to Popular Theatre, Phd. Thesis, Loughborough University.

George Pickering, 1974, The Creative Malady, Allen and Unwin, London.

Roland Rees, 1992, Fringe First:Pioneers of Fringe Theatre on record, Oberon Books, London.

Jonathan Roban, 1981, 'Icon or Symbol :the writer and the medium', in Radio Drama, ed. Peter Lewis, Longman, London.

Richard Rorty, 1992, 'The Pragmatists Progress', Chapter 4, in Interpretation and Over-interpretation, ed. Stefan Collini and Umberto Eco, Cambridge University Press.

Sackville-West, 1982, 'The Rescue', the preface, in Radio Drama, by Ian Rodger, Macmillan, London.

Richard Schechner, 1978, 'Anthropological Analysis', The Drama Review, Volume 22, No.3.

Carlos Tindemans, 1984, 'Coherence Focality. A Contribution to the Analysability of Theatre Discourse' in in Semiotics of Drama and Theatre, Editors, Herta Schmid and Aloysius Van Kesteren, Linguistic and Literary Studies in Eastern Europe,Vol. 10, John Benjamin, Amsterdam and Philadelphia.

Otakar Zich, 1931, The Esthetics of Dramatic Art, Prague Melantrich.

[1]Questionnaire information on the effect of scenography on the audience.
[2] See also 'Enactment as Creative Process', Linda Huntingdon, in C.G.Jung and the Humanities:toward a hermeneutics of culture, ed. Karin Barnaby and Pellegrino D'Acierno, Routledge, London, 1990.
[3]See also, Peter Brook, 1993, There are no secrets: thoughts on acting

and theatre, Methuen, London; Peter Brook, 'Psychotherapy recesses of the dark mind' Platform Papers, National Theatre; Michael Billington, 9th October 1993, 'No such thing as the Avant-Garde', The Guardian. [4]For example, Circle Limit IV, M.C. Escher.

The DNA of Scenography

In the light of the unnsatisfactory nature of many modern theories of theatre practice, the term 'DNA of scenography' most clearly suggests the nature of the scenographic process of production and its reception by the audience. It enables us to understand the non-linear nature of the reception of meaning through the performance text and the potential for coherence focality to have been achieved through serendipity because the DNA of scenography recognises the 'particular' in the language of significance to that performance text, rather than the general in terms of theatre productions. The evaluation of scenography and its value and use in the production of theatre requires us to consider its prominence as a conveyor of meaning. The deconstruction of scenography allows us to *read* its prominence in the whole theatre piece, and this *reading* has developed most particularly in the late twentieth century. "The artist is in search of his truth and this quest forms an order in itself, a message that can be read, in spite of the variations in its content, over all the work or, at least, whose readability feeds on a sort of totality of the artist".[Barthes:1977] The totality of the single artist who works in theatre is thus complicated in theatre practice by the number of artists involved. This idea of the totality of the work leads us to a perception of the theatre event as an echo of its creation, as outlined in the previous chapter. However, the logic of the text is not comprehensive but metonymic; the activity of associations and appositions which the audience participates in coincides with a liberation of symbolic energy. The liberation of this symbolic energy is a new process for theatre practitioners and audience, and has developed out of particular movements both in Fine Art and literature. The work of a theatre performance in the best cases, is moderately symbolic. However as Barthes suggested, the "Text is radically symbolic".
[Barthes:1977,p.158-9] A work conceived, perceived and received in its integrally symbolic nature, is a text. The text has a multiplicity of

meaning and this is most often irreducible, due to the complex nature of audience reception. The text does not answer to a single interpretation but to an explosion of meaning. This does not depend on ambiguity but on what might be called the stereographic plurality of its weave of signifiers, [Barthes:1977] and the combination of codes for each text is unique - a DNA therefore of each scenographic moment.

Naturally the defining of the theatre production must reflect the nature of each type of performance, for example devised theatre work involves 'strips of behaviour' which can be re-ordered and the link between them can be emphasized during live presentation. The logic of performance is formed through the improvisation and juxtaposition of these individual strips of features. The inter-action of features within this kind of work can be extremely intricate and what is formed is often abstract or surreal, in terms of its reality or materialism. The re-ordering of the strip, is a process which forms a new process of performance. These strips can be rearranged and reconstructed, and they are independent of the causal systems (psychological, social, technological) that brought them into existence: they achieve a life of their own. This is articulated by Schechner, "The original truth of motivation of the behaviour was made, found, developed, maybe known, or covered over and elaborated by myth. Originating in a process of rehearsal to make a new process, a performance, the strips of behaviour are not themselves process, but things, items, material". [Schechner:1978, pp23-32] This is a useful way of defining the nature of scenography in the late twentieth century, where the environment created for the performance have features which are abstract but interact with the live presentation.

The strips of information are particular to the performance and inform the audience's reception of the whole event. The phenomenologist seeks the heart of the experience itself; the immediate and direct consciousness of man in the face of the world: the foundation or structures of

consciousness and the foundation or structuring of the world on the basis of that consciousness. The experience must therefore be *had* in order to be described. The establishing of causal connections and the *filling in* of missing information, are necessary tasks for the theatre comprehension process and these depend on the generation of inferences. The strips, if constructed within a specific frame will have those inferences built in, on an almost subliminal level, consequently, the work is freer and more fluid in its construction.[1] The scenography has a DNA of performance, which could be described as the poetic of performance, the universal truth which has been created and is presented for the audience to re-assemble.

Scenography forces the spectator to act and react, it involves the audience even in the most Naturalistic of settings, and by inference, asks them to determine what lies beyond the doors we see onto the stage. Therefore as the work becomes more abstracted and symbolic so the participation on the part of the audience must increase. As Brecht suggested, "The audience is to be nudged into a critical and inquiring attitude by a continual emphasis on the fictional status of the theatrical enterprise... an active productive state is to replace its passive consumer mood." [Wright:1989,p.27] In addition scenography as an infrastructure of spaces, lays the pattern of movement for the actor. The decisions which the scenographer makes have direct bearing on their movement and presentation: whether there are strong diagonal positions; whether the actor can use levels of the set; whether they can be effectively seen in profile. Spatial configurations have important implications for the timing of the performance, and a basic dimension of awareness of the perception of meaning. As for the actor, the principle of the primacy of their position, and action, adds another layer of sensation. Action can create images, and circumscribe the space. The possible symbolic nature of the whole as determined by mood and meaning may be represented as part of a colour scheme. The objects presented obey the principle of the

primacy of action. If scenography is the phenomenon, a description of this can result in an analysis of structures such as temporality and spatiality, inherent in the total experience, such an analysis was carried out by Carlos Tindemans. "When people put fragments of information together, the appropriateness of a result often depends on the ability to focus attention toward 'one' aspect of the information. Different elaborations result from different shifts in focus."[2] The weave of signifiers, the DNA is related to the convention which is presented and accepted by the audience. The phenomenologists construct of time is complete totality, whose sub-structures, past, present and future form distinct but interrelated units. Human beings have a language constructed in terms of past, present and future, and we use this language to describe our lives and the images that are presented to us. Those images have a language of their own. Human being's consciousness stands out from themselves in terms of ekstatic (ek-stasis), from oneself. The consciousness must therefore, be used for some reason which we have not yet discovered. However in terms of perception it provides us with the sense that we have the ability to be conscious of ourselves, and can be aware of the effects upon us and of our own effectiveness. So in terms of logic and in endeavouring to reach a discovery, our consciousness will have already informed the experiment, in this case the performance. The results of the experiment are not a truth but rather they are a philosophical discussion. As such they form a theory of perception, not an absolute. If we are so informed by our own consciousness the phenomenon of theatre will be affected by our ekstasis, and drawing conclusions about the effects of scenographic elements on an audience becomes interrelated with individual's beliefs.

Therefore, the theatrical elements involved have a duality and are disparate. While a single cohesive structure they are also a structure whose meaning derives from the interrelationship of its units, the DNA, a temporal cohesion and temporal dispension, existing as a multiple

161

unity and unified multiplicity. Temporality exists because human consciousness exists, and temporality is inherent in the structure of human consciousness. Night follows day as an objective temporal succession, only because consciousness unifies the world with a structure of things related by appearances, which are external to one another. So a dramatic art is experienced by all involved and pre-reflective awareness is intrinsic in that experience. The technical movement within a piece is diasparatic, the moment being all of one piece. A pre-reflective awareness of space is also intrinsic to any lived experience of consciousness. In Gestalt theory the organisation of image and parts as a whole unit involves a deconstruction philosophy which mean the parts add up to something more than the whole, which I have called the poetic. This aspect of Gestalt theory is useful in providing a suggestion of the place of the DNA of scenography in relation to the whole performance and how we use the information given in that DNA based on our understanding of reality.

However, Quantum Electro-Dynamics posits ideas of reality as poor guidelines for judgement and as Williams' suggested in his lecture on realism, such judgements are always relative. Instead, quantum electro-dynamics suggests we must ask, "does the representation fit with the pattern of my experience ?" In this respect, a spectator will only learn more by spectating more and the experience of this will inform the spectator, subsequently, they will fit a pattern of experiences, which will make further relevance to their life. The dangers of this were highlighted earlier, the creation of an élite.[De Marinis] In this understanding of our perception of the world, the way technology is used in our daily lives must translate to the theatrical world, as we as spectators expect it. We can often be told things about our lives which we take to be true without any empirical evidence. This information goes on to inform our experience. In the area of scenography, a designer can only use their own experience to understand the statements of others, and their experience

can only be analogous to those of others. However, they must also discover in what respect their experience is typical or unique. This is a development of self awareness and the most useful skill for the scenographer is the ability to invent or discriminate between images and analogies from our experience. This solipsist view is the certain self-reliance of the artist scenographer. Even if we decide that electro-magnetic waves are the explanation for consciousness, it does not eliminate the fact that we are influenced externally and that is why reactions, no matter how rationally explained come about, and certain reactions, to emotion, colour, atmosphere and shape, seem to have universal resonance. Therefore, by reading symbolism in theatre performance and the dramatic text, and taking a view of the importance of a symbolic reading, we have created a method of reading and making art. However the limitations of this reading are that we can never know whether this is what the artists meant and it is this unreliability of interpretation which makes the reception process interesting.

Sarah Checkland described Van Eyck as a "fusspot", with reference to his painting, <u>Arnolfini and his Wife.</u> [Checkland:1995] Through the use of X-ray equipment it has been discovered that Van Eyck repainted his works a number of times; illustrating that the meaning of the objects shown in the paintings were in fact not proscribed by a symbolic message which Van Eyck wished to communicate to the viewer of his work, as was defined by Panofsky. Instead the x-rays showed that Van Eyck had removed and changed the position of objects in this painting a number of times before he finished the painting. The formulaic deconstruction is used by theorists of modern fine art and theatre performance, to formulaically determine the creation of an art which may then be read in a linear narrative fashion. The difficulty of this lies in an intended meaning through a symbolic value system of objects. Here again, the difficulty of serendipity arises. Whilst symbolism may be used in some Renaissance paintings, it is not used in all of them, and

163

when viewed by a spectator, how does a theatre audience know when to adopt a deconstructive pattern that is on the line of a theoretician like Panofsky, and when to view the work as a portrait: or in the case of the theatre, as an experience in its own right, a slice of life which contains the flux of human activity? Therefore, the theatre performance as a spectacle of human endeavour, which is to be celebrated in its own terms and not deconstructed for its theoretical background does not accept the value of the original and particular DNA of scenography.

The idea of a post-modern condition which results in absolute knowledge, of truth and intention in art, is problematical, for at what point can we say that the writings on symbolism and the reading of signs throughout life, add any greater revelation to the ideas and representations of humanity? Van Eyck's work was not pre-planned nor should the reading be proscribed by theory, before it can be consumed by a spectator. The consumed cannot be judged nor valued by theoretical standards but must exist in its own right, as either a chronology of the world at that time or a representation of the artist's fantasy. However, the audience and viewer may take from it what they will.

If we transfer this theoretical practice to theatre, we see it is of little use at all in determining the poetic or essence of the dramatic text. The theories are useful for the transference of ideas. A theory of acting is only a way that one person may choose to solve problems. A technique of painting is a useful transference of craft. A technique of acting is a useful transference of skill. A style of acting is particular to the performer. The replication of style is a conscious effort towards uniformity and this kind of uniformity allows a mutability of product. It is the replication of style, that is the extraction of the DNA of scenography without reference to the poetic, or the practice of gestalt, which endangers the very DNA which is mined beyond recognition. Where the particular DNA which is found to be successful is trotted out

again and again. This most usefully describes the economic environment which is such that, what is required for theatre performance is a mutable scenography which provides a transferable theatre product. The replication of a scenographic style and the use of an extracted DNA of scenography can be seen at work in late twentieth century theatre, in particular the large musicals of the West End. However, the replication of style to effect, in this instance capital success, is not a poetic, as by its very mutability it defies the specificity of DNA, a singular poetry and the uniqueness of a poem.

Ultimately, these theories of performance, have little impact on the position of the spectator and perhaps less on the role of the performer. They are of academic and statistical interest as theoretical standpoints of philosophy but as Freud illuminated Oedipus, he also closed a door on it for us. To refute his interpretation, is to find a new and more interesting interpretation. The subject matter of theory may as easily be literature, physics or theatre - the theory remains the same whether Quantum Mechanics or Semiotics. The text for the theory becomes the subject and the subject becomes the object of attention. If the theory when foregrounded before the subject becomes most important then the artist's intention (relevant or not) is diminished to that of the theoretician. We are no further enlightened towards the work of the artist - but we do know where the theoretician is coming from. The artist's practice is not affected by the theoretician, only when the theory takes precedence and artists try to plan their work according to it. In recent years the theatre's performance of a theory leans towards this direction and so becomes less relevant to the human mind as it falls towards a proscriptive theory and away from an instinctive presentation of the flux of creativity, which relies on serendipity, and the singularly poetic.

Conventions such as the literal use of a painter's style, as used for Jonathan Miller's production of Rigoletto[3], diminish the use of

165

scenography as particular. In this production Edward Hopper's cafe painting formed the final tableau, and the style of the production was designed in 'his' colours and 'his' use of light, and the costuming of the characters for the opera, were as for his painting. The visual production was therefore fashioned as that painting. This kind of referencing may in fact appeal to an élite who can enjoy spotting the references and concepts, allowing them to applaud the mise en scéne and so deconstruct the process of production through the recognition of other art. However, the stage space and time parameters can only be completed by a directorial understanding of the use of the set and the context. Such a presentation disrupts the process for the audience and turns the experience into something else. The audience becomes interested in spotting the artistic works, and not the phenomenon of the dramatic text. The mixture of styles and periods for aesthetic effect, is a feature of postmodern production which latterly has increased in the commercial sector, for the novelty of presenting an inanimate picture as animated theatre.[4] Here the scenographic is a flat canvas. The contribution of scenography is not as part of the DNA of performance but is a novelty trick of packaging.

The recollections of an audience after having viewed a piece of performance are mainly within a range of ideas of concordant and discordant relations between visual signs and the performance text. Their lack of relation disturbs the audience's preferential aesthetical behaviour, which mainly rests on the normative demands to remain accurate to reality; but the non-mimetic aesthetics sharpen up the audience's curiosity, precisely due to this leaving of reality. This is a decisive factor explaining the impact of the scenography on any performance especially in the late twentieth century. A living, ephemeral, and therefore rebellious art, theatre has the ability to send us back to a physical, fragile, loaded with infinite contradiction, materialism. Within scenographic presentations and their short life span,

166

it is the material which is important to the spectator, because it fixes the world presented in a reality. The size and extent of the scenographic elements is of little value, what is important is that the solid mass created bears relevance, or is appropriate for the world we explore; whether this be a seemingly bare stage or numerous hydraulic bridges. The consonance of the relevance will place it in the orbit of the poetic.

However, the meaning which forms a poetic comes from the whole piece and cannot be determined by fixing the diaspora of meaning, which is generated through the theoretical practices of late twentieth century theatre theory. All of the above theories are informed by our consciousness and therefore form part of a philosophical discussion of each theatre product. The conjunction of the present and the past that it is intended to question, and make us analyse how we make sense of our culture, is confused. As the scenographic DNA is poetic only when it is original and performance specific. The repetition of components no longer makes the scenographic presentation akin to DNA. The Postmodern has been commercialized and its aesthetic has been turned into the fashionable. The Postmodernist does not "emit any clear signals" and does not try to; it tries to make us question and it does not offer answers. "The contradictions of Postmodernism in relation to the poetic of theatre performance suggests that a postmodern style cannot contain a poetic because of the anti-totalizing nature of postmodernism". [Habermas:1985, pp78-94] It is the pastiche and cliché of Postmodernism which makes the poetic of theatre performance less possible. The line of poetry can be interpreted and re-interpreted but only in context with the homogeneous whole of the event, and therefore interpretation occurs after the event and not during. It occurs once information has been ingested, as it is from this point that the dramatic performance can be interpreted and understood, with the profound resonances of the visual, ringing true with that of the literary. As a

consequence, the scenographic has its particular DNA and as such it is an irreducible concept from the specific theatre performance.

Bibliography

Roland Barthes, 1977, Image Music Text, essays selected by Roland Barthes, translated by Stephen Heath, Fontana, London.

Sarah Jane Checkland, 1995, The Guardian, 13th February.

Jurgen Habermas, 1985, 'Neoconservative Culture Criticism in the United States and West Germany: An Intellectual Movement in two Political Cultures', in Habermas and Modernity, Richard J. Berstein, Cambridge Polity.

Richard Schechner, 1978, 'Anthropological Analysis', The Drama review, Volume 22, No.3.

Carlos Tindemans, 1984, 'Coherence Focality. A Contribution to the Analysability of Theatre Discourse' in in Semiotics of Drama and Theatre, Editors, Herta Schmid and Aloysius Van Kesteren, Linguistic and Literary Studies in Eastern Europe,Vol. 10, John Benjamin, Amsterdam and Philadelphia.

Elizabeth Wright, 1989, Postmodern Brecht, Routledge.

[1]Strips of behaviour as discussed by Ford Coppieters.
Experiments which I have been involved with include Angel on a Bridge and A Happy Medium. These were devised pieces produced at The Drill Hall and RADA respectively. Both used techniques of workshop and improvisation around the ideas of death and reincarnation, and both productions, whilst containing a narrative structure, played with the meaning and sense that the audience might make of the significant factors given through the dramatic text. In A Happy Medium the scenography of a supposed hotel room dissolved into an open stage space, where projectors transformed the environment into a wilderness of elements, fire, water, earth. The sense of where we had been before this moment, as in, was it an hotel at all ? or , was it a post-death experience?, and what do we imagine such a moment to be like?, were questions open to as much or as little investigation as any audience member wished to involve themselves with.
[2] Tindemans' sense of coherence focality is more a generic equivalent

168

than my approach to the scenographic.
[3]ENO 1990.
[4]Sunday in the Park with George, Stephen Sondheim, RNT.

The Commodification of Theory

The new aesthetic of the late twentieth century theatre uses features from Brecht's theories of theatre presentation but without an underlying political purpose which so many of the plays from the 'Brecht Collective' contained. In theorising performance, Roland Barthes referred extensively to Brecht's work. In these two individuals we therefore have a basis of theatre practice and that practice theorised. Both are useful to a discussion of scenography and its role in performance, and Brecht's work can be seen fetishised in UK theatre. In the previous chapter I proved that the nature of scenography as an irreducible concept, suggests a theoretical discourse for scenography is impossible. In this chapter I will look at the difficulty of using language to describe aesthetic moments and how the aesthetics of theatrical presentation have lead to the commercialisation of Brechtian philosophy, which has ultimately led to the commodification of theatre scenography. As discussed earlier, the extraction of reified scenographic DNA is a negative attribute of late twentieth century theatre but as Barthes suggests in <u>Image Music Text</u>, it is a phenomenon that crosses most art forms in this postmodern period of mass production.

As I have discussed in the previous chapter, theories which may be applied to the scenographic, ignore the DNA of scenography and do not offer an explanation of the efficacy of scenography. In addition they do not take into account the economic context of scenography and its use in the packaging of the theatre product. The recognition of the importance of audience involvement and their contribution to a sense of the poetic and the essence of a piece of literature, music, or theatre and the commercialisation of art, has been most successfully and clearly discussed by Roland Barthes. The application of Barthes to the discussion of the irreducible nature, the essence of scenography and its

efficacy, leads us to the legacy of some of his ideas, which reside in the theory and practice of Brecht. Barthes and Brecht unite the current theatre practice with the commercialisation of the scenographic aesthetic and this most clearly illustrates the reification of scenography.

In trying to make sense of the individual's response to the designed nature of the theatre event we fall foul of questions of taste, of both convention and presentation, and therefore, the aesthetic of the event. A theory of aesthetics for theatre scenography immediately highlights the changes in the nature of design for theatre productions which have occurred in recent years. Firstly, aesthetics is pertinent as it suggests that within the designed forms for theatre there can be beauty, and that beauty can be separated from the rest of the art form, theatre. That the designed forms can be broken down from the umbrella title of scenography, further highlights the potential separateness of all aspects of design, involved in theatre production. This fragmentation would further suggest that as an audience we are able to distinguish the separate features of the scenography and appreciate their success or failure in their own right, recognising a separate scenographic text from that of the literary text and the performance text. Secondly, the differentiation of the designed aspects of the scenographic from the theatre event involve a broader philosophy of taste. A devotion to artistic beauty for theatre productions could also be used to describe the prominence of the scenographic and the pursuance of high production values, especially if this devotion to beauty is compared to a more anarchistic response to the presentation of theatre within a non-bourgeois aesthetic. However, the theatre productions of the late twentieth century do not contain anarchic properties and the conventions of production has become the high production values which have formed a new aesthetic. For example, in the way in which areas of design have been professionalized and as certain levels of production values have become accepted as standard practice.

The theatricalization of theatre has also become a part of the late twentieth century scenographic aesthetic. The distancing of the audience from an emotional empathy with the event is a dominant practice, however, the standardisation of this as a production value suggests that the desired impact is less likely. As the audience have absorbed the distancing affect of presentation, so the practitioners have become distanced from the product, and aspects of philosophical aesthetics which relies on the distance of the author from the object of creation becomes a pertinent definition of the creators relationship to the art object. The position of objectivity alludes to the theories which Brecht felt were most appropriate for audience reception. Paradoxically theatre workers are also audience and specialists. Their objectification of the theatre event is a necessary attitude to viewing in order for them to be able to contribute to the scenographic DNA.

The use of Brecht's theory of *verfremdungseffect* which is not linked to a theory nor used as a political tool in the late twentieth century theatre, has become a part of a new aesthetic. It is not linked to the reawakening of the audience to the possibilities of political change, rather it is simply appropriated for use in the creation of the image, the scenographic. The dangers of this were pointed out by Brecht in A Short Organum, "a production which is only an aesthetic success, can be a disaster when considered in other ways."[Burgess 1987, p.77] As such the ideology of Brecht and his mode of production have given way to the ideology of the market, which aesthetic success in the late twentieth century rewards.

The objective distance of the theatre practitioners from the theatre production, has resulted in a new perception of what constitutes the text for theatre production. This can be explained as the textual identity of a work, the literary text, which is a clear description of what that text is trying to achieve. Thus, identifying the text and understanding the point

172

of view of its creation becomes more complicated when the creators of the text, are many, and not a single author. In addition the identification of the 'authors' intention is further blurred by New Criticism's doctrine of the intentional fallacy. [Beardsley:1973, p.16] This theory attempts to explain what I have already described as serendipity in the process of scenographic production. The collaborative nature of the creation of the scenographic would also suggest that post structuralism's doctrine of the death of the author is pertinent to scenography and the way it is made. [Barthes:1977] This is in contrast to post structural aesthetics, which discusses the work (the production) as clear, and the act of creating meaning through reading and interpreting it, as the more fluid activity. This latter definition of the text takes us away from reified meanings and poetics to a more playful celebration of the text. For late twentieth century theatre production this would certainly describe some of the more acclaimed work which has involved itself in the celebration of the theatricality of theatre, and which in turn has expressed its emotional efficacy more overtly. For example Tectonic Plates by Robert Lepage. In conversation with Richard Eyre he discussed how he came up with such interesting and complex images. "There was an image in the second half when you were in Pére Lachaise cemetery and a statue came to life. The shroud was taken off this statue and laid into the pool, and as it was laid there, a huge image of George Sand appeared on it. Of course it was just a simple carousel projector from above with a small slide. It was exquisitely beautiful because it was there on the water but only realsied because the sheet was there. Now, I want to know how do you arrive at that?...." Robert Lepage replied, "I think there's an important word that has lost its sense in the theatre, and that's the word 'playing'. It's become a profession, a very serious word, but the concept of playing has disappeared from the staging of shows. The only way you can attain these ideas is if you play...I think theatre is a place of form. You explore mediums until one day you express something very profound that has some echo in the audience."[RNT:1992,p.23-32]

More recently he has produced and performed <u>Elsinore</u>. One review described Lepage's work as being appropriate for the "last years of the 20th century, the generation thrives on a Kaleidoscope of random media images...with the help of an ingenious band of set, costume and lighting designers....Lepage likes to point out that audiences of today 'are trained by rock concerts, commercials, films and TV. Some say that's not theater. I say it can be.'" [Gavin Scott:1996] This kind of performance is a long way from the Brechtian practice of showing the technology of the theatre as a reminder of where we are, however this was originally a practice with specific meaning, now it is a practice which is hardly noticed as significant. This celebration and playfulness in relation to theatricality is linked in Barthes to a criticism of the pleasure of the text, rather than its truth. Potentially this disruption of the search for the poetic essence or truth in a piece of performance has been heralded by the lack of single vision which goes into the making of a piece of theatre. The death of the author/director and the prominence of the scenographic team have almost coincided with the change of relevance placed on the meaning of the text rather than its playfulness. Certainly, this is most relevant to contemporary scenography as we identify the work shown, rather than particular scenographic authors. Although, commercially, the engagement of a particular scenographic team is broadly felt to be a judgement of the possible future performance text, whether this is knowledge which affects an audience when they are about to purchase or watch a particular theatre piece, needs further empirical research of the audience's reception of the theatre performance. However, it is known that audiences do consider the production team for certain films, and it is therefore likely that some audience members will behave in the same way to theatre, as it is a similar cultural product. In contradiction to this the late twentieth century has added another creator to the list as it is often the name of the producer which gets top billing, as in "Cameron Mackintosh presents...".

The theatre's literary text has always been identified as the playwright's initial publication, and as such the meaning of the dramatic text has been thought to be inherently contained therein, however, the subsequent changes in the modes of theatre production have conflated the literary text of the playwright, with that of the other theatre workers who produce the final dramatic text for consumption. Consequently, this text is more open to an endless field of meaning-production. "All signifying practices can engender text: the practice of painting pictures, musical practice, filmic practice, etc." [Barthes:1981, p.41] "The text is radically plural and the reader plays with textual meaning". [Barthes 1981 p.164], and again,

"any text is an intertext; other texts are present in it, at varying levels, in more or less recognisable forms: the texts of the previous and surrounding culture".[Barthes:1981,p.39] Barthes' identification of these texts admits the rise and prominence of scenography as a performer in the dramatic text of theatre performance and the polysemy of these texts relies on the relativism of each text.

In chapter 4 I discussed the nature of spectacle, and the emotional involvement which pertains to its form. If that which is spectacle and spectacular is a result of our emotional response to the event and we describe the text through our emotions which are terms pertaining to humans and not the texts, then the aesthetic of response to the art would seem to have an intrinsic and recognisable emotion. However, the emotion present need not be predictable even though the expression of it may be recognisable, the spectator need not feel or be that emotion. [Elliott:1966, p.14]   Here we can see a direct link with Brecht and his ideas of emotional detachment. This would suggest the emotional detachment and spectatorial creativity inherent in Barthes' theory of the spectator and the art, is an appreciation of the process and the product. In Writing Degree Zero, Barthes argues that wider social forces and class interests govern the formation and transformation of writing styles.

New interests for the working class, breakdown the bourgeois style of classical writing. In terms of theatre production, this theory certainly suits what has occurred in the late twentieth century, with the breakdown of the production structures, or rather their transformation to a separate means of production. Barthes interprets this as the rise of the bourgeois hegemony. This kind of control can be seen in the production of theatre, and in the use of scenography to standardise the theatre event. This confers the power of scenography on the product, the product becomes recognisable from advertising, and so in turn, the advertising reinforces the nature of the product as being worthwhile. Barthes' signs, signifieds and signifiers however, all have to be placed within a context and as such, no sign exists outside of its social and cultural context. The signifier relates to form, the signified concept and the sign - signification, as such the signified always relates to a human emotion. The combination of the signified and the signifier to create the sign, still inevitably describes the sign as an emotional response on the part of the audience. In Barthes' most famous example, the bunch of roses, this is even more apparent - they signify passion. The roses are imbued with human emotion, but as a sign of passion, they have to relate to their social and cultural context to achieve this meaning. Thus it is with scenography. The bunch of roses as a component of scenography can have numerous meanings.

In Mack and Mabel, the West End transfer from Leicester Haymarket, a bunch of roses was brought on by Mack for the final scene. The recurring theme in the production is the song 'I won't send roses'. The fact that he brings some suggests he has recognised his love for Mabel, however, he drops them by the door when he sees her, as he is shocked by her appearance. In the event he never actually gives them to her. But the audience see them and the dying light of the scene highlights their presence. The roses become love, but more than this they are imbued with the feelings of Mack and represent his behaviour. The love he felt

but was unable to clearly demonstrate, as the closing image the bunch of roses signified the pain of the relationship Mack and Mabel have had. All of these feelings which are aroused by the roses are only available should the audience wish to continue the metaphor and explicate the presence of the roses. The audience are encouraged to play with this image. Ultimately, in the creation of the piece the scenographic team may have seen the roses as simply a physical reminder of the song (as it is reprised) and a 'good' image for the close of the show. Whatever the audience make of the image it is their creation, and their emotional attachment to the scene on account of the sign, which can be open to interpretation. The whole interpretation is only possible after viewing the whole event. The poetic line relates to the homogeneous whole.

Barthes used Brechtian theories for some of the basic tenets of his ideology of theatre, "the theatre should be a critical and intellectual, rather than a magical, experience; psychological conflicts should be replaced by historical conflicts."[Moriarty:1991,p.46] In a paper of 1956 on 'The tasks of Brechtian criticism', he begins to speak in semiological terms. In this paper he challenges the idea of theatrical representation as analogy, founded on likeness to what it represents. If the goal of Brecht is to signify the real, then the metaphorical use of scenic devices can enable this. This method not only institutes a certain distance in the relation between the signifier and signified, "lest that relation be perceived as natural." [Moriarty:1991,p.47] This distance, relates to Ben Chaim's theory of aesthetics but also to the last work of Brecht.

In 1956 Brecht made a last collection of theoretical writings, called 'Dialectics in the Theatre', in which he suggested that Epic theatre as a term had reached the end of its useful life. "Epic theatre is a prerequisite for these contributions, but it does not of itself imply that productivity and mutability of society from which they derive their main element of pleasure. The term must therefore be reckoned inadequate, although no

new one can be put forward."[Brecht:1964, p.282] "This technique allows the theatre to make use in its representation of the new scientific method known as dialectical materialism". This is reiterated in the appendix to <u>A Short Organum for the Theatre</u>, "This theatre of the scientific age is in a position to make dialectics into a source of enjoyment". [Brecht:1964, p.277] The enjoyment of theatre discussed by both Brecht and Barthes indicates some of the problems the theatre as a part of popular culture and the postmodern aesthetic has to come to terms with in the late twentieth century. When we look at the writing of Brecht on the specifics of set design we see that what he describes is in fact the aesthetic of late twentieth century scenography: "Many of the props are museum pieces. These small objects which he [Neher] puts in the actor's hands - weapons, instruments, purses, cutlery, etc. - are always authentic and will pass the closest inspection; but when it comes to architecture - i.e. when he builds interiors or exteriors - he is content to give indications, poetic and artistic representations of a hut or a locality which do honour as much to his imagination as to his power of observing. They display a lovely mixture of his own handwriting and that of the playwright." [Brecht:1964, p.231] This illustration of the working practice of Casper Neher confirms Veltrusky's description of the duality of the scenographic elements and suggests the efficacy of certain scenographic choices that I feel pertains to the aesthetic of late twentieth century scenography. Kenneth Tynan quoted a stanza from a poem by Brecht to illustrate the potency of such objects, "Of all works, my favourite/ Are those which show usage./ The copper vessels with bumps and dented edges,/ The knives and forks whose wooden handles are/Worn down by many hands: such forms/ To me are the noblest/." [Tynan:1961, p.465] This scenographic practice was disseminated in British theatre by practitioners like John Bury at Stratford East and Ralph Koltai at the RSC. However, an obsession with the physicality and presence of objects on stage has now become more than simply "a leitmotif of British Brechtianism", [Holland:1978] it is intrinsic to late

twentieth century scenography. In addition this approach to design is a poetic approach, it is powerfully imaginative and creative. Designs of this nature which reinterpret, Blau suggests, are what concern the nature of theatre, in that a truly original production can never be realised, as the nature of theatre is that it *re*-presents a production, "There is something in the nature of theatre which from the very beginning of theatre has always resisted being theatre." [Blau:1983, p.143] However, the scenography of the late twentieth century does recognise itself as theatre, again a feature proposed by Brecht, and that it in itself can be original in the sense of a poetic re-interpretation of the literary text. Therefore a play (literary text) can be re-interpreted to produce a poetic through the presentation of original concepts and thoughts which re-examine the literary text and contribute to an extended understanding through the dramatic text.

One of the problems of discussing these re-interpretations or even first interpretations is that we generate a vocabulary to discuss scenography from human emotions and moods. However, to frame the work in this way becomes less accurate as the work, the dramatic text, becomes less mimetic in its presentation. The less mimetic it is the more we need to find new ways of discussing its affect on us, again a need for a specific theory of scenography is required by the changes in the nature of the product. The need for a theory, through which to discuss Scenography, grasps the problems caused through the prevalence of non-mimetic structures of expression, which have come to dominate the late twentieth century productions, a legacy of Brecht's theatre practice. The need to reclaim scenography from the pejorative 'spectacle' causes us to use an emotional vocabulary to express its efficacy, and has led to the problems of discussing scenography other than as a theatre craft or practice to facilitate spectacle. "In the end perception and judgement are ineliminable." [Lyas:1994,p.364] The involvement of emotion within theatre productions, and the subsequent participation of the audience is

part of the nature of theatre. The explication of this emotion within the scenographic, requires a recognition of this process of assimilation. If aesthetic discrimination is to be thought of as perceptual, it follows that one way to show that aesthetic judgement *is* subjective, would be to show that perceptual judgements *are* subjective. [Lyas:1994, p.370] The difficulty of aesthetics is that part of it relies on taste and the other part requires intuition,"having counted the adjectives, and weighed the lines, and measured the rhythms, a Formalist either stops silent with the expression of a man who does not know what to do with himself, or throws out an unexpected generalisation which contains five percent of Formalism and ninety-five per cent of the most uncritical intuition"[Trotsky:1960, p.172]

Terms like 'intuition' and 'emotion' lead us back to a feminist critique of popular culture, which enables 'spectacle' and 'entertainment' to be of less value than art, due to the emotional impact of the form. In this way gender becomes central to popular culture and theatre reception. Therefore, popular culture and mass culture theory have become appropriate theories for scenography, given the changes in the process of production and our acceptance of scenography as an emotional *agent provocateur*. The last twenty years have seen theatre behave as a mass cultural form that travels well. To suggest a mutation however, confers change on a product that tours and does not change, in fact, the very reason for its travel is the ability to perform the *same* show anywhere. This is not re-interpretation in the sense Blau meant, with all the dangers inferred by the mutable, this is mass production; the mass production of aesthetic which Brecht warned of. The intuitive nature of the scenographic, expresses by another name the poetic which is generated as part of the process, but which is very hard to specifically create in order to provoke a truthful emotional response in an audience. This danger was both seen and used by Brecht to further his own commercial

production. [Fuegi:1994] The repetition of commercial success lacks the intuition which once made it successful.

At its most basic, post modern theory presupposes a distorted mirror of society, where consumption is determined by popular culture which in turn is determined by advertising. "A crucial implication...is that in a postmodern world, surfaces and style become more important, and evoke in their turn a kind of 'designer ideology'."[Strinati:1995,p.225] We consume images for their own sake rather than for the deeper values which they signify - their poetic. Whilst for some theatre scenography, the style and surface could be said to dominate substance and meaning, many theatre scenographies operate metaphorically and so refute this. The scenography and substance are interrelated. However, a metanarrative for scenography is very difficult to define unless it fulfils the remit of post modern theory. There is a tautology here, in that postmodernism denies the metanarrative, however, if postmodernism defines scenography of the late twentieth century then it fulfils the role of a metanarrative. The poetic of scenography is the universal validity of postmodernism and if postmodernism is a recycling of forms, recycling the recent past and the mixing of styles through collage, pastiche and quotation then all theatre scenography fulfils this remit. As the nature of the designed stage space is one where items are placed in the space; their references and inter textuality are a part of the role of scenography in the theatre performance. In this way the overt and covert meanings inculcated in many scenographic texts, as part of the dramatic texts, are as élitist as their high art equivalents. "The quotes and references that are part of this process are meant to appeal to those 'clever' enough to spot the source of the quote or reference. Rather than dismantling the hierarchy of aesthetic and cultural taste, Postmodernism erects a new one, placing itself at the top."[Strinati:1995,p.242] In theatre production we have the continual re-interpretation and re-staging of theatre's literary texts. This has been undertaken long before the

181

recent period of the postmodern. As such the postmodern theory has theoretical and empirical limitations when related to scenography. "Here again there is a direct relationship between funding and the type of work available for production and reception". [Bennett:1995,p.119] The economy of capital production has meant that these forms are repeated in order to achieve economic success.

Susan Bennett discusses the mise en scène and its importance in relation to the author's text. "Meyerhold's 1917 production of Lermontov's Masquerade showed two important things. It demonstrated how the creation of a mise en scène had replaced the author's text as the crucial aspect in the signifying process...." [Bennett:1994, p.5] Similarly, and more recently the production of Peter Shaeffer's Equus which toured the world was in fact John Dexter's production. It was Dexter's work that made the dramatic text, which was so crucial to its world popularity and tour, as it was the scenographic representation of horses through mask, that made the production distinctive, not the literary text on its own. [John Dove:1995 interview] In a similar sense it is hard to conceive of a production of Mother Courage without the use of a cart and the notion of Mother Courage struggling with this object which expresses the sense of the literary text. This image is ingrained in the production yet in terms of re-interpretation, in the sense Blau means it, this is merely a re-staging of the original play/dramatic performance.

The audience reception of scenography is bound by the means of production and aesthetics which rely on taste and intuition and emotional response. The performance text, therefore, that which is most ephemeral, defies definition, unless it is notated as a part of the literary text. As then it becomes an aspect to be included in the dramatic text, however, by the notation of the 'necessary' scenographic features it closes other methods of staging.

Contradictions

"With the help of Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, and others, the postmodern argues that what we so valued is a construct, not a given, and, in addition, a construct that occupies a relation of power in our culture. The postmodern is ironic, distanced; it is not nostalgic - even of the 1960s".[Hutcheon:1988,p.203] The contradictions of the postmodern in terms of being 'inside' or 'outside' current the ideology, being critical or compliant to it, suit the nature of late twentieth century scenography, as this too can be seen as politically "ambidextrous". [Graff:1983, p.603] Therefore, the means of production through capitalism cannot be discredited per se, as this denies the construct of the social and present historical, which any work that is produced must take place in. "Experimentation or innovation in form, for instance, can be used either commercially (advertising thrives on novelty) or oppositionally as in the work of Brecht, and Piscator and Meyerhold before him".[Hutcheon:1988, p.206] Hutcheon describes this art as 'unmarked' in the linguistic sense, and therefore open to a number of political interpretations. In these terms the postmodern asks us to question and be critical of what we see, and it is the author's intention for the ideology which when not apparent, provokes the spectator to inquiry. In the case of theatre scenography whilst work such as An Inspector Calls make that activity occur, this questioning is not simply achieved by presenting the scenography, as a metaphor might for the literary text. If all the theatre arts are used as a metaphor, then the use of that construct to provoke criticism must be undertaken in the sense which Brecht meant, and many postmodern theorists refer to. [Hutcheon:1988; Jameson:1977; Althusser1971;Taylor:1977] The poetic of some theatre scenography can therefore be linked back to the early work at the Royal Court and more particularly to Brecht and Neher's work. "The underlying belief here is clearly that self-awareness combats self-delusion." [Marcuse:1978,p.13] "All of Gaskill's theatre work at this time was directed towards this type of signification, in

which the action and the object (rather than consistent and emphatic overall characterisation) become the centre of the theatrical process of invoking meaning. The results of Gaskill's work were the redirection of audience perception towards an evaluation of action as expressed towards the object - an object that is defined and continually re-emphasized as being real, 'used'". [Holland:1978, p.26] However, this aesthetic of the metaphoric set, the notional and intended meaning, the signification of meaning by a commentary through the scenography, on the literary text and the dramatic text, has become an aesthetic, without necessarily any critical intention. As in the abstracted realism which can infer meaning in terms of locale, but which offer little critically to the meaning of the performance text.

In theory, postmodern practice challenges and exploits the commodification of art by consumer culture, in practice, it can also become that commodity. In theory the postmodern is duplicitous and Hutcheon carefully explains this duality of the theory. "But postmodern art cannot be fully explained either by the view that art is totally complicitous with the prevailing mass culture (Jameson,1984) or by the view that "real art" posits a distance from ideology in order to allow us to perceive it critically (Althusser, 1971, 219). It does both, usually addressing the issues directly, either thematically or in terms of its form." [Hutcheon:1988,p.212] The thematics of theatre production are particularly present in the scenographic aesthetic, as outlined earlier by Bob Crowley. He referred to the designer's ability to contribute to the authorship of the concept of a production. Here scenography operates through form and as such the role of the scenographic team towards this end would seem apposite. However, Hutcheon suggests what is created is more than Brecht outlined. "Its self-reflexivity still points, however, to the fact that art does not innocently reflect or convey reality; rather, it creates or signifies it, in the sense that it makes it meaningful. This is how the "combative" *Verfremdungseffekt* was intended to function,

184

moving the receiver from "general passive acceptance to a corresponding state of suspicious inquiry"." However, the commercial production of theatre is not interested in the 'process' over 'product'. The theatre production and its form, is turned into an amulet for any given production. Commercial productions may not wish to have each consumer receive a potential understanding of their position and therefore intentionally subvert it. However, a production such as Les Miserables which is critical of a certain ideology, re-enacts revolution, the barricades are visibly built and a critique of the historical event is embodied in the scenic presentation, and this aesthetic is highly fetishistic. Hutcheon admits that the postmodern probably exploits as well as subverts "more than Brecht would ever have allowed". [Hutcheon:1988, p.220] The self-reflexivity and political commitment which are characteristics of some of late twentieth century scenography could be termed 'dialectical scenography', an act of textual self-questioning although such definition cannot be applied to all scenographic practice. However, this distinction does begin to allow a detailed discussion of the work in respect of the legacy of certain scenographic practices.

In this respect, late twentieth century scenography can be mediated through Barthes and Brecht. This enables a theoretical answer to where political alienation has led, through the fetishistic nature of the product, due to the rise of capital and commercial concerns within theatre production. Barthes allows us to theorise on the way in which scenography aids representation and its interrelation to other texts of performance. "The theatre is precisely that practice which calculates the place of things *as they are observed*: if I set the spectacle here, the spectator will see this; if I put it elsewhere, he will not, and I can avail myself of this masking effect and play on the illusion it provides."[Barthes:1977,p.69] Barthes directly quotes theatre as a geometric environment which maintains its form through the placing of

objects in an environment, as such, this is the scenographic content of a performance. In this way the theatre is a direct expression of 'geometry'. The geometry of the stage plan, design and lighting patterns all work in a spatial sense and the representations presented within that geometry are what Barthes terms 'découpage'. "The 'Organon of Representation' (which it is today becoming possible to write because there are imitations of *something else*) will have as its dual foundation the sovereignty of the act of cutting out [découpage] and the unity of the subject of that action."[Barthes:1977,p.69] This usefully can be applied to the work of theatre workers, who in the last twenty years have endeavoured to take works and make them into another form, which Barthes describes as Texts. The difference he places between work and Text is applicable to the differences which occur between the literary text (the work), the dramatic text and the performance text as Texts. The découpage from which theatre performances originate comes in the form of tableau. "Is the tableau then (since it arises from a process of cutting out) a fetish object? Yes, at the level of the ideal meaning (Good, Progress, the Cause, the triumph of the just History); no, at that of its composition". [Barthes,1977,p.71] The fetishism occurs once the spectator has made sense of the composition. The *fetishized* object of the performance, often in late twentieth century theatre the scenography, has taken on this idea. The découpage halts the fetish but when scenography is objectified in the way Aronson discusses, with reference to the Prague Quadrennial of 1991, where découpage is not a technique of the composition, then the meaning of the work can become distorted, "the scenographic on stage and beyond the model is the reified mock-up of the model." [Aronson:1993, p.61-73] "(Doubtless there would be no difficulty in finding in post-Brechtian theatre and post-Eisensteinian cinema mises en scène marked by the dispersion of the tableau, the pulling to pieces of the 'composition', the setting in movement of the 'partial organs' of the human figure, in short the holding in check of the metaphysical meaning of the work - but then also of its potential

meaning; or, at least, the carrying over of this meaning towards *another* politics.)" [Barthes:1977,p.71-2] This exactly describes the fetish whereby the scenography of the 1980s has used ideas of découpage and the aesthetic of a Brechtian political agenda to formulate a product which is cohesive but contains no dialectic. In Brecht a series of segmented episodes, what Barthes describes as tableau, each had meaning and through the juxtaposition of the tableau a number of meanings were created. In this way each episode could be the object of fetish if the découpage was not successful in this process of presentation, "form, aesthetic, rhetoric can be socially responsible if they are handled with deliberation". [Barthes:1977,p.74] Our perception of theatre's social responsibility will determine the product and form which that particular theatre takes.

In relation to the work and the Text, the Brechtian approach would be to present messages but to not formulate the total meaning of the work. The contemporary theatre has fetishized the 'moment tableau' through scenography, and signed the work. This approach accounts for many of the productions and re-productions of work, throughout the 1980s and 1990s. In An Inspector Calls the production has become the fetishized object through the scenography, in that there is one comprehensive image, which presents the work. In Barthes' discussion of the death of the Author, he suggested that the demise of the Author's position within the literary text has in many senses freed the modern Text. Whilst this involves the spectator/reader in a considerably more active process, it does not automatically result in the birth of the spectator/reader. For scenography this is certainly true, as the scenography can now be signed by more than one hand, but remains a signed piece of work, complete and requiring no further deconstruction or questioning on the part of the audience.

The role of the performer within the context of the work or Text has also changed. "So too has the performer changed. The amateur, a role defined much more by style than by technical imperfection, is no longer anywhere to be found; the professional, our specialists whose training remains entirely esoteric for the public (who is there, who is still acquainted with the problems of musical education?), never offer the style of the perfect amateur the great value of which could still be recognised in a Lipati or a Panzera, touching off in us not satisfaction but desire, the desire to <u>make</u> that music." [Barthes:1977, p.150] The specialisation to which Barthes refers explains the nature of the growing specialisms within technical theatre. This relates once more to the Text and the spectator's involvement, "the work is a fragment of substance, occupying a part of the space of books (in a library for example), the Text is a methodological field." [Barthes:1977,p.156-7] Lacan's distinction between 'reality' and 'the real', elaborates this point in relation to theatre, "the one is displayed, the other demonstrated;...the text is a process of demonstration...*the Text is experienced only in an activity of production.*" [Barthes:1977,p.157] The scenographic in these terms is most definitely a Text. The scenographic in the late twentieth century uses the aesthetic of extraction and découpage, to produce a specific response, however, "The logic regulating the Text is not comprehensive (define 'what the work means') but metonymic; the activity of associations, contiguities, carryings-over coincides with a liberation of symbolic energy (lacking it, man would die); the work - in the best of cases - is *moderately* symbolic its symbolic runs out, comes to a halt); the Text is *radically* symbolic: *a work conceived, perceived and received in its integrally symbolic nature is a text.* Thus is the Text restored to language; like language, it is structured but off-centred, without closure (note in reply to the contemptuous suspicion of the 'fashionable' sometimes directed at structuralism, that the epistemological privilege currently accorded to language stems precisely from the discovery there of a paradoxical idea of structure: a system with

neither close nor centre)." [Barthes:1977, p.158-9] The associative nature of contemporary scenography certainly adheres to this idea of metonymy. In the most basic sense all scenography is metonymic, all scenic constructions work as a replacement for the original. This is complicated further when, within that replacement there is an intentional comparison, a metaphor which may not be linked to the metonymic. For example, the asses head which Bottom wears in A Midsummer Nights Dream is a replacement for a real donkey, as in we are to believe Bottom is a donkey but this visual presentation also works as a metaphor for Bottom's stupidity, and depending on your interpretation, Titania's fantasy. The associative nature of both coexist within the scenography, this highlights the paradox of structures and geometry of scenography, as such, "the Text is plural and irreducible." [Barthes:1977, p.159] The Text therefore requires play and resists reduction. However if the play and listening activity of the text has been taken over by the performer, "the interpreter to who the bourgeois public... (has) delegated its playing." [Barthes: p.163], then in this case the complex structure of the Text can become reduced.

The interpreter in theatre is seen as a co-author who completes the work, rather than expresses it. This theory is the theory of performance which Brecht outlined, and much of Barthes' work borrows from Brecht's theatre practice. The Text, however, asks for practical collaboration from the spectator. When the Text is not open and the spectator cannot engage with it, then boredom with the form and consumption becomes the norm. This equality of status for the work and the various theatre texts, produces an inter textuality and democracy to the work, "the Text is that space where no language has a hold over any other, where languages circulate (keeping the circular sense of the term)." [Barthes:1977, p.164] This democracy has resulted from changes in the process by which theatre is produced, the more democratic creation by the scenographic team, is reflected in the perceived democracy of

interpretation - as the audience are allowed in, to interpret and be involved in the performance.

The paradox of a theory of Text and thereby a theory of scenography, is also theorised by Barthes. The theory of scenography is linked to a theory of text, "which cannot be satisfied by a metalinguistic exposition: the destination of metalanguage or at least (since it may be necessary provisionally to resort to meta language) its calling into doubt, is part of the theory itself: the discourse on the Text should itself be nothing other than text, research, textual activity, since the Text is that *social* space which leaves no language safe, outside, nor any subject of the enunciation in position as judge, master, analyst, confessor, decoder. The theory of the Text can coincide only with a practice of writing". [Barthes:1977,p.164] This helps eradicate aesthetics as a possible theory of scenography, which require taste as an arbiter as is the case with most other theories. "How is culture evaluated? According to dialectics? Although bourgeois, this does contain progressive elements; but what *at the level of discourse*, distinguishes dialectics from compromise?" [Barthes:1977,p.211] The poetic interpretation avoids compromise and retains the poetry of the subject but in this respect it is an individual's response to that poetry.

Barthes identifies the difficulty of translating any kind of performance into a verbal language, when he discusses the poor nature of adjectives to describe the quality of a music performance. "No doubt the moment we turn an art into a subject (for an article, for a conversation) there is nothing left but to give it predicates; in the case of Music, however, such predication unfailingly takes the most facile and trivial form, that of the epithet." [Barthes:1977,p.179] This reiterates the work of Reid. He described the reduction of the essence of the art form, when language was used to communicate that essence.[Reid:1969] This offers more evidence for seeing a poetic as a personal response and that the

description of the essence is irreducible from the concept of the subject. However, the activity of the spectator and the encouragement of an individual response to an art form is potentially dangerous to the status quo. Especially if the audience does not behave in the expected manner. Inevitably, the spectators are encouraged to enjoin with the event and in order to do this the individual response is contradicted by the need to lose oneself in the activity. The potential danger of this was discussed in Reclaiming Spectacle. The sense of music as dangerous, which Barthes links to our inability to correctly describe spectacle, and therefore the belief that both are dangerous because one needs to lose oneself, is at the root of the negative criticism of work which achieves this for the spectator. "There is an imaginary in music whose function is to reassure, to constitute the subject hearing it (would it be that music is dangerous - the old Platonic idea? that music is an access to *jouissance*, to loss, as numerous ethnographic and popular examples would tend to show?) and this imaginary comes to language via the adjective." [Barthes:1977,p.179-80] Again, this reinforces a critique of spectacle as low art. [Strinati:1995] Therefore, the difficulty of describing essence is continually thwarted and reinforced by the paucity of language.

Barthes used Julia Kristeva's 'pheno-text' and 'geno-text' to define what he calls the 'grain' in music and which I have referred to as the efficacious and poetic in scenography. In relation to song which he uses as an example, pheno-song is equal to everything in the performance which is at the service of communication, representation and expression; "everything which it is customary to talk about, which forms the tissue of cultural values (matter of acknowledged tastes, of fashions, of critical commentaries), which takes its bearing directly on the ideological alibis of a period...". [Barthes:1977,p.182] Geno-song is what Barthes calls the diction of the language, the depth of its quality; it is the "singing and speaking voice, the space where significations germinate 'from within language and in its materiality'; it forms a signifying play having

191

nothing to do with communication, representation (of feelings), expression; it is that apex (or that depth) of production where the melody really works at the language - not at what it says, but the voluptuousness of its sounds-signifiers, of its letters - where melody explores how the language works and identifies with that work" [Barthes:1977,p.182] The latter is the potential for seduction, or as Barthes puts it *jouissance*. This seduction is pertinent to spectacle and relates to the DNA of scenography as the poetic which subsumes and ingratiates the spectator into the depth of the performance world.

Barthes discusses the mass production of the art, in this case music, via record production. "Such a culture, defined by the growth of the number of listeners and the disappearance of practitioners (no more amateurs), wants art, wants music, provided they be clear, that they 'translate' an emotion and represent a signified (the 'meaning' of a poem); an art that inoculates pleasure (by reducing it to a known, coded emotion) and reconciles the subject to what in music *can be said*: what is said about it, predicatively, by Institution, Criticism, Opinion." [Barthes:1977,p.185] This coheres with the changes in production and ideas of mass culture currently exploited in theatre production, and in scenography. Barthes, is here also against interpretation by the interpreters, who mass produce the product as a commodity with no recourse to the 'grain' or the *jouissance*, which does not allow the 'soul' of a work, "it is the triumph of the pheno-text, the smothering of *significance* under the soul as signified". "Whatever Mussorgsky's intentions, the death of Boris is *expressive* or, if preferred, *hysterical*; it is overloaded with historical, affective contents...Mélisande, on the contrary, only dies *prosodically*."[Barthes:1977,p.185] "The 'grain' is the body in the voice as it sings, the hand as it writes, the limb as it performs. If I perceive the 'grain' in a piece of music and accord this 'grain' a theoretical value (the emergence of the text in the work)". [Barthes:1977,p.188] The lack of this theoretical value can result in "under the pressure of the

long-playing record, there seems to be a flattening out of technique; which is paradoxical in that the various manners of playing are all flattened out *into perfection*: nothing is left but pheno-text)." [Barthes:1977,p.189] There are obvious parallels with the current accepted production values for late twentieth century theatre, which revolve around a certain style of scenographic presentation, offering theatre to the spectator in a reasonable bite sized image - the pheno-text. This interpretation of the elements of any art, and heralds the stripping away of the phenotype and genotype from the DNA of scenography and ultimately from theatre.

Barthes' theoretical concerns for Image Music Text, span the concerns for scenography which I have laid down, in terms of production, mass culture, commodity, efficacy and poetics. I have attempted to describe the rise of scenography through the changes in the mode of production via capitalism; attempts to describe the aesthetic of scenography have led to a recognition of the scenographic text and thus the dialectics of scenography, which was initially theorised by Brecht and initially produced by Neher. In the light of these explorations Hutcheon's suggestions of the future questions for theoretical inquiry seem pertinent. "There can be little doubt that the postmodern has been commercialized, that the aesthetic has been turned into the fashionable. It might be wise, however, to make some distinction between art and what the art-promotional system does to it. From the fate of even hermetic modernism, it seems clear that any aesthetic practice can be assimilated and neutralized by both the high art market and mass media culture."[Hutcheon:1988,p.231]

However it is not only aesthetic practice which has been assimilated by the high art market and mass media culture. In the light of Barthes' concerns for the fetishisation of product we see during the 1980s and 1990s the addition of a scenographic practice which allowed a

pre-interpreted abstraction of meaning to be presented to the audience, facilitated a further multiplication of the commodification of theatre theories. However, when these abstractions, which are then represented as images, become a recognisable style, the image loses its previous meaning and provocative nature. As such, the scenographic content becomes reduced to merely the form and the packaging of the theatre event, which is a recognisable style for the audience, what Kristeva defined as a phenotext with no genotext. The signs used in the scenographic are then without content or meaning particular to a given dramatic performance. This fetishisation of the form, due to the popularity of that form, is continued as the style which is commercially processed and fashionable, and the form becomes reified and in turn replicated. A theory of presentation can then be mutated for commercial profit. The process of assimilation of theatrical theories in the twentieth century has led to the commodification of these theories.

The main and most clear example of this is Brecht's theories of theatrical production. The particular use of a form, in relation to a specific set of practices, allowed Brecht to formalise those features which he felt enabled *verfremdungseffeckt*. This style of theatricalization was a continual reminder of the 'theatre' to the audience. The reification of this successful scenographic form has seen the political effect of these features reduced, due to its popularity and resultant overuse without pertinent meaning to the text of any given performance. The poetic and DNA of scenography, which I have suggested is present in all successful productions of theatre, has subsequently been lost from these forms when the scenographic has been used in this manner. The disappearance of the 'use', and the making use of that form to a given end, which is specific to a politics and use in performance was theorised by Barthes as *jouissance*. In his theory he suggests this is *the grain* and it is what I term the poetic. Inherent in

Barthes recognition of the grain is the realisation that it is irreducible from the context and content of the art form.

In late twentieth century theatre, scenography is now at a loss to produce Brecht's *verfremdungseffeckt*, Barthes ideas of *jouissance*, and Julia Kristeva's notion of *the grain*, because of the appropriation of features, political practices and theories of theatre as 'styles' of theatre production, which due to their success have become commodified. For example, The Woman in Black, which uses 'story-telling from a costume hamper'; Jesus Christ Superstar, which is designed by John Napier with metal bridges reminiscent of his design for Nicholas Nickleby, and trailing microphone cables that not only reveal the means of production but date the style of production to the 1970s through the use of this technology. The theorising of theatre practice and scenography, and the need for a theoretical language to describe scenography's impact on the performance text whilst a valuable area of debate, endangers the original and the poetic, and it invites replication in order to achieve success. It does not further an understanding of the poetic of the dramatic text/performance.

It is in some ways obvious that Barthes' theories should have a particular relevance to Brecht's theories of theatre production, as Barthes cited and admired Brecht's work. Brecht's theories were attractive to Barthes for their espousal of the need for the audience to not forget the illusion behind what they were viewing. For both Barthes and Brecht the importance of this awakening of the audience to the illusory nature of performance, whilst patronising the audience, is perhaps understandable when they had both seen art used for political purposes and most obviously used as a form of indoctrination. Their preoccupation with the importance of framing the theatre in terms of its illusion, can be linked therefore to their experiences during, for Barthes the second world war and his involvement in the French Resistance, and for Brecht, his

awareness of the Soviet use of art and artists both in the Weimar years and in the GDR post-1949. [Fuegi:1994]

The self-awareness of the theatrical has resulted in the theatricalization of theatre which, according to Barthes, unlimits language but this theatricalization has also standardised the form. It is this standardisation of form which has occurred in the latter part of the twentieth century. Theatre performances are often described or advertised in theoretical terms, using theoretical labels such as absurd, brechtian or postmodern. Barthes felt the form created literary value, however, for twentieth century scenography it is the form which has created a new theatricalization which has unlimited the understandings of re-interpreted productions, authored by a team of makers in form. These teams, skilled in theatre presentation, have become packagers of theatre, using known styles and conventions to shorthand meaning or simply present the act of performance within an aesthetically pleasing convention. Whilst they are assimilated into all areas of theatre production, as they are perceived as a necessary requisite of, what we call, theatre. These aesthetics of packaging are most often present in commercial theatre. This process is inevitably lessened if the aesthetic of packaging merely refers to the theatricalization of theatre. What is more damaging is that the sensual pleasure of the *grain* of text as described by Barthes is at odds with the need for distance previously expressed by Brecht and theorised by Ben Chaim and it is the *jouissance,* the pleasure of performance which requires us to lose ourselves in the spectacle of any theatricalization in order that the text, the dramatic text, remains unlimited for the individual audience member.

What is interesting about the forms which have become so dominant in the late twentieth century is that they have antecedents from western theatre history. They were not necessarily revolutionary in terms of a progression of ideas of staging but rather they contradicted the bourgeois

practice of theatre production. Brecht and Neher therefore used features which were a part of theatre's heritage which later Brecht wrote into a theory of production. The work of Neher had a great influence on Brecht's productions and his theories for the theatre. It is interesting to note that in the first part of Brecht's career before 1949, he had less clear opinions on the scenographic features of production than he did later, after having worked with Neher for some time. In fact, during the time when he was writing his most consistent piece of theory, 'The Short Organon', Brecht was working with Neher on a production of <u>Antigone</u> at Chur. "Where Brecht's ideas end and Neher's begin is difficult to determine. Often, the Neher drawings are taken verbatim as a matrix into which the actors were placed. Directing credit was shared in the program." [Fuegi:1995,p.491] In both the use of visual images provided for rehearsal in a similar way to which we envisage using computer generated images, and in the recognition of the collaboration of the designer, Brecht was ahead of his time. The use of styles from all areas of human history and culture has long been practised for theatre production. In this respect the postmodern theory has just caught up with the ideas of pastiche and cliché which theatre has long practised. It is therefore no surprise that Brecht and Neher embarked on a production which used styles and practice from classical and Elizabethan theatre practice. "As a backdrop, Neher has a semicircle of screens covered in red rush matting. In front of the screens stood long pew like benches on which the cast sat waiting to come forward to play their roles, a device now widely used even in mainstream theater. There was no curtain. The acting area was marked by four posts on which hung the boiled skulls of freshly (*sic*) slaughtered horses. Props and masks were hung on a rack and taken down by the actors in the full view of the audience, another practice that would henceforth become widespread in contemporary theater. The production was starkly modern, but paradoxically, this very starkness echoed the bareness of the Elizabethan and classical Greek stage. The future of the modern stage drew on classical stage history."

197

[Fuegi: p.491] Whilst this legacy harked back to the Elizabethan and classical as Fuegi states, it was Brecht and Neher's use of this aesthetic which when translated to the late twentieth century, has made both the 'bare stage' and the 'poor stage', recognisable staging forms and conventions, and it is these features which have mingled with new technologies and become reified.

Initially, the mixture of seemingly opposing aspects of theatre scenography is contradictory, for what can the poor and bare stage have in common with the hi-tech world of much of world theatre? It is true that over the last 15 years, in particular, the staging of productions and theatre practice in general has begun to work with new and complex technologies which have encompassed all areas of scenography. These practices have allowed for experimentation outside the venue of performance for the scenographic team. In this way, the nature of the scenographic has become primary, as a formative and instructive tool for the creation of a text for the audience. In many senses the CAD technology has further enabled the process which Neher practised, of drawing scenes and initial impressions of the production to be used earlier in the rehearsal process and become part of the planning of a production. It has allowed practitioners to discuss the implications of environments and the atmospheres created, long before the final drawings are completed, with a visual resource that can be quickly changed. Hence, the value and the poetry of scenography can be constructed for each piece, and the practitioners can review the efficacy of their decisions in combination before agreeing to the final 'score' of the scenographic movement. The tautological way in which the technology has provided for both the detachment and involvement of the scenographic in a dramatic text, has helped strengthen the scenographic components and the role of design for theatre in general.

Moreover, the scenographic has been linked to the Aristotelian theories of emotionally moving an audience and it is this which has dominated the role of the scenographic in areas of spectacle. The return to an Aristotelian theory of theatre production during the late twentieth century has been similar to Brecht's journey from cool emotion, to the Aristotelian theory which he had originally repudiated. "What he realised in 1949 was that his long-time assumption - cool acting leads to cool audiences - was wrong. In a rapid about-face, he now acknowledged that an audience may become more emotionally involved by cool acting". [Fuegi: p.507] In addition, the significance of objects left the actor more frequently alone. "The actor suddenly appeared on stage on his own, with no furniture to mask him, props to help him; every gesture became significant and nothing is left as superfluous detail. The action, the plays subjected to this treatment became pared down, visible, significant." [Holland:1978, p.26] The theory of semiotics has enunciated the polysemy of signs and as a consequence this has revealed the poetic of theatre performance, but semiotics has been unable to pinpoint this. Therefore, in part due to Brecht's influence, the scenography of a performance is no longer a formalist crucible for the expression of the literary text, it is a vital part of the dramatic text which forms a part of the homogeneous, without which the piece fails. The poetic of the scenographic cannot be distilled from the whole, it is intrinsic to performance and understanding, it carries the *grain* which Barthes identified, and the efficacy of performance.[Barthes:1977,p.181]

The recognition by Brecht, of the importance of Aristotelian theory has forced us to revisit classical practice once more with reference to the scenographic. "Aristotle's argument in the Poetics that marvellous effects can be more plausibly and decorously produced in epic, because drama has to cope with the impedimenta of material representation and with stricter criteria of credibility".[Tasso:1973,p.15-16], is also

appropriate, as Tasso argues that tragedy and epic are the special province of the marvellous, with transformations or metamorphoses as a type of marvellous effect. This kind of credibility and the substance which Tasso implies, is less sort after in the contemporary theatre or at least has been more difficult to attain within the proscenium arch structure of much of British theatre. However, when scenography operates on the level of transformations of the stage space into numerous environments and atmospheres as pertained in classical theatre, the scenography must pertain to an epic nature. More importantly it must be linked to the poetic of the dramatic performance. The scenography then takes on a collaborative role with all other aspects of theatre production. Tasso's theory is appropriate for the work of Brecht and for the demise of the credibility of scenographic presentations, which are no longer restricted to the credible but the incredible, the marvellous effect without a poetic or epic purpose.

However, these concerns are not only the provenance of the twentieth century. The rediscovery of The Poetics during the 16th century, stimulated discussion of Aristotelian literary theory. Ben Jonson's reference to the 'bodily part', the scenic machinery and visual spectacle designed by Inigo Jones, were couched in Aristotelian terms. Both he and Jones shared an Aristotelian aesthetic, although Jonson felt his writing was at odds with the presentation of Jones. However, this misunderstanding of the scenographic, by Jonson of Jones' designs, has been similar to the criticism of the scenographic in the late twentieth century. "The discription(sic)of a maske", represented a combined effect of poetry with the other art of music, dance and design, and the interaction of poetry and politics." "By changing the model of poetic invention from construction to inspiration, Campion replaces Jonson's Aristotelian doctrine of artifice and feigning with the Platonic idea of furor, poeticus."[Peacock:1991] "Just as the furor of love corresponds to the beauty of Good, and indeed he contemplates beauty, and the furor of

prophets corresponds to truth, which announces and predicts; so the furor of the poet corresponds to symmetry, that is, to divine proportion and harmony with which everything is filled...."[Segni:1581,p.407] Segni's comments are here very clear about a spatial content to the poetic. In much the same way Appia referred to the poetic as the essential which was beyond interpretation. The development of the metaphorical substance of scenography has become more and more dominant since the realisation, brought about in part by the work of Brecht and Neher, that the scenographic both directs the audience understanding and, "that his kind of staging could help audiences reach deeper levels of the Aristotelian elements of pity and fear than were reached by other directors." [Fuegi:1994,p.507] Again, this kind of practice was known before Brecht but was never articulated in quite the same way. The importance of the poetic, was expressed by Robert Edmond Jones who suggested what the nature of the scenographic should be, "The error lies in our conception of the theatre as something set aside for talents that are purely literary. As if the experience of the theatre had only to do with words! Our playwrights need to learn that plays are wrought, not written. There is something to be said in the theatre in terms of form and color and light that can be said no otherway."[Jones:1969, p.73-4] Jones identified the way in which plays during the twentieth century were beginning to be viewed and significantly he realised there was a need to identify the other contributors to the theatrical event. Jones describes what he feels to be intrinsic to theatrical production, notably for the scenographers to be responsive to the essence of a dramatic text, a feature which by using Barthes we could describe as the grain or the geno-text. "In the last analysis the designing of stage scenery is not the problem of an architect or a painter or a sculptor or even a musician, but of a poet....I am speaking of a poetic attitude....we may fairly speak of the art of stage designing as poetic, in that it seeks to give expression to the essential quality of a play rather than to its outward characteristics."[Jones;

201

p.77-78] Here he is clearly discussing the nature of theatre as possibly relying on the pheno-text, the "outward characteristics." This clearly identifies the major change which has occurred in contemporary theatre scenography, the potential view of theatre productions as solely commodities. Where the ideology of 'essence' has now been superceded by the notion of 'concept', which we use as interchangeable terms to encapsulate the literary text's intention. This abstraction for theatre, as for the poet writing a sonnet, is the concise but clear evaluation of emotion and atmosphere and it is this which moves the audience most. "The poetic conception of stage design bears little relation to the accepted convention of realistic scenery in the theatre....In the theatre the actual thing is never the exciting thing. Unless life is turned into art on the stage it stops being alive and goes dead." [Jones, p.82] we do not applaud reality. "By draining the theatre of its literalness they are giving it back to imagination again."[Jones, p.71] This may be an inexorable feature of the consumer society in which we live. As a consequence the technology which has aided the replication of "outward characteristics" can potentially diminish the poetic and in some cases it has. The reification of certain scenographic styles and environments is most naturally occurring now in this century, as the specific functions of the scenography are suppressed in favour of the aesthetic. "Poetic reference differs from informational reference in that its relationship to reality is weakened in favor of its semantic linkage with context. In poetry the practical functions of language, that is, the representative, expressive, and appellative functions, are subordinated to the aesthetic function, which makes the sign itself the center of attention." [Mukarovsky:p.162] The commodification of theories of semiotics in highlighting the importance of objects, which can be expressed as particular features of scenographic presentation, and the commodification of the 'brechtian', have thus both reified the forms they have been used to explain and they have been used as a means to achieve the mass production of theatre. As the signs have been recognised as polysemic, so the designs have

202

become more proscriptive. As some late twentieth century scenography has tried to proscribe meaning, so a concept system of presentation has resulted, perhaps in the knowledge (from theoretical discourse) of the proliferation of meaning, and as an attempt to dictate a meaning to the audience. An Inspector Calls in this frame, becomes an attempt by the scenographic team to present *a* meaning. However, an increase in concept productions once more eliminates the audience from an intellectual participation in the event and suggests a strong authorial voice.

Even the musical Time, was able to provoke activity in the audience. It was perhaps unsuccessful in most critics' eyes in creating the outer space world of science fiction, however, unsuccessful theatre and bad performance, do not refute the meaning inherent in the form even though this production owed much to performing technology. One hegemony of Time would be that the theatricalization was a meaningful representation of the society we lived in, and the poetic value understood by the audience was the use of technology for capital gains, which was most evocative of the 1980s in the UK. The allegory comes directly from the theatricalization rather than any intended meaning from the traditional authors; writer, director, performer. Whilst some scenography has fallen into the trap of simply translating the literary text into the three-dimensional, the most evocative and, therefore, most poetic scenography is that which gives *jouissance* and incorporates the *grain* of the text. In performing the theatricalization, the scenography also makes continual reference to the theatre, the place, and the artifice and so clearly justifies its nature as being effective in achieving *Verfremdungseffeckt*. We are never of the belief that this is reality. The Brechtian ideal has been achieved, and the audience are empowered.

However, through semiotics and technology, the form has been given status as a communicator and therefore the creator of meaning. The

status of additional authors is diminished by the notion that finding the meaning is impossible and as such is irreducible from the event or performance. Especially when the theory of the audience's involvement has also determined the need for clues in visual presentation. "In the theatre the spectators' imagination is able to supply that which is left unsaid. It is this mystery and the desire to solve it which draw so many people to the theatre." [Edward Braun:1969, p.25] Scenography of the late twentieth century has tried to fulfil all of these criteria. In doing so late twentieth century theatre has reached a climax of evocation of the absolute illusion, whilst equally destroying that illusion. We show the mechanisms and expose engineering in the form of hydraulics and revolves to the indulgence of performance theatricality. The illusion and anti-illusion are part of the theatricality, and as has been illustrated above, the appropriateness of this is dependant on the truth and poetic of the event. In Craig's work we see the abstraction of scenic elements condensed into a concise and suggestive statement where spectacle becomes a cohesive unit. But the revealing of some mechanisms in twentieth century theatre has become part of a scenic language derived from a theory of the stage which is no longer relevant. The modus operandi has a role in performance but it is entirely different from that initially intended by Brecht. We applaud the imaginative use of technologies but the resultant standardisation of stage effects, which comes from the over use of such decor is quite naturally, less than imaginative and the dangers of its repetition have not been fully comprehended. Therefore, "What we stand for is not separatism of art but the autonomy of the aesthetic function" "But the poetic function, 'poeticity', is, as the 'formalists' stressed, an element *sui generis*, one that cannot be mechanically reduced to other elements". [Jakobson p.174] Thus, the reproduction in a mechanical fashion of that which was once the essence, or as Barthes' suggests, is the *grain*, limits the essence and limits the audience involvement, so contradicting the need for involvement and critical awareness on the part of the audience, which

204

was expressed as necessary by Brecht. It is not an intellectual challenge to the audience but a recognition and celebration of the technology. In the raw first meeting of the style, it is the phenotype which when over used, as with the cliché, allows reproduction but does not allow a re-reading. The flattening out of production styles and values into 'perfection' represented by high production values, leaves the audience with the performance of technique and not a poetic. The paradox is painful because it implies the need for 'poor' production values, however, what is really implied is the need for a truth of purpose within production rather than the commodification of styles, which have been learnt from theoretical writings, and theatre practitioners prose.

The reification of specific theatre styles is due in part therefore to the commodification of theory. In part the technology has allowed the reproduction of style as a commodity, and formalist practice has popularised 'methods' of theatre production. Unfortunately, the shopping for style and design is an inevitable product of both consumer and society.

Bibliography

Ivan Aksyanov 1923 Zrelishcha Moscow no.21 p.8 in Braun 1969.

Louis Althusser, 1971, Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays, trans. Ben Brewster, New Left Books, London

Arnold Aronson, 1993, 'The 1991 Prague Quadrennial', The Drama Review, Spring T134.

Roland Barthes,1977, Image Music Text, Essays selected and translated by Stephen Heath, Fontana Press, London

Monroe C. Beardsley, 1973, The Possibility of Criticism, Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Ben Chaim in Susan Bennett 1994.

Susan Bennett, 1994, Theatre Audiences: A Theory of Production and Reception, Routledge, London.

Herbert Blau, 1983, 'Universals of Performance; or, Amortizing Play',
Sub-stance 37-38.

Edward Braun, 1969, Meyerhold on Theatre, Methuen, London.

Bertolt Brecht, 1964, Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an
Aesthetic, ed. translated by John Willett, Methuen Drama.

Marvin Carlson, 1984, Theories of Theatre: A Historical and Critical
Survey from the Greeks to the Present, Cornell University Press.

R.G. Collingwood,1938, The Principles of Art, Oxford University Press

Irene Eynat-Confino, 1995, 'Architecture, Past, and Future: Gordon
Craig - the citta ideale and the teatro ideale', Conference paper to the
International Meeting of Scenography IFTR at the Prague Quadrennial.

Linda Coverdale, 1984, The Grain of the Voice: interviews, 1962-1980,
Hill & Wang, New York.

Robert Edmond Jones, 1969, The Dramatic Imagination:reflection and
speculation on the art of the theatre, Theatre Art Books, New York.

John Fuegi, 1994, The Life and Lies of Bertolt Brecht, Flamingo,
London.

Peter Holland, 1978, 'Brecht, Bond, Gaskill, and the Practice of Political
Theatre', Theatre Quarterly.

Linda Hutcheon, 1988, A Poetics of Postmodernism History, Theory,
Fiction, Routledge, New York and London

Frederic Jameson, 1977, 'Reflections in Conclusion' in Taylor 1977,
pp.196-213.

            - 1984, 'Postmodernism, Or The Cultural Logic of
Late Capitalism', New Left Review, 146, p.53-92.

Roman Jakobson, 1976, 'What is poetry' in Semiotics of Arts, ed.
Ladislav Matejka and Irwin R. Titunik.

S. Langer,1957, Philosophy in a New Key , Harvard University Press.

Vernon Lee, 1913, The Beautiful, Cambridge University Press. (Vernon
Lee nom de plume of Violet Paget).

Colin Lyas, 1995, <u>Philosophical Aesthetics an introduction</u>, ed. Oswald Hanfling, Blackwell Publishers in association with The Open University Press

Herbert Marcuse, 1978, <u>The Aesthetic Dimension</u>, Beacon Press, Boston Mass.

Michael Moriarty, 1991, <u>Roland Barthes</u>, Polity Press.

John Peacock, 1991, 'Ben Jonson's Masques and Italian Culture', in <u>Theatre of the English and Italian Renaissance</u>, ed. J.R. Mulryne and Elizabeth Shewring, MacMillan Basingstoke.

Torquato Tasso, 1973, <u>Discourses on the Heroic Poem</u>, translated by Marcello Cavalchini and Irene Samuel, Oxford.

Louis Arnnaud Reid, 1969, <u>Meaning in the Arts</u>, Muirhead Library of Philosophy, Allen & Unwin, London.

Gavin Scott, 1996, 'Multimedia DO-IT-BY-YOURSELF HAMLET Canadian playwright Robert Lepage gives Shakespeare's tagedy a once-over and a new name', <u>TIME International</u>, May 20, Volume 147, no. 21.

Ronald Taylor (ed.),1977, <u>Aesthetics and Politics</u>, New Left Books, London.

L.Trotsky, 1960, <u>Literature and Revolution</u>, University of Michigan Press.

Kenneth Tynan, 1961, <u>Curtains</u>, Penguin: Harmondsworth

L. Wittgenstein, 1953, <u>Philosophical Investigations</u>, Blackwell.

Conclusion

What is theatre? What kind of a question is this to be asking in a thesis on British Theatre Scenography, and in the conclusion! 'A theatre', 'the theatre', 'theatre', all have different connotations. We speak of connections and reflections by which an audience can see different attitudes and aspects of contemporary issues. However, 'a theatre' refers to a building, 'the theatre' refers to a form, and 'theatre' a political state. This mix of labels which inevitably interfere with one another, the nature of the object and its making, becomes philosophically challenging. Theatre can be used to subvert, as a counter culture to other forms, such as television and film, and to the stagnant static forms of theatre itself. It is critical of culture and of itself. In the late twentieth century the increasingly fluid nature of the boundaries between high and low culture and art forms, has to some extent been encouraged by other forms, in particular television and film, and in contrast bourgeois theatre is endeavouring to hold out against becoming a part of this mass culture. This resistance at one end of the theatre spectrum and the compliance which theatre has, in the past, shown towards mass culture and being considered a part of popular culture, is raising questions about its form, construction and meaning. In the 1980s resistance to the idea of theatre as a mass cultural form, was achieved by dismissing the popular as spectacle, and many critics did not celebrate the raised profile of the theatre experience and the increased attendance at the theatre. In the 1990s there is the inevitable fin de sieclé pressure, which is making the establishment jittery and many theatre institutions have been instructed to become popular or die. The recent instruction from the Minister for Culture, Chris Smith [1998] to the management of The Royal Opera House and his subsequent enquiry into the amalgamation of the English National Opera and the Royal Opera, illustrate these political intentions.

Intentions which are responding to a need and call for popular culture, rather than the continued support of an élite's concerns.

In this thesis I have endeavoured to show how, in part, the funding issues of the late twentieth century have changed our perceptions and the aesthetics of what we expect both at the theatre and of the theatre. Having decided that spectacle may be necessary for emotional and meaningful contact with the audience, and that this is a good thing; that scenography cannot be reduced from the whole of what we term theatre and that capitalism is here to stay; the questions which are raised for the scenographer and scenographic team relate to the nature of how we see theatre. If it is a product made by many people for an even greater number to see, should theatre scenography be a continual presentation of packaged object? If we accept this as the nature of the form 'theatre', in the late twentieth century, then we have begun to respond to it in a similar manner, as we respond to religion; where the story varies little and methods of presentation rely on belief rather than intrinsic meaning. In this respect the ceremony becomes simply a repetition of what works. It is the ultimate in reified object and to a large extent scenography can aid this, resulting in the further commodification of the scenography and the theatre.

The points I wish to raise in this conclusion stem from concerns about the nature of stagnation and the use of scenography to perpetuate the status quo, when in truth scenography is an area which has enabled a freedom of form for a theatre, the theatre and, theatre.

We are currently questioning what theatre buildings should be and how they should be constructed. This is typified by a debate about whether fly towers on existing theatre buildings should be demolished! "The latest Arts Council statement likely to cause blood pressure to rise concerns an impending review of the need for flytowers since the

Council feels there are opposing views and consequently questions the value of the high cost of such structures. Whilst it is true that modern scenic design rarely incorporates flying as part of the experience, it seems to me to be undemocratic in the least to restrict designers to a static or electronic experience. I am tempted to suggest that only a few years ago we would have been criticised for not considering a fly tower". [Walne:1998, p.64] The very fact that there is such a discussion, suggests that the nature of the object or product 'theatre' has changed quite substantially and the destruction of theatre fly towers implies the many and varied ways in which theatre productions are staged beyond the proscenium stages which are contained within most of our repertory theatres.

Ultimately the lack of rules, an almost chaotic theatre, will help a theatre evolve which does inevitably form a counter culture. As with most counter cultures, and the irony of the counter culture of the 1960s and 1970s, and the radical nature and anti-establishment politics of these forms, are that they are frequently funded 'by' the establishment. This situation, however, may never be resolved but it does not mean the culture was not 'counter' to that of the 'establishment' at some point in its life. The narrative imperatives that present themselves during the creation of an art form, and which are present in the creation of theatre in particular, are its regularity of production - it is not necessarily chaotic but the 'system' of creation is extremely hard to determine.

Throughout this century there has been a tussle over power; power in respect of who controls the meaning of theatre. Expressionist and Epic theatre used built-in effects of self-conscious theatricality and devices of ironic distancing, which have put the audience in the special position of authority. The involvement of the audience has allowed them to reflect on public affairs and judge a 'meaning' of this thing called theatre. The play and the performance are indivisible, as I have tried to show, and the

preoccupations with spectacle and of the fears raised by it, both from critics and playwrights, become the preoccupations of the audience of this period. In much the same way there is a general lament of the lack of poetry in our material world of the late twentieth century, and this has also tended to threaten who we felt we were, and has made us question the characteristics we were presenting. In this respect then, there are parallels with concerns at the beginning of this century. Tretyakov noted that, "the results of the 'October Revolution of the Theatre' were nil: "The confrontation of 'life' and 'art' is over. What is left are confrontations between different styles within 'art'. Theatre has returned to its channels, constructions have become decent wooden sets, and biomechanics a peculiar kind of plastic movement."[Kleberg:1993, p.115] The similarities between the bourgeois theatre presentations in many of our theatre buildings and the diminishing resonance of physical theatre as a political statement, have similarities to Tretyakov's analysis of post-1917 Russian theatre.

"The theatre thrashes around in its little box and cannot get out. No help is to be had here from masters of ceremonies, strolls out among the audience, performances 'out in the provinces', topical interpolations in the text or other such sallies on the part of the actor, walled in as he is by the footlights.

"Attempts have been made to explode the theatre 'from within'. In vain. The expert dynamiters conscientiously expended their supplies of dynamite - but the result was unexpected:
Instead of an explosion, a brilliant pyrotechnical display glorifying that same bastion of theatricality (cf. Meyerhold's 'The Forest', Tairov's 'The Storm', etc.).
But must the theatre be blown up? Let it stand as a monument to art and olden times.

The new theatricality is taking shape without it and outside it - not in special little theatre boxes, but in the midst of the spectators - *in the clubs*!

Of course, not on the old club stages straining to imitate the 'real' theatres, but in our new clubs that are free of academic traditions.

Here *there are no plays* - there are only *scenarios*.

Not topical *interpolations*, but a thoroughly topical *text*.

Not 'contact' between actor and people, but a blood relationship.

Not the pinning-up of agitational pennants, but a single agitational task.

Not causuistic motivation of why Ostrovsky is useful to the people, but clear ultilitarianism.

Not props, but reality.

Not the amusing fireworks of the unfortunate dynamiters, but the living fire of modern theatricality.

The new club has allies in the theatrical world: the *circus* and the *variety stage*.

They have what it needs.

It is through their water of life that the old theatre man will rediscover his youth.

But remember the fairy tale?

'The tsar jumped into the pot and was cooked.

But Ivanushka the fool came out of the pot handsome and wise.'[Osip Brik:1924, p.22]

The reification of spectacle has incurred a preponderance of these preoccupations and it is clear that theatre can be a timely commentator of culture. The number of threads which are interwoven within a single play in performance and its elasticity is to be celebrated. However, this can only perpetuate if the mix is continued, and not replicated to savour the thirst of capitalist structures of production which at present run our system of funding and which are becoming the more important

preoccupations of theatre artists, rather than a search for a truth, magic and sense of reason which human beings wrestle with, and which theatre as a form, is very good at expressing. The political power of the maker of the Art is linked to their understanding of their purpose as artists. This may go some way to explain the recent withdrawal of permission by Alan Parker, for the National Youth Theatre to produce his production of Bugsy Malone. Parker said he was proud of the film and did not want other productions to detract from his work by not fully understanding the nature of the material.[The Guardian:18th April,1998] In a similar way Joan Littlewood has always refused rights to the RNT and RSC to produce Oh What a Lovely War. The RNT have recently got around her stipulations by producing it as a national tour, which of course admits her intention that the work is not placed in a bourgeois environment where its meaning is diluted. The struggle by these individuals to retain ownership of their work because of its political potency requires changes in how we see the theatrical text. If the struggle is no longer there we are in danger of producing a stagnant tradition which is simply played out almost as a religious service. Whilst the dialectical nature of scenography has increased, its aesthetic has become fetishized in the same way as most religions 'play out' what is successful for their message. The religious festival in the catholic church in Spain, which results in thousands of people walking in procession, in costume, carrying items of celebration and in particular, large platforms of recognisable tableaux, lit by candles and smelling of heady incense might lead one to believe, that theatrical spectacle is best achieved beyond the theatre walls; without professional actors but with willing participants and scenography. The whole event is choreographed, structured and designed to affect an emotional response, we know our part and can react in some sense by autosuggestion. It has a universality of approach and an attraction which is linked to the meaning that the whole theatrical event has for the participants. This event has a nostalgic attraction which concerns a sense of togetherness, community

213

and mission; common aim. This is how spectacle can work. However, the attraction to nostalgic events is one of the problems of the late twentieth century theatre, that repeats such designed features. This is similar to way that the gratuitous use of technology, the flashing of expensive lighting before a dazzled public can emit the response from the audience of, 'how did they do that?' Those questions also arise when we view the Thames Barrier, or the Sears Tower: feats of engineering which are amazing to wonder at, and by their existence celebrate human activity. However, Scenography is not about construction or the celebration of engineering techniques, if it becomes that as part of the theatrical event then something 'other' is happening to the audience. They are passive celebrants of human activity rather than active spectators in the event. They witness the extra-ordinary, not the spectacular. They do not experience the poetry possible in theatrical performance because the poem does not exist.

Over the last seven years during which I have been compiling my research, attitudes in the theatre profession towards technology have changed quite considerably. Initially, technology was seen as radical and to be feared, now however, it has been realised that the technology is all part of a further experimentation. Sometimes this has positive effects, sometimes negative and there is now a clearer understanding of how one can relate to technology. An example of this was the Association of British Theatre Technicians'(ABTT) trip to The Lyceum theatre in London, to view both the theatre building and the production of <u>Jesus Christ Superstar</u>. The production was reported as being reminiscent of a particular style of design, in this case John Napier's and a revival of his design for <u>Nicholas Nickleby</u>. In addition the technology was dismissed as being, "Drottingholm with motors". [ABTT:1998] What this illustrates, is how when we know what works we use it, and as both productions had the same designer the fear of plagiarism is merely the recognition of a designers' style, and use of pragmatics rather than the

deterioration of the theatrical practice. The contradictions inherent in the use of certain theories, practices and their heritage, is in fact the only way in which any art form does not become reified; as it is by the use of a variety of style, politics and philosophy that something different is achieved. [Adorno:1984; Lukács:1971] This is a clearer analysis of technology as a means to an end, rather than the 'knee-jerk' reaction, which technology received in the 1980s. This realisation of what technology is, has calmed the belief that technology is the downfall of new writing. The lack of empirical evidence to prove that new plays are now less culturally penetrative than in the 1960s and 1970s, is ultimately divisive. We do know, however, that in economic terms buildings and institutions of theatre feel it is more viable to produce a large technological event, rather than a new play, whether it, as Phyllis Nagy suggested, deals with, "the collapse of our collective bravery", or deals with, "violent sexual practices, drug taking and general nihilism."[Michael Coveney:1997] The principals of pleasure which are involved in the making of the popular, and the spectacular, which behove the audience to use their imagination as another tool in the production of theatre, are no longer a part of philosophical discussion about theatre. Philosophical discussion has become an accepted premise by which theatre works. The involvement of the audience to this extent, using their imaginations, as Appia suggested, must however be utilised with care. It must veer away from the commodification of reified examples of an Art which will limit imagination, and lead to stagnation. It is the mass production of theatre which leads to stagnation, in the same sense that repeated activities used in other theatrical arenas offer an event, whose meaning in the sense of a radical statement of human existence is never different from the accepted practice, hence the comparison with religious festivals, the reified product. As in other ages the repetition of form produces a bourgeois theatre.

215

Therefore, a social and emotional response to action (theatre production) and the staging of objects has in turn influenced scenography. For example in the sense that the character feels this and so would have that...but what if the character has that because that is what people have? Ultimately, the practice of theatre is not simply a theatrical art but necessarily a political one.

There is then a need to rethink what we mean by performance in the 1980s and after. The high academic formalisms of semiotics and deconstruction, have sought to expose and dismantle the dominant system of representation, however, they too have become a part of the Art. In any event a political discourse cannot satisfy an aesthetic theory of textuality at its politically weakest, "which doesn't acknowledge its involuntary regeneration of the same subject of history, the same family drama of capitalist culture, that it has declared defunct."[Birringer:1991, p.171] However, if Birringer is correct how can Art ever rebel against it's parents and it's heritage?

David Edgar's belief that socialism would come from the theatre of the Royal Court does have some credence, when we consider this as where Brecht was disseminated for the British. However, the politics of the Royal Court was and is always aesthetic because of both its catchment area and its self awareness, "a great deal of writing, acting, and directing talent is given a 'socialist' reason for deserting the working class and settling down to experimenting with 'the upending of received forms' for the cosmopolitan cultural élite, whether in The Warehouse or Manhattan Theatre Club." [[McGrath:1979, p.54] This is a fair criticism which seems to have resonance in the late twentieth century, for companies who are reinventing the use of style and it's value.

A preoccupation with style and in particular expressionism, (which comes from the need for originally the artist Van Gogh to express himself with force), has driven theatre to be reflective, concentrating on expression. "The abiding secret of dramatic interpretation lies in its

'style', the way of seeing of writer, player or spectator, and style is the one ingredient, it must be supposed, which a play and its performance should ideally have in common, since it is the sine qua non of dramatic communication."[J.L.Styan: 1981, p.1] The confluence of style and content, as expressed here by Styan, expresses what was striven for in the early 1980s. However, the problems of over stylisation and the inherent detraction from the human detail due to the zealous pursuit of it, has to be admitted. In particular the theatre has been stripped of sentimentality, although the appropriation of style has actually enabled a sentimental use of anti-romantic features, which themselves are then reified. The subjectivity encouraged by early expressionism especially in the form of Strindberg's The Ghost Sonata required a similar style of design and staging. However, the delving into the consciousness of human beings has, in the latter part of the twentieth century, been dispensed with. Many of the new plays of the 1990s are depicting our actuality, the here and now, for example with Shopping and Fucking, The Hare Trilogy, Lights, Amy's View and the re-stagings of Shakespeare and other classic texts, most notably Robert Lepage's Elsinore. Lars Kleberg is again useful here as he expresses the shifting ground which has changed theatre practice throughout this century, "the major shift of emphasis that occurred in the latter half of the 1920s from director to actor, from production to text, and, of course, from politics to psychology."[Kleberg:1993, p.114] The expression of the psychological stage has been enabled through many changes in scenography, most particularly lighting design, which can bind themes rather than simply illuminate the environment from a naturalistic stance. The poetic of this drama has been found but not transcended. It's currency is diminished perhaps, because the profound and subjective investigations have become more prosaic, as is suggested by the subject matter of the modern plays quoted above. "The poetics of the moment are found in the relevant drama mode for and of its time and not simply regurgitated as form." [Stallybrass & White:1986, p.201]

Signification, metaphor, denotation and connotation, aesthetics and modern criticism must use an aesthetic model because of the dislocation of political purpose in the making of theatre. As with New Socialism, neatly coined the 'third way', we have a less polemical Art form. So scenography involves pragmatic problem solving. It is architectural in process, but these pragmatics have shifted some of the theatre forms of the twentieth century, back to the nineteenth century. In 'The Theory and Practice of Political Theatre', John McGrath talks of the political practice which was being dislocated, "presenting a theatre of classes"..."Lets talk about theatre that has as its base a recognition of capitalism as an economic system which produce classes; that sees the betterment of human life for all people in the abolition of classes and of capitalism;".[[McGrath:1979, p.43] McGrath links the important features of the economic structure with the need for self-expression. He suggests that there is an uneven development of the emergent, which is not present in modern theatre production and the way in which emergent practice becomes assimilated, McGrath highlighted, is the inherent problem of opposition as a novelty, "appropriated in production by the very ideology they set out to oppose." [McGrath:1979, p.46]   In addition, McGrath highlights the problems of over use, which are problems which resonate for the theatre of the 1980s, "Effect for effect's sake can lead to trivialization". [[McGrath:1979, p.54] This is perhaps a clearer articulation of the damnation of technology which occurred in the 1980s. A reaction to this was to present physical objects on stage which left the actor alone and not masked or enveloped by a naturalistic set which exposed and freed the actor. In this expression the actors presence and activity is primary, nothing is left to superfluous detail and so all detail has meaning. This deconstruction emerged from the expressionist form and has enabled the theory of semiotics to be applied to theatre performance, for without this opposition it would not have emerged, as there would not have been a need to describe the significant objects in

the theatre space. This in turn has tended to make us explore theatre performance as a series of separate texts; that of the actor, voice and body; that of the scenic environment; that of the social strata within which it sits. In reverting to the view that theatre is a collection of texts rather than 'theatre' being seen as a means of production, we are led to an acceptance of the most reactionary structures, which are at the core of our theatre funding system. The problems of the authentic document of a text for the theatre can lead to it being a record of stagnant forms, caused in some senses by the notation of Scenography. The literary publication paradoxically restricts us to re-staging. Stagnation occurs when RSC and RNT productions are copied as the reified practice, which is notated in the text published by these companies. So whilst we may wish to have the notation of the complete production, as by doing this it recognises the value of that which is presented, or at least suggests it's value, in actual fact it diminishes the value of the theatre, as it goes against the nature of the form. This is not a reinterpretation, but a re-staging. The open Text which allows audience engagement, aids participation, the reverse achieves consumption and if such texts are used to produce the reified product then the Text is closed - ready to be consumed.

The archived objects from theatre inevitably become fraught with political connotations, as the notated theatre signification is linked to a political conception. However, the reification of the scenography in the form of the model, as a piece of iconography to be studied later in an attempt to illuminate the sociological and historical context of a production, is extremely different from analysing the nature of the scenography and its impact on a particular performance. For instance in the work of Robert Wilson, such distinctions become academic. "Wilson, our latter-day Fitzcaraldo who brings the new opera to the jungle of cities (the twelve - hour fragment, designed as a collaboration between theatres in Cologne, Rotterdam, Marseille, Rome, Tokyo, and

Minneapolis, was scheduled for the Olympic Arts Festival in Los Angeles but failed to secure sufficient sponsorship), is perhaps the most typical example of an emerging élite of designers, composers, and visual/performing artists that meets the interests of major cultural institutions in rebuilding the aura of "avant-garde" performance on a very large scale, involving the glamour of high risks and high budgets and the full range of commodity tie-ins (sale of books, posters, records, video cassettes, T-shirts, touring exhibitions and so forth) available to efficient "art world" marketing machinery."[Birringer:1991, p.171-73] We have returned to the, "image of high art, and with it the patriarchal mythology of the "masterwork" (Einstein on the Beach?), while coopting a host of culture industrial forms into material support for its production." [Birringer:1991,p.173] However self-referentiality has led to the end of any coherent viewpoint or subjectivity, "of any epistemology arranged in spatial terms and dependent on distinctions between subject and object, the real and the imaginary, the body and its projections".[Birringer:1991, p.174-175] For the inter-textual presentation resists the spectator rather than admit their imagination. "And yet, the question of how one listens to Wilson's architectural abstractions is redeterminable (and not determined) precisely through the obvious ideological contradictions built into the scenario of the CIVIL warS, into its imaginary "Prussian history" that ends with a hysterical epilogue on the History of Mankind during which we are offered *undifferentiated* images of mythical, anthropomorphic, historical, and literary figures. Sound begins to fill the air, furiously, signifying nothing. The "Snow Owl" screeches (Hopi prophecies, as the program indicates), the "Earth Mother" mutters a Grecian fairy tale, "King Lear" quotes himself, speaking to the blind ("Look with thine ears..."), and a tall black shape that looks like Abe Lincoln recites Ecclesiastes in Latin; "tempus est". Blackout.

"It is impossible not to notice the strange disproportion between the technical design of this "holographic" scene and the total emptiness of its content. The recovery of a social content implies reconceiving the ambivalent relationship between the theatrical body of the actor and the technological representations by which it is hollowed out."[Birringer:1991, p.178-179] The possibilities enabled by theatre expression, are gutted from the theatre, and its body dispensed with. Rather than use fetishes as the means of production, we actually need to experiment with, "the transformable theatricality of body and voice in real space-time - and thus addressing the actually changing conditions of representation *for* social subjects that we experience today." [Birringer:1991, p180] In looking beyond the technologically sublime, artists like Pina Bausch have learnt that the medium is not the message and if theatre wishes to survive it must resist the masculinist aesthetic of a new "technological sublime"[Lyotard:1984]. Peter Sellars suggests that this can be done by a reinvention and in turn a re-staging of theatre works. This reinvention may be another technological dream which allows an 'avant garde' fantasy and which we are already familiar with; stagnation may still persist when theatre is no longer effecting or radical, merely whinging with a pretence to meaning and resonance, for example in Shopping and Fucking and Lights, which at the end of the performances make one want to ask, 'So?'. However, theatre is a continual presentation of packaged object and over centuries we have had phases when it has been more or less accentuated. Can it be avoided or should it? The theatre of the present is very safe and middle class. The diversification and disruption of this audience, can only occur when theatre wishes to be more inclusive of the society it 'plays' within.

The flourishing of theatre arts has been proved to not necessarily need to be housed in theatre buildings which are a safe haven for the middle-classes and this has been due, in part, to the triumph of touring theatre companies in a variety of different spaces. The financial support

that theatre buildings may have received up until now is beginning to be questioned, not least because of the cost of maintenance but also in the hope of reawakening civic pride, and thereby including private money for the maintenance of such buildings. The dependency of buildings on large grants, has been thrown into relief by the number of projects which have received funding all over the country, of both professional and amateur companies performing very different and varied theatrical experiences. [Arts Council of England:1998] Drama and theatre has flourished but not necessarily in the places where it has been traditionally housed. Ironically, this has also been due, in part, to the nature of new technologies. Their flexibility, and transportability has enabled open spaces to be converted into theatre environments, or non-traditional theatre buildings to provide spectacular and moving theatrical experiences for a variety of audiences. It is in these areas of the community, who are involved in theatre and drama, where the threat to the bourgeois theatre of the West End is to be found, where the staid productions of the national companies, who no longer speak to the vibrant, young and the politically astute have little credence. Alien objectives have taken hold of the majority of building based companies, for reasons which are obvious given the rather narrow funding structures which are permitted in the United Kingdom.

Younger companies who constitute from students of theatre and elsewhere, are beginning to question these rather narrow boundaries of definition which gave companies in the 1960s and 1970s, a political identity. These new companies want to provide a number of styles of theatre/drama; they wish to perform to a variety of targeted constituencies, young or old, theatre in education or community theatre, full length play or postmodern collage of a disrupted world; performed in a pub, in a school or in a traditional theatre space. This is the theatrical real politic of the fin de sieclé, and funding bodies must restructure the pigeonholes to accommodate the differing performance patterns, as the

222

then Arts Council of Great Britain had to respond in the 1960s and 1970s. At present such companies must endeavour to be project funded, if funded at all. It is a hand to mouth existence but pressure to suggest an 'alternative theatre' and pressure to change the definitions of the theatrical, could elicit a vibrant, plural, and instructive time in the theatre, which may in fact be had by a far wider audience than has yet been imagined. Instead of creating companies which specialise we have the ability, having trained so many students in the multiplicity of choices available in the performing arts, to create companies of multi-skilled and multi-talented artists, who can see relationships between art forms and performance styles which will enrich the next wave of theatre in the twenty first century. The "immanent processes in which man is as much object as he is agent for creativity", need to be facilitated.[Altieri:1973,p.608] Such interrelationships of forms of performance and constituencies, would negate the damage done by the rise of capitalist ideology within the performing arts and would result in a 'rebirth of drama', after the empty formalism of the late 1980s and 1990s. A theatre of immediacy could be asserted which in Steven Conner's terms would be, "the presence of performance against the inauthenticity of representation".[Connor: 1989,p.154] The organisation of the Arts in general and theatre in particular, must not be allowed to diminish the endeavours of artists, with Art controlled by the ruling class, "the plaything of (corporate) patrons whose relation to culture is less one of noble obligation than of overt manipulation - of art as a sign of power, prestige, publicity." [Foster:1985, p.6] In this hegemony of late twentieth century theatre the controllers and critics have simultaneously refuted technology and then embraced those same technologies. This illustrates quite clearly the power of capital in the manipulation of cultural forms. However, whether the special needs of the intellectual will ever meet the social needs of the community, is a coincidence Habermas discussed without coming to any clear conclusion.[Bernstein:1985, pp161-75] The distinctions between high

223

art and mass culture have already become blurred and with luck and political will, this can be sustained. As a direct consequence of this blurring of the borders, the plurality of events which can be described as theatrical has multiplied in the late twentieth century and the impetus for this explosion has been an expansion in the number of theatre practices, which are used to produce a particular event. The techniques of production may involve work-shopping, improvisation, and the creation of texts from image stimuli or from scenographic information. The appreciation of the scenography of theatre performance, has aided this practice by highlighting the relevance of the scenographic to the performance text and hence, fine artists have become interested in the performative nature of their Art, not just its exhibition and galleries have begun to explore the nature of theatrical presentation for art objects.[1]

The discussion which the study of British Theatre Scenography in late twentieth century has provoked must recognise the continually shifting ground and it is part of an ongoing cultural process, the poetic of which changes with the culture and theoretical procedures which are prevalent.

Spectacle which occurs on the streets is mediated, it's intention is for the ceremony to reinforce the ideology, the spectators and performers are not required to be critical or inquiring of the event, the scenography is used to reinforce the intention. However, at no time does spectacle lack intention although it can lack the need to provoke a distanced objectivity in its audience, as perhaps Meyerhold best illustrated and his work provoked ideas on, "the nature of the theatrical audience and its modes of reception." [Kleberg:1993, p118] Ultimately, the poetic of scenography cannot be extricated from the total theatre event, once the audience has viewed that event, as when the poem is finished, the resonant images/lines continue to reverberate. Although, it could be used to express the dominant ideology. The social and moral expediency of theatre has diminished and Tairov's statement about Russian theatre post

-1920 is perhaps more relevant to our situation in the late twentieth century, "Theatre is theatre." [Kleberg:1993,p.117] Where that theatre is seen as a luxury and market forces have altered attitudes about the projects that are, and should be created, there have been many examples of commodification. These projects have added to the theatre of illusion, as artistic directors have listened to market forces which have urged the production of unified sets and unitary meanings for the sale of the unitary product. In this sense the *deus ex machina* has had a different use from that of Greek classical theatre. It is therefore, the context of technology which is important, as this determines the use of manipulation and play, where both the pre-interpreted and the poetic of scenography can define the work that becomes reified. The recognition of features from theory as useful images, identifies the possibility for manipulation of a large group of people, the audience. As theory suggests that if experimented with, and practised then a particular effect will have been achieved. The reification of these features for commercial reasons must be realised by the audience, in order that they are not duped, as both Barthes and Brecht feared. Where such features of presentation have become fetishes assimilated as conventions which express a certain type of production, then such productions become formal expressions of those theories, which are then mediated through the individual viewer, even if only *sotto voce*. The poetic is only created if the form has a particular resonance to the text. Quite naturally then, this text becomes a poetic for interpretation by the audience, and not the theorist. If the features of the form are recognisable to the audience as a repeated form without resonance to the text, then the scenography plays the part of packaging and no poetic is created. The irreducible concept of the Scenographic text has become reduced, a bolt on extra which pertains to a theory but no longer resonates with the original intention. Invariably, our audiences are able to recognise such packaging.

Whilst the capitalist structure of theatre and the rather narrow field which this market has created, has resulted in specific aesthetics which are used in commercial theatre by both the public and private sector, to sell the product, the breadth of influence which visual theatre has had on the literary text for theatre, has resulted in a renaissance of interest which will hopefully concentrate attention on what, broadly speaking, all these theatre events provide for society. Optimistically, it is to be hoped that theatre as an art form can play a large part in the regeneration of late twentieth century society. Simply in terms of economics, investment in theatre can provide a plethora of employment and multiply those industries which benefit from our entertainment of one another. Certainly the Objective 1 projects funded by the European Union will result in an expansion of artistic buildings, for example in Bradford the Photography, Television and Film Centre, and funded by the National Lottery and private finance, the Millennium Dome. As value for money, theatre is a proven area which is worth expanding. Such investment might result in a greater concentration on what theatre-makers may wish to say to theatre-viewers, through meaningful spectacle. This must involve a discussion of how we relate to Art, and more generally what we see it's function and value to be in late twentieth century society. The number of projects submitted to the Millennium Office for consideration illustrates the enormous output of artists in the community, who recognise this initiative as an opportunity for project development, and as a place to submit their work. It also suggests that contrary to David Edgar's suggestion at the Eighth Birmingham Theatre Conference, the state of British performance is not simply about "masculinity and its discontent". [The Observer 20th April,1998] On the contrary there is a sense of expectancy and involvement amongst what might be termed Britain's artistic community. In 'Commissioning The Future', a document published in May 1997 the New Playwrights Trust began to discuss play commissioning in respect of a need to see the text as not purely literary, "writers don't and can't have all the answers, they

operate as an equal part of the creative team....Mel Kenyon's assertion is that in Britain the text is perceived as complete and a company realises that text; whereas in Germany the writer is a springboard for the text and a company want to work with one that is open rather than closed and finished." In addition this group also noted the "preponderance of linear and closed narrative structures".[NPT: 1997, p.10] This realisation on the part of writers, and perhaps more importantly for the future of the theatre, the commissioners of theatre work, can only have a positive result in respect of a real understanding of the value of an inclusive approach to all the theatre arts for the process of theatre production. That scenography whether it borrows a language from different theoretical approaches, or uses technology as a means of expression, is ultimately about collaboration. The collaboration of arts and people, of technology and writing, and it is this practice that creates a poetic and an irreducible concept.

Bibliography

Theodor W. Adorno, 1984, Aesthetic Theory, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

Altieri, 1973, 'From Symbolist Thought to Immanence: The Ground of Postmodern American Poetics', Boundary 21, Vol.3, pp605-641.

Arts Council of England, 1998, Arts Lottery, Spring, ACE, London

Bell, 1976, The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism, Heinemann.

Richard J. Bernstein, 1985, 'Habermas & Lyotard on postmodernity', in Habermas & Modernity, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Johannes Birringer, 1991, Theatre, Theory, Postmodernism, Indiana University Press, Bloomington & Indianapolis.

Osip Brik, 1924, 'Ne v teatre, a v klube', Lef, no.1, 5, Translated and published in Kleberg, 1993.

Edward Bullough, 1912, 'Physical Distance as a factor in Art and an Aesthetic Principle', in British Journal of Psychology, No.5, June, pp87-118

Steven Connor, 1989, Postmodernist Culture: An Introduction to Theories of the Contemporary, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

Michael Coveney, 1997, 'Play Fighting', The Observer, 20th April.

David Edgar, 1997, 'Notes and Queries: Four papers given at About Now: the eighth Birmingham Theatre Conference, the University of Birmingham, 11-13th April 1997', in Studies in Theatre Production, No.15, June, pp.79-103.

M. Featherstone, 1988, 'In Pursuit of the Postmodernism', Special issue on Postmodernism, Theory, Culture & Society, Vol.5, No.2-3, June.

Foster, 1984, 'Postmoderninsm, on the logic of late capitalism', in Art After Modernism:Rethinking Representation, Brian Wallis, David R.Godine, Boston and New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York.

Hans Robert Jacess, 1982, 'Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics', in Interpretation of Narrative, Editors, Mario J. Valdes & Owen J. Miller, University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Lars Kleberg, 1993, Theatre as action:Soviet Russian avant-garde aesthetics, translated from Swedish by Charles Rougle, Macmillan, London, Series New directions in theatre.

Georg Lukács, 1971, History and Mass Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectic, Cambridge, Massachusetts, MIT Press.

Jean-Francois Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis

John McGrath, 1979, 'The Theory and Practice of Political Theatre', Theatre Quarterly, Vol.IX, No.35, p.54.

NPT, 1997, New Playwrights Trust:'Commissioning The Future', London Arts Board.

Peter Stallybrass and Allan White, 1986, The Politics and Poetics of Transgression, Ithaca:Cornell University Press.

Graham Walne, 1998, 'Art of the Matter', in <u>Lighting and Sound International</u>, February, pp.63-64.

Janet Wolff, 1983, <u>Aesthetics and the Sociology of Art</u>, George Allen & Unwin, London.

[1]<u>The Gallery of the Future</u>, April 1998, James France Exhibition Centre, Loughborough University. This was a consortium project funded by the National Lottery to produce a gallery for the exhibition of computer animation, projections, sensor environments, sculpture and digital paintings for which I was engaged as Exhibition Designer and Lighting designer for a theatrical environment. This was, therefore, a staging of those art works which both performed themselves but which were exhibited in a theatrical arena.

Appendix Contents

Introduction to Appendix a & b

The market forces in the lighting manufacturing over the last 10 years have influenced the nature of the product available. My research and the co-operation of Strand Lighting UK resulted in a number of initiatives to look at new technologies which the company should pursue but which were lead by the artists rather than the technology. This data proved that the artists are often adapting existing equipment and that most of the time they are ill informed about the technology which is available. As a consequence the manufacturers must understand their field and its application and so be the inventors of the products for the future. However, the market has come to play an ever increasing role in UK research and development and its strictures have not allowed companies to provide the innovations which the technology and the human resources have provided because of the need for a quick return on the product. These findings have informed my opinion of the nature of technology for theatre and its use in the fields of design.

Introduction to Appendix c & d

I carried out a number of surveys of audiences who attended
performances at Loughborough University's theatre. The surveys were
designed to discover the audience's response to scenography and in
addition their recognition of the role and use of scenography in theatre
for the comprehension of meaning.

The interviews which I carried out during 1995 and 1996 were designed
to discuss the feelings of designers towards their profession all of whom
were working in a variety of performance spaces. I specifically chose to
mix this study of designers with those who had experience of large
institutions and the production line element of repertory, and the more
freelance workers who had experience of a wide range of design
experiences. The directors I spoke with also indicated their
understanding of scenography as being a collaborative experience. This
aspect of scenography as collaboration was the main conclusion which I
drew from the interviews and the responses to the audience
questionnaires.

Appendix A

Data on working practice: Lighting and Set design

In an attempt to discover how the UK profession felt about the technology which was being manufactured, I sent a questionnaire to lighting designers on the Association of Lighting Designer's mailing list, and Chief Electricians of every building based theatre company in the UK, for feedback on their lighting technology, its use and effect. I then sent a further questionnaire to set designers (some of whom also design costume), for their response to the questions of employment hierarchy and what they felt about their work as a scenographic team. I also discussed with specific lighting designers, and set designers their views on the scenographic team. The Lighting Designers' questionnaire data was completed in 1992 and highlighted some interesting factors about how lighting designer's viewed their work and what working patterns they might prefer. The statistics were quite illuminating but as with most statistical surveys do not give specific information, this was given in discursive comments on the questionnaires. These contained suggestions for improvements in working practices which lighting designers felt could easily be achieved by changes in manufacturers designs for products. The rather vague question I put on the questionnaire, about how much time one would spend on a project, and how this time could be divided up did bring out some interesting points about how designers would like the rehearsal period to be divided, which I will describe later. As might be imagined most people believed that being under pressure as a designer was part of the job; though some did find particularly tight schedules limiting. Only one person seemed truly exasperated, and stated that, "It Stinks!" The ideal schedule was remarkably easy to collate with most set designers asking for a pre-rehearsal design period, and then during the rehearsal period, more time to adjust and take on ideas brought out in the rehearsal process. High on the agenda was a need for a broken rehearsal period. This being

explained as the first four weeks of rehearsal to develop design ideas within the company, the second four weeks to crystallize the design and realization; or even a break in the rehearsals for the design to be done. The idea being for the design to operate in performance terms, having a period of improvisation, alongside the acting. This is indeed the aim of many subsidized companies but again this method of working needs finance. Designers generally felt that there was a great need to be in rehearsal, and they preferred the system to work so that the design evolved, rather than was placed on top of the rehearsal process. Previews were seen as an added pressure which was unnecessary. There was a perception that budgets prove to be frustrating and unrealistic but generally people are challenged by them feeling that the small budget can focus the mind. However, it was pointed out that too small a budget actually becomes a 'stage management project' rather than a design, and often the success of the design then begins to rely on goodwill.

In relation to scale of budget the work is quite poorly funded but many of the specific items of set cost a great deal to make and are of a high quality in design terms.

In answer to the following questions in 1992-3 this data emerged: What would you consider to be a small budget?

Commercial Theatre = £6,000

Repertory Theatre = £4,000

Fringe Theatre = £200 - £1,000

Touring = £3,000

Musical/Opera = £3,000 - £20,000.

These are averages of the results. Some people differed quite markedly on what was a small budget with quotes of under £3,000, £250,000 for opera, between £3,000/£5,000, £500, "can do it on £80!" The name and address of the latter will be made available to production companies for a small fee!

The commercial responsibility of designers was felt to be only applicable within commercial theatre, and then not really that important only in terms of transfers. However, one designer did remark on the horrors of sponsorship impinging on design. Whether this is thought to be a possible 'slippery slope' or a comment from experience, was not made clear. Technology was thought to have been a help in making theatre easier in commercial, repertory, musical and opera events. There is a general fear of technology from set designers, in particular of it becoming a ruling force but the primary worry is of its reliability; with small budgets humans tend to be used for economy and are often more reliable than machinery. Many technological advances are absorbed through osmosis but the designers often don't consider the practicality of their design, leaving that to their production manager.

A large group of designers expressed a preference for trying to stimulate the audiences appetite for, "honest and simple work". The greatest illusions often created by the simplest of devices and there are obviously architectural limitations in the area of touring, as to when technology can be used.[1] It was felt that new regulations, about what can and can't be used in terms of materials and equipment on stage, and in places of public performance has withdrawn funds from design. It is highly likely that this same money could at one point have been ploughed into a more substantial use of technology for design ideas. As an industry theatre is slow to expand in these areas.

The set designers comments about those in their profession who they most respect showed a particular trend. Ideas of simplicity and clarity are cited as highly commendable. Ultimately, the designer's designer has these qualities and it is interesting to see these qualities spoken of at this particular time, after the past ten years of technological advances. How true their ideas of what simplicity results in are debatable. Often that

which seems simple has in fact used a great many of the latest advances in materials and methods to bring it effortlessly to our view.

Data Analysis

Some people chose to answer the same question twice, hence as a % answers don't add up! This is not a perfect statistical survey by the very nature of the subject matter.

1) Do you feel employed by the director or do you feel you have equal status?

Employed = 21%   Equal Status = 23%

2) Do you enjoy a creative partnership with the lighting designer?

Depends On Availability = 68%

Yes = 80% No = 12.5%

3) Do you have a pre-design meeting with the lighting designer?

Yes = 79% No = 21%

4) How much time do you spend on research?

Variable = 32%   One Week = 68%

5) How do you feel about being under pressure to complete a design before rehearsals begin?

Scheduled Time = 75%

Would Like Period For Evolving Design = 25%

6) What would your ideal schedule be?

Split Rehearsal Period = 6%

Two Months = 18%

Evolved Design = 31%

Long Period Programme = 80%

7) Are you challenged or frustrated by productions with small budgets?

Challenged = 75% Frustrated = 37%

8)What would you consider to be a small budget?
Broad Range Described Above.

9) In your preplanning, does the commercial success of the show influence your design?

No = 75% Yes = 6%

Commercial & Transfers Only = 18%

10) Have the advances in stage technology affected you?

Yes = 50% No = 18% Unreliable = 18%

More Concerned With Actor Centred Design = 6%

11) Does technology ever limit your inventiveness?

No = 81% Yes = 12%

Technology Not Considered = 6%

Technology Requires Inventiveness= 6%

[1] That is the use of flying systems and traps etc. Again, the use of flys
affects the financial cost of production in terms of personnel, especially
if access to the whole flying system is limited by the building's design,
as at Warwick Arts Centre.

Appendix B

Data on new lighting technology

Market led technology in the US, took the form of touring dimmer racks - portable and designed to fit through doorways. Production Arts have 48 LMI dimmers and 3 fans in a box 3' 6" x 2' 6". These compact dimmers each the size and thickness of an A4 ring binder make touring easy. The touring boxes were developed from a need to have equipment easily accessible but tightly packed for transporting. The newest piece of technology were aluminium bar dimmers. These dimmers at the luminaire, or in it will revolutionise theatre rigging. They are at present being produced by one company in the US called Entertainment Technology. The market asked for silent dimmers at the unit and the dimmers are non-choke, so are silent and they are on the rigging pipe. The pipe is rigged and the unit plugged in, while the control technology daisy chains back to the console, for touring and quick installation work this would be excellent. The LMI dimmers are modular and can be repaired by slotting in a new module. The call from the customer to have automated lighting with its own dimmer in the luminaire and cable-less control, has not yet been provided, although most technicians believe the technology is available. US Technicians are frustrated by manufacturers who won't manufacture labour saving goods as such products would revolutionise the theatre worker's job. Especially when one considers that quite often the smaller venues only have one permanent member of staff who is a general technician with the title of production manager. Any labour saving device is therefore a welcome advance, hence the enthusiasm for cable-less control and dimmers at the unit.

It would seem from the survey that not everyone is aware of the modern technology that is already available. We can deduce from the questionnaire results that if people were asking for the best thing ever, it did not already exist. However, many requests were for equipment that

is already manufactured. If manufacturing companies were to monopolize on the technology already known, in the manufacture of lanterns with for example, integral transformers, colour variety, light source variety, they could produce a lantern for theatres that would offer total flexibility. The 'all singing all dancing lantern'. The more flexible the equipment, the greater the range for experimentation in the short time often allowed for focusing. The choice would be for a 'multi-purpose lantern' as described by some respondents of the questionnaire. It would need to have three lenses:- fresnel, profile, prism-convex - and would therefore have a wide range of beam angles and qualities. It would have a lamp holder able to take Tungsten Halogen, H.M.I., C.S.I, Metal Halide and other varieties of light source. By asking for the ultimate flexibility in light sources however, the designer is in fact presenting more technical problems which would result in less flexible lanterns, for instance H.M.I. and C.S.I. require cold re-strike transformers and cannot be dimmed effectively. In order to accommodate these light sources, the lantern units would have to be very large, thus cutting down the number of suitable rigging positions.

If such a unit were able to function with PALS or similar, it would give theatres with separate software and hardware components, the chance to aim for these products and build up comprehensive lighting facilities. One of the problems for the chief electrician is finding compatible equipment that they may add to, and build upon.[1] The theatre lighting industry has a similar problem to the domestic hi-fi system buyer. Whether to buy a complete midi-stack system, or different components. The latter becomes limited by what is available and compatible, the former results in throwing it all away when it fails or a single part becomes obsolete. Should manufacturers try to build compatible units? SMX/DMX (U.S.I.T.T.) working party and discussions, reiterated these thoughts and they seemed to be an important part of the future of lighting equipment. However, through 1993-95, the imperative of this choice has become diffuse. It is of little consequence when computers

can be used to interface with the different equipment used. This change is, in part due to a greater familiarity with computer technology; the QWERTY variety and the realization that it is only the big commercial shows who often require this facility. These productions can afford to pay for whatever is necessary for the production's lighting, and frequently do.

Each area of the performing arts has a different requirement of its lighting, equipment and controls.

i) The one night stand venue with no time to set up and record states needs plenty of submasters.

ii) The rock show where the board is played with the music by the designer naturally needs instant access to every channel.

iii) A play which is running in rep. or for a season using x-fades but also on occasion needing the flexibility of manual over-rides.

All these factors require manufacturers to either flood the market with the most flexible technology or specialize in one particular area. The latter is costly and a definite marketing risk. It seems there is no easy answer. What is obvious is that education and publicity will help both consumer and manufacturer to live in harmony - rather than at loggerheads.

Lighting Designers' Questionnaire - discursive comments on lighting products.

The lighting design questionnaire brought a range of advice and requests, all of which I have collated here.

LANTERNS:

i) to have a wide range of beam angles.

ii) integral dimmer

iii) re-lamp from above lantern, without defocusing.

iv) dichroic filter for infinite colour spectrum.

v) pole operated lanterns.

vi) all functions i.e. lock-offs to be operable with one hand.

vii) smaller units but same wattage.

viii) zoom from 2 degrees - 45 degrees.

ix) pole operated 2kw to stop droop.

x) means of indication on lantern that it has blown.

xi) parcan to give a round beam.

xii) multipurpose lantern i.e. fresnel, profile, p.c.

CONTROL BOARDS:

i) portable lighting boards.

ii) get rid of computer type terminals.

iii) fit preheat buttons.

iv) fit remainder dim to riggers controls.

v) rig report jobs to the board for personnel on next shift.

vi) light pen operated mimic.

vii) multiplexing by radio control - cut down on cable.

viii) return to quadrant faders

PRODUCT CHANGES:

i) colour to have number printed all over it (when it is cut it is still labelled).

ii) cheap mountings for follow-spots.

iii) boom arm manufacture better lock-off so can be rigged easily with a lantern, whilst up a ladder!

 iv) hook clamp to fit 20mm-100mm.

v) lock-off on present low voltage equipment e.g.M16/birdies.

LOW VOLTAGE:

i) a definite yes from the majority of designers.

ii) worries about colour temperature of low voltage units.

iii) compatibility with other equipment.

iv) mains dimmers able to drive low voltage lamps direct by limiting the output voltage.

v) energy efficient.

vi) need to be able to snap to blackout.

NEW IDEAS:

i) better way of lighting cloths, less bulky than flood battens.

ii) a 5kw profile.

iii) motorized pan, tilt, gobo, self-dimming, low voltage, integral transformer for a lantern.

iv) MR 16 with lens, gobo, shutters.

v) modular lamp holder to take different types of bulb,mercury,sodium,metal halide.

vi) lantern units to be smaller

Requests in percentage terms of the return

LAMPS:

i) Combination lamp = 30%

ii) lightweight equipment = 10%

iii) built in dimmers to units = 16%

CONTROL BOARD:

i) board standardization of logic used = 10%

ii) simplicity, less computers = 23%

iii) designer's palette = 10%

iv) easily programmable f.x. panel = 10%

v) compatibility with Computer Aided Design = 20%

CONSULTATION:

i) need for chiefs and production electrician to be consulted = 20%

ii) manufacture felt to be very much engineering led and not customer orientated.

iii) not enough consultation

LOW VOLTAGE:

i) yes = 80%

ii) no = 10%

[1]As discussed at P.L.A.S.A. meeting in 1992.

Audience Reception of Scenography

The Questionnaires were given out as the audience entered the auditorium and read as follows:

1) Had you seen or read this piece before? If seen, who performed it and where?

2) Did the set, lighting and sound enhance or detract from the writing? Could you say how?

3) In what ways did the set, lighting and sound aid your understanding of the piece?

4) Would you consider the staging 'realistic'?

5) What do you feel the set represented?

6) What moment in the piece did you find particularly affecting for good or bad?

7) Could you describe a moment you felt was particularly well staged/

8) Was there anything in the set, lighting and sound which you felt to be superfluous?

9) Any other comments

Show One

I targeted two productions, <u>Death in Venice</u> by Redshift Theatre Company and <u>Plastered</u> by Trestle Theatre Company. These were both small scale touring productions and as such the scenographic features needed to be compact but explicit for their use in the productions.

<u>Death in Venice</u> directed by Jonathan Holloway designed David Roger, light Jonathan Holloway.

The design used three sided flats or periaktoids and were used in order to "let Aschenbach's journey be as much internal as realistic."[1] The adaptation suggested that as Aschenbach thought of a place he was at once transported to it.

The style of RedShift generally uses a minimum of naturalistic detail. In this way the periaktoi's offered a fluid change of scene as marble columns of Munich could unfold to be the hotel foyer or cathedral altar, from a dark alley to open seas and the sky of the Lido in Venice.

Responses

1)Had you seen or read this piece before? If seen, who performed it and where?

      No

2)Did the set, lighting and sound enhance or detract from the writing? Could you say how?

      No

3) In what ways did the set, lighting and sound aid your understanding of the piece?

      50% Nothing helped much

      50% Helped to clarify

4) Would you consider the staging 'realistic'?

      No

5) What do you feel these represented?

      Old buildings,

      Venice coloured,

      loved the green bit at the bottom of the walls,

      sand super,

      sea/beach set,

      effective like an impressionist painting.

6) What moment in the piece did you find particularly affecting for good or bad?

      liked the dropped pencil

accents were good

the clattering on the floor

7) Could you describe a moment you felt was particularly well staged?

gondolier scene

8) Was there anything in the set, lighting and sound which you felt to be superfluous?

the auditorium lights coming on in the first and second scene

9) Any other comments

very enjoyable

interesting

Show Two

<u>Plastered</u> Trestle Theatre Company staged and directed Joff Chafer, Sally Cook, Toby Wilsher.

This piece was set in a pub and had a series of flats suggesting the room of the saloon bar. It was to all intents and purposes a box set. As with all Trestle shows the primary design features are the masks used by the company. This show was of particular interest as the first two act play ever performed in full helmet masks in Britain.[2] One of the features of the performance was the number of doubling possible which allowed two people to play characters regardless of sex, thus creating a dilemma for the audience of just how many actors there are.

1) Had you seen or read this piece before? If seen, who performed it and where?

99% No

1% same company at Edinburgh

2) Did the set, lighting and sound enhance or detract from the writing?
Could you say how?

      enhanced as no dialogue

      set and sound enhanced dialogue - lighting not significant

      add atmosphere

      enhance - realism music

      lighting enhanced pub area making it gloomy

      set fitting

      sound enhancing by 'pumping up' the images

      no

      realistic set and lighting to suggest pub

      sound exploited use of juke box to denote characters feelings or

      personalities - replaced

      conventional language

3) In what ways did the set, lighting and sound aid your understanding of
the piece?

      set provided the necessary background to work out what was

      happening

      sound in terms of the juke box effect was very good in setting the

      mood of the characters and their personalities

      sound use for comic effect which I enjoyed. Lighting I didn't feel

      changed throughout and used only to illuminate set

      set helped establish 'type' of pub, that performance set in.

      sound created appropriate or ironic atmosphere

      good arrangements

      Set established the action well especially with the music

      set - simply what it was - commonplace

      sound - very much puts across the hopes and aspirations of

personality

      of the characters

      strongly set the scene

reference to life

set was good imitation of 'typical working class pub' sound effects
necessary in defining action.

greatly because set the piece in context and added to feeling like a
pub

4) Would you consider the staging 'realistic'?

Actions animated and stage sufficiently realistic for type of play

yes

very

in a way

5) What do you feel the set represented?

a bar/pub and a hospital

the social function of a pub - the events that take place there

represented a local pub in a lower middle class region, fairly seedy

depressing pub/ poor hospital

a poor NHS hospital and deadened pub

mundane everyday life

6) What moment in the piece did you find particularly affecting for good
or bad?

music used to good effect

every time a new mask came on

general movements excellent

the funny parts, particularly the younger guy who puts on heavy
rock

fight scene in pub

bar maid inadvertently tipped rubbish over female patron

repeated emphasis of doctor falling asleep

7) Could you describe a moment you felt was particularly well staged?

the hospital where actors moved in and out of cubicles without
being

seen

bar man excellent

the dogs first appearance

dog with handbag

8) Was there anything in the set, lighting and sound which you felt to be
superfluous?

no

9) Any other comments

a longer story

too short

mime very well done-it never felt as if anything was missing

[1] David Roger, Designer, August 1993, programme notes.
[2]Trestle Programme notes for Plastered

Interviews

Jenny Carey - set & costume designer

Alison Chitty- set & costume designer

Rick Fisher - lighting designer

Marsha Roddy - set & costume designer

Johanna Town - lighting designer & chief electrician at The
Royal Court

John Dove - associate director Hampstead Theatre

Nona Shepphard - freelance director & writer

Scenographers in Conversation

The following interviews were conducted over a two year period. My aim was to discuss with designers, lighting designers and directors aspects of their work in a critical way, highlighting some of the issues that contemporary Scenography has raised with particular reference to the effect and affect of technology on their work and the product we describe as 'theatre'.

The questions I was most concerned to ask covered the way in which the designers felt that they were in control of the final image; if they were the true 'director' of the piece and if perhaps the director of the piece understood the ways in which scenography can be used. Many of the responses from designers suggested that the director rarely understood the relationship of the image to the theatre created. I was concerned to discuss the designers work with them in a critical way rather than simply viewing their designs from a 'product' perspective.

One aspect which concerned the designers I spoke to and canvassed opinion from was the relationship within the scenographic team, which is further complicated by its hierarchical structure, especially where the director is more often than not a direct employer of the other members of the team. The ability and indeed care necessary therefore on the part of the director to create a balanced and collaborative working environment must already be offset by this employment iniquity. Although as is apparent from the type of work discussed this iniquity is not always present.

The designers I chose to talk to span a variety of different areas and are all recognised as particularly relevant to British

Scenography, in that sense I feel they represent a good cross-section of the plural theatre of the twentieth century. Naturally, there are many other designers who would have added to this study and to some extent everyone's contribution would be valid but the choices I made were based on the relevance of the designer's style/work to my discussion of Scenography.

Alison Chitty embodies a pre-1990s view of the designer. Having been regarded as Peter Hall's designer for his period of reign at The Royal National Theatre she sheds light on old and new approaches to the working relationship in the Scenographic team. In 1995 she took over the role of director of the Motley School of Design from Margaret Harris.

Jenny Carey, also a National Theatre designer, comes from a more fine art background and gives some more 'total' ideas about the nature of performance and design as an integral part of that process. She has been involved in training theatre designers at St Martins, London.

Marsha Roddy having trained at Wimbledon School of Art on the Theatre Design course is perhaps the antithesis of Nick Ormerod, who also trained at Wimbledon. Her work is of a more abstract and surreal nature. The discussion here is not only of interpretation but also of a design style being moulded by the training one may have. Roddy also works in a variety of fields not just mainstream theatres but also more avant-garde areas of work, including Young Peoples Theatre.

Rick Fisher represents the lighting designers who have worked beyond the executive role model. He works as an artist and describes himself as part of the Scenographic team. He is

recognised within the lighting design world as someone who uses lighting technology but is not led by it. He also describes himself as always looking for units of light "as revolutionary as the naked flame" and in some senses his practice embodies a lighting design for the 1990's which is not the technologically overt but atmospheric. He is then the antithesis to traditional West End practice embodied by David Hersey and the technology companies.

A theme which ran through these discussions was an interest in image and the creation of image. Whilst my position is confirmed in the strength of the silent image it is true to say that the effect of the actor within a given designed space is the next stage in the process of scenographic practice either through a specific choreographing by the director or by finding the strength of the environment created from which the actor may play the scene. In this sense the actor becomes both a part of the design and a collaborator in the scenographic process. Whilst designers may not draw the blocking for directors, as Neher did for Brecht, the relationship of the actor and designer are integral to theatre scenography. It is often hard for actors to be part of the scenographic whole, as part of the discussion and viewing of the object, but they are inevitably an active and creative force within it.

Alison Chitty bases her beliefs for theatre work on an understanding that one must always "cut your cloth". She does not thrive on large budgets but enjoys pushing herself to the limits of what is possible. She sees herself as a designer of plays and not scenery. She enjoys the work when it is collaborative, However she says that for the director the creation of a freer or more experimental partnership is hard as there are fewer chances

for a director to learn by default from the designer's work. She still feels that the job of the designer occurs in isolation and that managements have forced this situation. Opera extends the period of design so that the designer works even further in advance of the production. The notion of opera is of a 'presentation' and so it is even more 'designed' than other theatre works.

She sees her role with directors as still being one where she must massage ego in order to get what she wants. She says that in order for the designer to be allowed an exploration there has to be almost total chaos, for total experiences to be discovered and used in the work. She believes in the need for a "focus ability of a scene which can be given by lighting" - though her experiences with lighting designers vary. For Gawain at the ENO, Paul Pyant (Lighting Designer) and she worked extremely well together and as a result the light "told the story".

She believes in the specificity of design, perceiving that "if the blade of grass is designed and you take away one then you lose part of the essence which was designed".

What she calls the "lift and tilt" school of design, perhaps best exemplified by Richard Hudson, she sees as a trend and fashion in design. "Such visual values becoming exploded for spectacle". In this sense the result is "over designed under scripted work", however she also suggested that it was unfair that John Napier be blamed for most of this "but thank god for the design in most cases!"

She sees the technology and machinery as the result of finance. "In Gawain there were lasers, and the temptation to 'play' with these was enormous but they worked because they were used at a restrained moment and only used for that moment." She felt that

Bill Dudley was a designer who was both an advocate for technology and used it well.

"The negotiation of ideas for theatre is highly pressured whereas in film this is less so, as you as a designer are lower down the hierarchy for film work. In terms of product, the set in theatre production is the direct result of negotiation between the designer and director, whilst for costumes the negotiation is between the designer and actor".

We looked at one particular example of her work <u>The Rose Tattoo</u> which she had designed and Peter Hall had directed. Her approach was to create "moment drawings to express the tension and relationships in the text". The geography of counterpoint and objects to get effect. "Peter Hall is a strong advocate for naturalism and if it says it in the text, he has to have it". Other problems were the fact that the Playhouse (Embankment, London) was a tiny theatre space and this production was to tour, opening at the smallest space. Hall wasn't into the idea of transparent walls so she went for a "heightened realism extracted from naturalism". The house had to have inside and outside and "so a turning truck seemed to be the answer - couldn't be anything else really". "There is a predictability with a revolve, inevitably some times these devices are death in solution".

The production manager's influence on a design depends on their effectiveness and the gambling with materials and modern day equivalents. She feels it is important to have trial and error which is only possible if everyone is honest about what they don't know will work. It is here we see the creative aspect of the production manager working most strongly.

Chitty felt that some of the problems at the National were caused by the technology. "The revolve in the Olivier gets lost and traps in the revolve and stage floor cannot be down stage which is a real pity as this is such a strong acting position, for example in Danton the Olivier stage had a permanent bridge built but this has now deadened the theatre and turned it into a proscenium". She doesn't want to be precious about technology but to mould it, cut and shape it to her needs.

Her 2001 theatre building would be able to convert into other spaces, and therefore be completely organic. She is excited by environments like the Bouffe du Nord Paris, the Almeida London, "but with different seating"; Riverside Studios London and the Haymarket London, new stage. "Of course Epidaurus. A space to tell stories in." She feels the theatre needs to be led by a physicality of possibility and not funding. "Many more things are possible". She also believes people should be paid not to go on the stage!!
"The arts at present are subsidised by personnel and not by funding, in that most people who work in the profession do so for low wages and consequently their work becomes less valued".

Jenny Carey talked about her production of Animal Farm at the National Theatre, in 1984. "Masks were the strongest feature of the production". She ingeniously blended the childlike with the chilling by using these masks. The theme of the design was as a child's picture book.
I asked whether this was in order to point to the dialectic in the play ? "The details of the set were not allowed to obscure the book's anti-Stalinist message - as it is his toy farm."

Jenny was keen to link forms of theatre and types of space to an approach to design and to new approaches to theatre production. She quoted <u>Les Atrides</u> directed by Arianne Mnouchkine in Paris, as "a new theatre form, involving gestures and gestus, a change for theatre both in style and presentation". This production she felt was "a good example of the theatre outside of theatre buildings but not as 'community theatre' which she felt could be reactionary". She felt our approach to designers in Britain was wrong. "Designers as 'directors' can say much more, without the words".

She found it distressing that theatre was changing in terms of finance. "An investment in people and not the product was what was required". She also felt there was no need for large budgets in order to create spectacle, "we want money for people to experiment in making the product so that the energy used goes into creation." She linked the "breath of life from musical instruments and the thrill of a production on stage" to be similarly important, "the contract with the audience - an audience as one in both body and mind."

Theatre was important in the broader sense as a catharsis, "we need the ritual in order to learn and change and feel better." It is a social contract, "people coming together into the same space to perform and partake. To be able to talk about the experience they have had." In response to the idea of the designer as 'auteur' offering the mise en scène and the raison d'être for a theatre production she referred to David Ultz and Tom Cairns. "They take control of the visual metaphor as designers because of the frustration of watching directors".

<u>Les Atrides</u> was, "emblematic of the destruction of theatre space in Paris as each time a new performance is made a new space is

needed to change the dynamic of the theatre space". She went on to say, "when I talk to a director my heart sinks at the words, 'the way I see it'. When this happens directors are "shopping and you become mechanised. There's no point throwing money at it to create spectacle, for what reason ? - so what!" "With more money we can still make the same spectacle but it leaves us empty. A further study of human nature and the phenomenon of theatre has to take place."

She spoke very highly of the work of Robert Lepage, "If Lepage never does another show it doesn't matter because his ideas will become distilled into other's work. And so the cutting edge of theatre will go on and change." The use of image was a primary communicator.

"The ways in which film changes focus and moves from one scene to another can be translated to theatre. The composition of scenes. How we direct attention as in a picture. All these areas lead us back to the designer as director." In this sense she described the blocking of a play as being 'designed' and not 'directed'. "It is the making of pictures which is the most important."
"If you give the audience everything, they won't work and join in. So you give them a little bit and they do the rest." She felt that designers and directors should be working more in these ways to form a unified product. The impact of funding has brought about a style of designing often called the 'bare stage' approach. "The choice of each unit for a purpose and a metaphor, we have to do this now in 'poor theatre' - but actually its a good thing, as you give the audience their imagination."
She makes a distinction between French and British theatre,

"French theatre is a theatre of vision, British theatre is a theatre of language"

"When you're thinking of a design you're using up and referring to not only history but your own sense of history and reference to these ideas. But once you get started its like looking into the electric lines of a trolley bus. As you realise you've cracked it other routes and lines appear and you say, 'oh I can use that, and that or that.'"

She noted ironically that 'poor theatre' and a bare stage simply mean no money. "The iconography that is chosen specifically is one thing but features which are there because they are cheap say something completely different....Economy theatre rather than poor theatre". She refers to <u>Twelfth Night</u> as "a welded set with wooden tracery cut out to substitute for the real thing. This economy changes the nature of what is seen, as two things as materials, are contradicting one another."

How much is the recent change in design due to finance?
"Now designers are going back to painting because its cheaper than the plastic sets and styles of Appia and Craig. But if the play becomes a pretence for design that looks flashier or more real, it fails on all counts." The problems of technology failing in the form of the 'technical hitch' result in, " the audience spirit changes but they enjoy the recognition of the play as a play if an error is made that can be 'caught' by an actor. The audience will never forget the device they are watching - an immersion in this art form is difficult. It is not 'all enveloping' as in film. Every performance is different and this is the strength of theatre it is a risk...ever changing potential and audience dynamic."

Do we need a new language to describe these new forms?

"Very probably but we must not let the science take over the art to try and make a formulae for success. Also the interpretation of the signs is open to error and ambiguity if socio-economic realities aren't taken into consideration."

Jenny Carey felt that this was a period of new theatre forms arising from the "techno boom". "A revolving stage has no interest in itself except to those who have to make it work. Designers work from the basis of what they would like and then work out how they would achieve it and if it is possible. Working from the other end of this spectrum doesn't work. Thinking of what works and what the technology is doesn't produce the design".

Rick Fisher with Johanna Town the chief electrician were in discussion with the me at the Royal Court Theatre. An Inspector Calls was about to go into the Aldwych (August 1993) after running a year in and out of repertoire at the National. It has played a number of proscenium theatre's and in Fisher's estimation gains some things but loses others. It was only scheduled for 30 performances and in 1997 it is still running in the West End. It was one of the most produced plays in Britain even before the National's success with it, though mostly produced by amateur dramatic societies.

Fisher, "It is the production which makes you think, 'it is a surprisingly great play!' The resonances benefit from the treatment." The treatment was given by Stephen Daldry director, Ian McNeil designer and Rick Fisher lighting designer. The production Rick has just lit in New York with the designer is much the same, "a fait á compli set". He used filmic lighting

generally and he did what he wanted to do. In York where it opened he had old footlights and it was therefore "much more 'stagey'". The choice of the Lyttleton for the first venue was made because it was going to tour. "In York the proscenium was on an angle and the stage cloth painted murky, like oil on water." He used sidelight because "it made the floor look best - especially now it is cobblestones." The sidelight made the set look best. He had lots of shadows in York but pushed this further when in London.

Did the show benefit from extra budget?
"Yes, and by the more experienced actors for the older parts, the blocking remained pretty much the same. Much was gained by having more space and money. The house (which collapses) actually had more movement at York because the production used low technology, that is, it was man-made!
The National Theatre spends a lot of money on making the set strike-able in order to fit into the repertoire. They say a black floor in the Olivier costs £25,000, (1993) and any floor covering has to be durable.

In technical terms he used colour temperature balancing but using colour correction as colours not as a technical piece of equipment, as it was designed. He used 201/202 with an open white to warm up the light. Rick liked the murky colours of this mix, "it was a very effective use of simple equipment."
Rick's choice of new technology provided by the manufacturer would not be a multi-purpose lantern "as realistically they wouldn't make it, it would be like making the never ending Biro."

He didn't use overt primary colours and in his terms "it was a small rig, (200 units), most of which are lighting the cyclorama." Little of the permanent rig was used in either the Olivier or the Lyttleton because he used side light. His logic for the design was to light the Birling family in a traditional manner when they were in the house "but when they leave it they are separated from that area as they do not belong there. They should look like glowing figures in the landscape - hence the sidelight and treat the floor and cyclorama separately for mood as required....The lighting should highlight what they are thinking as in most plays not necessarily what those people are saying but what they are thinking." This leads us away from ideas of the literary text as the impetus for design and allows us to approach theatre from a very different 'textural' background with the set as metaphor and lighting as atmosphere.

I asked about what could be described as a heavy handed expression of the dialectic already contained within Priestley's play. "5% have an intelligent anti-reaction to the play. We wanted to get away from the 'whodunnit' aspect of the piece." Rick suggested that the heavy handedness of the production helped strip away the interest in plot - "so you became interested in action and reaction...Action and reaction being defined as what the characters are thinking and saying as discourse rather than plot furtherance. The style stops you sitting back and just getting interested in the plot. The 1945 working witnesses were there to give our audience a direct access to witnessing, so you heighten the way we look at drama - and the pros arch and false pros. arch. Innocence of the kids playing in the adult world - they find something they don't really want to see. The Inspector directs his rage and message to the audience we watch, 1945 watching 1912. We are told to be careful that we don't allow the same

thing again, where 1912 people set up a situation (the war) for the 1945 people. We've fucked it again however."

If you missed the dialectic in the language - here it is in the set? "Some people feel it makes all the conclusions very obvious to the audience." Rick felt the argument is quite simplistic - "we can't do this again it is a warning. Remember the image and that will explain the politics. The false pros. says, look at this and look at it again".

Does it matter if we reject the image or ignore it? The intricacy of the production becomes caught up in understanding the language of the image. "Hopefully it works sub-consciously if you can't decode. If you create them often you're not aware of their meaning until after the event. After you deconstruct."

The ending of the play changed between the different venues. "At the Lyttleton, the Birlings staggered back to the house, when the house was full of people, the curtain and the iron were used to separate young from old. On tour it ended with a blackout. In the Olivier where there was no iron the blackout wasn't strong enough in that space, so we played with the flying system. The house empties and they bring the curtain on in past the dead. It was timed that how long it took for the actors to clear. Set the power flies so that when the curtain wiped again they were gone. A 'coup de théâtre' - looked good and felt strong - left with a future but the idea came from a need for a stronger 'visual' ending."

The scenographic team have been discussing how to end it in the West End " a gauze has just appeared. Though there is no lighting to light it! It was great fun to do because we haven't stopped playing but we are playing with devices - not ideas

which have moral substance. But with this 'playing' there is a "danger of over-egging the pudding but it doesn't seem to matter. The audience still gasps when they realise Eric got the woman pregnant. Even with the 'over the tones' of the production people are still surprised by the plot." It seems the poetic of image cannot disturb the literature and the plot is important no matter what emphasis the production team try to place on aspects of the production.

Rick spoke of his work at the Royal Court, " We've done plays here and thought they had a certain meaning and people came to see them - who the plays were about and they love them and they don't see the implicit criticism, it happened on Three Birds and Serious Money. The messages are good but only if the right people watch it. "They take away a reinforcement of their own importance." During the production period of Serious Money "Max said, 'people love to see themselves on stage. They won't identify with the horribleness but they'll see themselves and manners. We 'see' people like that but we're not them', in Three Birds the art traders pointed out each other!"

How can we ever learn from anything we see on stage? If we are not subverting are we just having a good time and doing shows that we like?
"A lot of what is in Inspector is because 'we' (the production team) like it. It gives us full range of what we can do in the theatre and we make it better and better and better. Just because they look good. For example, when the Inspector stands in the audience and the shadow appears on the wall. This came late in the day. It didn't come from any meaning it was just liked".
Is this not the decadence of which we speak? Work on the meaning afterward. "The trouble we have with any art is the

stark difference between the creative process and the construction of meaning by the viewer, and perhaps it is this difference we should be interested in".

The problems of the technology and manufacturing for Rick are to do with the engineer's pursuing and exploring their areas, " and we'll use the spin offs." As far as colours go "we use colours that we relate to and that work, correction fluorescent green I use in every show! There is no reason to correct - no camera. They don't feel like colours. You create what is white light as a standard," for Rick this is 202. "Most theatre people are interested in the TV equipment because it gives a new quality and personality, for example H.M.I. used in Inspector and the work light image on stage created by a 5K Skypan".
The credits and critics' reviews for the work for which the lighting played a major design role did not feature Rick. Fisher, "had not one name mention in Inspector, though people talked about atmosphere and described the lighting. Frank Rich described the whole show from lighting state to lighting state but didn't mention the lighting designer!"

Marsha Roddy trained at Wimbledon and talked of the actor based training given by Malcolm Pride, who she believes has had a major influence on scenic designers of this period. "The training theory at Wimbledon was that the actor on the stage was central and you build up around the actor. So consequently they work from a minimalist point of view". She sees the influence of the college. "A reaction to figurative work. Theatre at this period (1980s) was expressing this. However, at the same time student work at Central was very flamboyant. It was interesting to see the influence of the college."

In the argument for Fine Art versus Theatre design training she felt, "it is more important to train people in 'theatre'. Wimbledon liked the idea of the physical person on stage, designing for actors to work." The feeling she perceived in theatre at the moment (1992) was "a need for spectacle or at least a push towards it to bring in the money." She remarked on the painterly style of <u>Sunset Boulevard</u>, which she has recently worked on for John Napier, "theatre sets trying to be more like film sets in both working practice and product."

She feels that designers add to the script and challenge the audience through their use of images, "the 1980s have produced a period of updated classics where design helps to enable the relevance of the classic texts".

"The new technological discoveries for other industries meant there is a need for the designer to keep up with changes and the availability of materials." The idea of pleasure at our own cleverness she feels is intrinsic to the nature of design and always has been involved in all art. She expressed a similar pleasure when in the production of <u>Happy Medium</u> the set disappeared (by human effort) using low-tech means. "This was very effective and efficacious because of the enormity of the problem and space which the set took up - it was a major achievement." Most of the time sets can move in that way to express the transient nature of this thing called theatre. "We are not trying to fool you. It breaks the convention at the beginning of the century where you took away the fourth wall and said 'this is the angst they're going through. Nora slams the door, we think this is bad news. We now want to destroy that convention and express the theatricality of the moment...but you don't see this kind of presentation and if you do, you find it anachronistic".

She felt, "new ground had been broken by John Napier and his use of technology but often real risks in design were taken by smaller companies."

Marsha tends to work in an abstract way, but then she went on to question what we are portraying, the question of 'realism' on stage.

She felt that, "few modern plays were word based and so the reliance on image, scenography and design, was an obvious necessary."

For <u>Sunset Boulevard</u> she had been involved in the design of one of the sets but she said this had been like a "factory line". "Individuals had no input to the concept". Generally, "working on a detail, you weren't adding to 'text' or 'subtext' as a designer". Consequently, "people did not understand the over all effect and the process". She questioned whether, "we actually see the amount of detail", in painterly terms which went into this set, "when we see the play. There will always be a split between production line theatre and smaller scale theatre."

"<u>Nicholas Nickleby</u> cracked ensemble playing so creating the atmosphere, this became more important than creating 4 walls. Fine art is considered the top form of Art, and design is secondary". Marsha feels theatre design is a different form of art - "so if it is commercial, it immediately becomes less than art - a part of the factory production line....It is important for the designer to understand the totality of theatre and the actor/audience relationship, you do performance work in order to understand the stage. A designer needs to understand that theatre can happen with just a black box and props, or nothing. As a designer it is important to understand that. Then you build up

what works and remember you are making a piece of theatre, not a visual piece."

Marsha referred to <u>Orlando</u> a recently released film (1992), "it was boring and you see only the style and there was no content - looks beautiful but there is no content. We present the signs and symbols because we have educated the audience to read them so we present them. So they [the signs] have now become a cliché, we undertstand the sign when we see it and don't recognise it, then that is theatre done well". "Things get too easy. What's presented is too easy - not challenging the audience, for example in Orlando everything is on a plate. Over designed and over directed. Going back to a black box for <u>Rosie and Jim,</u> I wanted to draw back so children have room to have fun - a 'conversation' with the audience".

Marsha sees this period as, "a catholic time, not a definable art...the fashion in theatre is to go back for historical references and mix with now." "The externals of the expressionist style were used in the late 80s but there was a choice, minimalism or spectacle in the 80s, because of the exuberant economy and retentive avant-garde minimalism". Marsha sees this as the thesis and antithesis. She would much rather, "make worlds and not recreate periods. Often director led, even so it is an abstraction of that period - only trying to replicate, and abstraction - always from whatever has gone before."

"The technologies and mechanisms and materials are important but theatre rarely uses things as they were intended. <u>Starlight Express</u> pushed forward spectacle and hydraulics, the use of engineering changed a lot of things. As Lloyd-Webber had so

much money John Napier pushed for certain things, like rebuilding the theatre to fit the set".

Marsha uses artists and artistic movements for reference and inspiration. She feels new ground is broken by independent companies not by the repertory companies. "Smaller companies take more risks."

Do you see other peoples work?
"Not often. If I end up looking at the set then the play isn't holding me. I try to get lost in a piece of theatre." Her choice of designer is Yolande Sonnaband, who she worked for as an assistant. She was taught by her and Derek Jarman, both of whom she felt spoke the same language. Marsha did very abstract work at college but she says this wasn't her style she was just trying things out. "A theatre designer is trying to be Picasso in the breadth of work". Marsha doesn't want to repeat herself, not only in what she does on stage but by using a different approach. It, "could look like I can't find my style - or that you're working to the moment."

The status of the designer varies. Sometimes it is important to have assistants to help out for specific areas. "Some directors want to keep you very separate and you are used to visualise it with your technical expertise - not very challenging. Once you work with this style of director you don't again....Communication of the piece is when the success of the work is shown through joint work on the same concept, everyone coming from the same direction. Director as auteur is still very much the case - some directors do work more openly with designers."

"The designer dictates the action by some of the visual things you come up with. How much the designer puts in and whether you [the audience] see this is dependant on whether the director uses or sees how it can be used, and works the set as an evolutionary and organic piece of theatre experiment. If you create a space you are directing action. The director can do what they want on it but you are stipulating a certain amount - you can't help it, you are an 'artistic director' in that sense. If directors let you work with actors to use a prop or the set then the whole production can benefit. Some directors feel threatened by this kind of involvement and push the designer back."

"In the industry there is a slight levelling out of director and designer. Perhaps due to the increase in the importance of visual images."

"If it feels like work then I don't want to do it. It should feel like you are engaged in a creative process. The 'moment' for that moment and then its gone on. Intangible return to the basic element because you can't keep it."

How does the director work with the designer ? Nona Shepphard has been an actor, director and writer. She has worked as all three, in repertory theatres and for small independent companies and has also run her own company. Whilst she is a specialist in Young People's Theatre she has worked for all ages and so brings an interesting angle to this discussion.

I asked Nona a variety of questions about her working practice and in particular the way in which she saw scenography and the designed areas relating to her work as a writer and director.

In what sense do you feel involved with the design of a production? Are you a designer?

270

No, but because my writing comes from my being a director (I was a director first), when I am writing, I'm often thinking about how I'm going to stage what I'm writing. I don't think of the nitty gritty of the design, or the practicalities necessarily but I know the feel and I know a lot of the look. If I'm concerned with my own writing then I feel it's very integral to what I'm writing.

Would you tell the designer the specifics of what you wanted?
No, not necessarily because I think the interesting thing is to see what the designer comes up with quite independently. I mean sometimes, if its important, I might say, well I had in mind this sort of thing or thought this for this scene, but I would rather not dictate what a designer thinks on the look, as that would be a waste of their talents.

Is this still the case even on the work you have written?
Yes, although a recent piece, Forbidden Fruit , is one which I kind of designed myself, because I knew I wanted it in the round and I knew I wanted very little, just a sound station, and as authentic 'club lighting' as possible - so I suppose in a sense I designed that myself with a designer coming in for costumes, which I wouldn't say is my forte.

In my most recent production, Bed of Arrows, a trilogy which I adapted from the Mahabharata, I was very involved with the design, partly because I had to be, as the designers I had chosen dropped out at short notice. I knew that I wanted a style of design whereby things were assembled by performers and stage crew, and then lost e.g. making cities in front of the audience and the audience seeing what components you make them with, and then losing them again. I love sets that move. I came up with this notion of huge moving ladders, which in the end became

quite integral to the whole design, and luckily the new designer liked those notions and ran with them.

How do you see the process with <u>Good Person of Setzuan</u> ? Is that a more normal practice?

Well, I suppose when I'm reading it, I will gradually get a notion of the things that are important or the way I'd like to look at it - its hard to know what you start with, you have different starting points for different pieces - because each different piece has a different requirement. So I'll just read it and read it, and see if anything surfaces that might be useful to myself and the designer. I know for instance, that humour is very important, but we have yet to discover what kind of style. It is going to be a more normal process, in that we get a chance to have a couple of days just throwing around ideas, which of late has seemed a luxury; of late it's been more design as you go...

Before that there was <u>You're Thinking About Doughnuts,</u> which was described as being over designed do you agree?

Yes, it was, - so described, I mean; and, I hasten to add, by only one person.

Do you think that was a fair criticism?

No I don't really. I don't know what the person quite meant by 'over designed' but I felt that the story required that the audience be treated to different experiences in the museum ; they had to see a skeleton come out of a cage, and believe it and be scared by it ; they needed to see a space exhibit, to see a tiger, to be transported into a Victorian pickling factory. I felt that the story required that these places and people be there in all their glory, not mimed or represented. If I had done it minimally, I think the kids would have been disappointed not to have had those

272

experiences visually, which was one of the strengths of the whole experience for them, especially as it was a very popular book which a lot of the kids knew.

Is there a different design approach for the work you do for kids as opposed to the work you do for adults ?

No not really. I just think those were the requirements of that particular story and I would defend it against the charge of being 'over designed'. I thought it was real spectacle. I thought it was fabulous the way it changed but there are other times, for instance when I did <u>A Midsummer Nights Dream</u> I didn't have any money and I didn't have a designer (this was at RADA), I used very little and I had a most unpromising room - so its not like I'm always prone to want heavy design. I feel it depends on what the show is.

What do you mean by spectacle?

When the scenery and scenic elements are completely in tune with the moment of theatre. So they are not just moving or being there for their own sake, but are telling the story with the text and the action. They're not separate just to look gorgeous - they need to be there. For instance, when we did the space exhibit in <u>Doughnuts.</u> I'd chosen very obvious music - 2001 Space Odyssey, - to bring on this enormous, beautifully-made, cratered moon on stage, on which an astronaut was standing. The whole thing was completely spectacular and the guy playing Frank has to be bowled over, and so he was ; as were the audience. So that the moment was completely believable. The way the set changed was spectacular. But if it had revolved, split up, done a dance and made an omelette, and it didn't actually mean anything in terms of the plot or the action, or the emotion

of the moment, then it would have been empty. Whereas this
was supposed to render him speechless and it really did.
That's what I mean by spectacle.

*In approaching the Brecht you have had a conversation with the
designer Norman Coates, about having things that drop down
and things that come out of the initial set that are a surprise for
the audience. Do you think that is important, that a set is
continually changing in front of an audience?*
No not necessarily. You can have sets that are beautiful and just
stay there and are the right environments for the piece. For
instance, in Duet for One which is a totally interesting and
fascinating psychological play, you are interested in the
characters, you are interested in these repeat visits and what's
happened to her; the development of her disease and the
development of her character; you can appreciate it - it's elegant.
It should satisfy you that it's a psychiatrist's office, it never
changes - that is not the interest of that particular play. In the
case of Good Person, Norman feels, or at least is expressing to
me, the need to make a great deal of visual interest because he
feels a lot of the text is very dense. So from the audience point
of view, he feels that the text needs help in terms of keeping
them enlivened and interested in what is said.
*Is that what design does then, it counterpoints whatever form of
text you've got? So that if something is psychologically
challenging or intellectually rigorous, the set relates to the text?*
It often does, yes I think so.
When you're writing a text, you have to then leave room for all
sorts of inputs, - from the director, the set and costume designer,
the lighting designer, the actors, the stage manager and lastly the
audience to get in. Often, the same thing is done again and

again. For instance, the text might be very busy, then the lighting is very busy and then the set itself is very busy, the costumes are very busy, everything is then reinforcing and saying the same thing again and again. Whereas I find it interesting to have different peoples' input, talents and views, tones and textures of their mind. Norman Coates is expressing an opinion about this play, by saying he thinks the audience needs visual stimulus because obviously he thinks there are bits that he finds quite difficult and indigestible. He was also talking about design with the actors in mind because he was saying, 'the actors will need to be interested and involved. We need to keep them interested and involved'. There are lots of small parts and its a big ensemble piece. He is wanting to give them things to do, so they have action rather than just the spouting of ideas. That is the way we can almost work out the whole tenor of the piece, not the blocking in detail, but what people are doing.

If you get a good design, you've got half the production cracked. You know where you are bringing people on, you know how you're bringing them on, and you know why.

So what is your relationship with the set, costume, lighting designer. Are they very different processes of involvement ?
Inevitably they are.

I usually work with someone who does both set and costumes. On the rare occasions when they are different people it's felt like one person because everyone's been at the meetings. Costumes require a more psychological approach.

The lighting designer, I feel should be involved as early as possible. I think lighting is fundamental not just in terms of colours but in terms of the look of something. I mean if the look is very minimal and there's a chair on stage and a cyc., then

obviously the lighting has to take on a certain quality, different to that when its a box set which has a late afternoon and then a summer evening. Its obviously doing different things. But its good if the lighting designer is there in the early meetings to shape and put their two penny worth in. Often this isn't possible. Often the lighting designer just comes in at the stage when you're doing runs. Which means a lot of decisions have been made. This is a pity.

What do you think lighting contributes to a production?
The whole atmosphere. The lighting designer is important as they give the tone. When I 've worked with a lighting designer whose work I haven't liked say, or they don't accord with what I see, (I'll see the look of it but I won't consciously think, 'oh, that's a profile doing that etc.' but I'll just see it in my head) it is completely different. Its not to say the person I like gives me what I want but they'll give me either the same feel of it or a complementary feel or a different, more interesting feel. But sometimes I 've been with a lighting designer who have really ruined the atmosphere of the whole scene. Same set, same acting, same blocking, same everything, but I've felt that the lighting has destroyed an atmosphere.

In conversation with the lighting designer can you not recover the look?
I've tried to on one occasion when I was particularly unhappy and I did recover a bit but it took me a while. Even with designers you're very compatible with, you can have problems - and not get at first to a state that you want, and need to try something else, and you can usually find it because you will know the rig, and the way it's focused down. But in this case, and a couple of cases where I have really not liked the lights, I've just thought it was angle and colour and approach to the whole

thing, the pairings and organisation. And I didn't feel it was, at that stage possible to retrieve.

Lighting is integral and central

Can we go back to the point about the psychological complexity of the text. In the Mahabharata there is a vast amount of intellectual rigour, yet that was quite spectacular too, in the sense that you mentioned for Doughnuts. Do you think there is any contradiction there in wrestling with the fundamentals of Hindu philosophy in amongst quite a fantastic array of pyrotechnics and and moving objects ?

That was one of the things I was so pleased about in doing it. One of the things that had concerned me about performing it outside at Lincoln Castle was that the testament to the Hindu faith should be very strong. How in the open air can I get the right atmosphere to do justice to this moment when people are really projecting hard - and you have to give a spectacular effect as opposed to an emotional impact? So I suppose that's why I was very pleased to come up with the notion of the dance that the children did, and that did it really because it was a simple idea, with mesmeric music as Krishna says those tenets of faith and I tried to make them as simple and as strong as I could going right to the heart of what I perceived them to be. So no, I didn't see a contradiction there at all because I found the language there, whilst dense spiritually, textually spartan. In comparison Brecht is dense - there's masses of it. I think the Mahabharata is dealing with a lot of quite interesting and difficult ideas but there was a lot of room for incident, for action, for massive puppets for battles, for the poetic of other natures, either from the lighting, or from sound and costumes and music etc.

When you say 'poetic of other natures' can you explain what you mean by poetic ?

Its interesting that you feel there is a poetic in those strands and design areas. What do you mean by it?

Well, if I think about poetry, it kind of sums up, it hits the spot poetry, in the shortest possible route. When I think of good poetry in the textual sense, poets that I like emotionally, it hits the spot by conjuring up - a magic process by conjuring up a word play or an image, or whatever that's absolutely right and true, and its the truth that reverberates in you. You know when it is true emotionally. There's a lot of false poetry, lots of overuse of poetic language and lots of things that sound very poetic - romantic sentiments that aren't what I'd consider poetry. So if I transported that into what I mean about the set or the lighting, that's what it does. It has its own rhythm through the piece it is working with the piece for the piece, and the truth of the piece but it also has its own truth. It moves in its own way and almost sometimes moves despite the piece. In the same way as the set sometimes wasn't designed to be like that but it has its own rightness, working with the lights at that particular point, working with everything. And everything working together hits the spot. It becomes true and becomes absolutely grounded in a true moment which is the best you can do for the audience at that moment. Everybody's working together for the best expression of that moment of theatre - at that moment, to the audience, at that time.

Is this 'the concept' where the scenographic team sit down and work out their score, or is it more loose than that, is it not such a rigorous process?

I don't think it is as rigorous as that. I think sometimes you have to peg down the moments that you know - however, a lot of the

internal poetics that I'm talking about happen almost despite that. No one would know the permutations of the tilt of the head of seven people at that moment, or how the audience might be feeling, or how the kids costumes might work, sometimes its as if magic happens - it all comes and vibrates and the air gets thick. You always know when something marvellous has happened in theatre because the air thickens, and there's an incredible stillness and intensity of focus and attention. Even if there's kids in the audience and there's noise. I don't mean there's dead silence, just you can feel the thickening of the air. Marvellous stuff. But I think good theatre designers know their craft, so they know a lot of this. As a director, this sounds a bit pretentious, but I often see the whole thing like playing a huge great instrument that has enormous variation of colour, look, tone, so that I can play a whole production like a big instrument. I can hear what it sounds like and see it. It has a visual expression as well as a sound expression, and you can just play through in such a way that it becomes like a poem.

You've been working in theatre for over 25 years. What do you see as being a radical piece of technology that has changed the way you work?

It seems advances have only made certain things easier, to operate in lighting and sound with a range of choice that is much wider. But you are still attempting to do exactly the same thing. I don't approach things differently. I don't think, 'oh, good now I can use Vari*lites and I can have a whole sequence with those', because I think that would be deeply dreary - it would be empty. Which is the difference between proper spectacle and emptiness. There's that lovely story of Fiona Shaw in Machinal where she was spot-lit, performing an intimate scene to the audience, whilst between her and the audience were about twenty

stage crew on headsets manoeuvring the set, unseen by the audience, but not exactly helping her make the moment. The stage machinery was a big feature of the production which I found the audience enjoyed for a bit and then they lost interest in it because the play was dwarfed by the technology.

So do you think the performer is at a disadvantage if technology is very obvious to them?

At a moment like that I would have said so. Sometimes it can be absolutely fantastic. One of my favourite moments as an acting a.s.m. was on the fly floor at the Liverpool Playhouse and there were five of us flying for the Wizard of Oz and everybody loved the moments of scene changing/flying. The audience loved them, the actors loved them and we loved doing it because the band blared out and the audience was clapping these sets flying in and out and making a different configuration.

Have you a perfect design process?

Its hard to say when you're going to have a good idea. Often you can be with the designer and have research materials and have talked in rooms, talked about the important points and then nothing happens. You can't force ideas through. Its nice to have time but not nice to have too much time We'll have a couple of days for Good Person to talk through the problems, what we do want, and what we don't want.

Do you not feel that the lighting designer should be involved at this meeting?

It depends on the lighting designer. Some wouldn't want to be there, or see it as necessary in which case you wouldn't want

them there. They would rather know the kind of approach and then go away and find their approach, which is very valid. And other lighting designers love to be in there at the creative moments, and give their input. It depends on who it is. If their available and would like to be there, then lovely but it isn't essential - as it hardly ever happens. Personally I enjoy that input but it does really depend on the individual, like you, Rick, Wolfgang (who also directs shows so he thinks of them with lighting in mind) many lighting designers want to be able to have that input.

Do you feel that the 'designers' are 'directors' ?

Clearly they are shaping the product. It depends on what you see the role of director as. I tend to think I manage the production. I conduct. I have the best instruments available in all sections of the orchestra and I judge the quality, the tone, the infinite variety of texture, volume, and I put it together in such a way that the audience hears every instrument. So the whole thing sounds like a beautiful symphony and has its own emotional power, yet the audience hears every section and every little instrument. That's what I think I do. I think a lighting designer and the designers are leading players.

Do you research theories of theatre? Are you thinking of Brechtian theory in terms of the production and how it is produced?

No I'm not. I have my own hazy notions of what all this is, Brecht and alienation etc. and I think that will suffice at the moment. I'm very interested to see how to do it, the characters speak from the truth of their situation, and that's hard for the actors, so I have to wrestle with that. Hopefully if its successful you will have established your own method of doing Brecht. I

think you have to do what you do now, and with the people you are with, and what they bring.

So do you think that theatrical theory has any place in terms of theatrical production?

Its difficult, we are so used to theatrical theory. These things have obviously shaped my thinking without me necessarily being aware that they have. For instance, some of my favourite expressions of work, like assembling scenes and having the actors around a lot of the time, are very much to do with the sort of theatre we're talking about. It shows the audience your not trying to fool them, its very alienating in one way and I've grown up with these in my theatrical working life. I think they're important. I suppose I'd rather do it than read about it.

What do you see as the future for modern theatre? Are we moving in a particular style?

I think its in quite a parlous state. I think theatre buildings are in a difficult state at the moment because I think rep. has still got the 40s, 50s, 60s and 70s notion of the heyday of the reps. and this is well and truly gone. I think these buildings are turning into clubs in towns. Where they used to be the centre of civic life, they now seem to be on the periphery of it. When I went to the theatre in the 60s they were very popular. In Liverpool we had 4 theatres, the Everyman was a student and more working-class venue, the playhouse was the more middle-class Wirralites but nevertheless they had a variety of clients, and the Royal Court was a mix of both depending, and the Empire was for the big shows which everybody went to. They all seemed to be very lively and very busy in a way that theatres just aren't now. When I was in Watford (Palace) recently, (and I'm sure this is true for a lot of reps) the average audience age seemed to me to

282

be over 60. I think that the faithful following for the reps. is older people who like to go to the theatre. Is it that once this lot have died there will be no one to replace them ? I think a lot of the future is to do with people actually doing theatre. Having just done the Mahabharata as a community project, the number of people you can involve in a project starts small and can only grow and grow, and because they love to do it and the people bring their friends and family, it becomes a huge vibrant thing that is very much at the heart of peoples' lives in a way that seeing your Ayckbourn or your Chekov isn't. Reps. seem to be unable to sustain audiences even with so called 'safe programmes'.

Do you think that's to do with using literary forms of production rather than visual forms?

Is there a need for a change in the dramaturgy?

I think it isn't necessarily a style. Although Lloyd-Webber etc. produce tailor-made productions to sell as set pieces, I think people come to that from the music and not the spectacle. They like the music and then they go and see all these sets moving and so on. I think education about theatre, more people taking part in it, people finding out what it is the important change. Some plays are absorbing, one set where nothing changes like <u>Herbal Bed</u> or <u>Duet for One</u> well-made plays and then there are many other things in between. People will enjoy all of them once they get used to what theatre is - the live performance. We are still fighting the notion that its a middle-class preserve and it's elite, and we'd rather watch telly and play with the computer, because you have to exert yourself to see and do theatre. Leisure and entertainment are more dominant, cable and computer spin-offs are occurring. Its not live though is it? I think when it is visually very interesting and exciting it is very accessible for people.

When I'm writing for kids, I don't necessarily change the
opinions or ideas but I might change my expression of them and
keep my eye on the set changes. I will keep it interesting visually
and keep the performance moving visually. And I think that
might be true for the equivalent of 'children to the theatre',
people who aren't used to the theatre, its obviously a way of
making it attractive and accessible.

But I think things should be visually exciting, even if they're
still.

Research Questionnaires

As part of this research I sent out a questionnaire to designers asking for the 'designer's designer'. The following are the results and some of the comments which people felt were important about their choices.

Chloe Obolensky, 'simple purist style'

Bob Crowley ' serves the need of the play, not a signature designer' 'simplicity'

Jocelyn Herbert 'gets to essentials and never decorates

Inigo Monk ' flare for grand design without going over the top

Maria Bjornson 'pure talent and bloody lucky!' 'inventive and competent at set and costumes'

Svoboda 'use of light and movement'

Richard Negin 'total immersion / obsession / understanding of theatre'

Tom Cairns 'stimulated and spiritually nourished by him'

Ultz 'originality'

Alison Chitty 'simplicity'

Stephen Lazaridizs 'imagination'

Gordon Craig 'brought theatre back to theatre'

John Bury 'brought theatre back to theatre'

Ralph Koltai 'brought theatre back to theatre' 'aesthetically bold'

Bill Dudley 'inventive and competent at set and costumes'

Richard Hudson 'boldness and directness, clarity', 'clear intentions'

Nigel Lowry 'vivid realisation'

Philip Prowse 'aesthetically bold'

Tim Goodchild 'flare and imagination'

Adrian Vaux 'excellent vision and uses hi-tec. without destroying illusions'

The overwhelming response is for the theatricality of theatre to be recognised but to be executed with bold simplicity.

Productions

I have listed some of the productions I have referred to and those which I believe have been notable both in terms of media reaction and the scenographic content. As such I have noted those who concern my discussion in terms of directors or designers for productions, omissions of detail have been made on this basis. Full details of these productions can be found in the Theatre Record for that year.

A

An Arabian Night Shared Experience, Director Mike Alfreds, Design and Light Paul Dart first performed at The Crucible Sheffield and then at the Soho Poly.

A Happy Medium, 1993 George Bernard Shaw Theatre RADA, Director Nona Shepphard, Design Marsha Roddy, Light Christine White

An Inspector Calls Olivier, RNT, July -August 1993, Director Stephen Daldry, Designer Ian McNeil, Light Rick Fisher.

Aida, 1989, at Earls Court, Producer Harvey Goldsmith.

A Little Night Music, 1996, RNT production which was extended at the national rather than transferred or moved from the repertory.

Angel on a Bridge, 1992, Drill Hall, Director Nona Shepphard, Design Jenny Carey, Light Christine White.

As You Like It, 1991, Cheek by Jowl National and International Tour, Director Declan Donnelan, Design Nick Ormerod, Light Judith Greenwood.

B

Bed of Arrows, 1997, Site Specific performances in Bedford, Lincoln,Watford and Dunstable, Director Nona Shepphard, Design Bettina Reeves, Light Christine White

C

Cats, 1981, New London Theatre, Director Trevor Nunn, Design John Napier, Light David Hersey.

Cyranno de Bergerac , 1993, Light David Hersey.

287

E

EFX 1996, Las Vegas Vehicle for Michael Crawford, opened February 1996, in Las Vegas, Light Natasha Katz.

Elsinore, 1997, Robert Lepage International Tour.

F

Five Guys Named Moe, 1995, Producer Cameron Mackintosh.

G

Guys and Dolls, 1994/7, RNT, Director Richard Eyre

H

Heartbreak House, 1989, Riverside Studios, 21st November- 2nd December, Director Nancy Meckler, Decor Dermot Hayes, Light Stephen Watson.

Henry VI, - The Plantagenets, 1988, RSC, Director Adrian Noble, Design Bob Crowley, Light Chris Parry.

Henry IV Part 1, 1982, Director Trevor Nunn, Design John Napier, Light David Hersey.

I

Ipi Tombi Cambridge, 12th May 1981, Director Bertha Ernos, Light John Lytton.

J

Jesus Christ Superstar, 1997, Director Gale Edwards, Design John Napier, Light David Hersey.

Joseph and His Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat, opened 1995, at the London Paladium.

L

La Bete 1993 Lyric Theatre Hammersmith, Director Richard Jones, Design Richard Hudson, Light Jennifer Tipton.

La Bohéme September 1993, English National Opera, Producer Steven Pimlott, Design Thomas Hoheisel, Light Hugh Vanstone.

Les Atrides, 1994, Théâtre du Soleil, Director Ariane Mnouchkine.

Les Miserables, 1985, Trevor Nunn, Design John Napier, Light David Hersey.

Les Liaisons Dangereuse,1986, The Pit, RSC 8th January-13th March, Director Howard Davies, Decor Bob Crowley, Light Chris Parry.

M

Machinal, 1993, RNT Lyttleton, Director Stephen Daldry, Design Ian MacNeil, Light Rick Fisher.

Mack and Mabel, 1996, West End transfer from the Leicester Haymarket, Director Paul Kerryson, Design Martin Johns, Light Chris Ellis.

Martin Guerre 1996, Director Declan Donnelan, Design Nick Ormerod, Light David Hersey opened July 10th 1996, at the Prince Edward Theatre, London.

Miss Saigon, London, New York, Tokyo, Director Trevor Nunn, Design John Napier, Light David Hersey.

N

Needles and Opium, NT, April 1992, Robert Lepage.

Nicholas Nickleby, 1982, Directors Trevor Nunn, John Caird, Design John Napier, Light David Hersey.

O

On the Ledge February 1993, Nottingham Playhouse, Director Robin Lefrevre, Design Bill Dudley, Light Nick Chelton.

Oliver London Paladium 1994, Director Sam Mendes, Design Anthony Ward, Light David Hersey.

P

Peer Gynt, 1988, Director Declan Donnelan, Design Nick Ormerod, Light Rick Fisher.

Poppie Nongena Assembly Room, 5th-10th September 1983, Director Hilary Belcher, Decor Jon Ringbom, Light William Armstrong.

Phantom of the Opera, 1986, Director Harold Prince, Design Maria Bjornson, Light Andy Bridge.

R

Richard III Lyttleton NT Light Jean Kalman.

Rigoletto, 1982, Director Jonathan Miller, Design Patrick Robertson and Rosemary Vercoe, Light Robert Bryan.

S

Serious Money, Royal Court and West End transfer, Director Max Stafford Clark, Light Rick Fisher.

Starlight Express, Apollo Victoria Theatre, 1st performed March 1984, Director Trevor Nunn, Design John Napier, Light David Hersey.

Shopping and Fucking, 1997 Royal Court at the Ambassadors.

Sunday in the Park with George 15th March - 16th June 1990, NT, Director Steven Pimlott Design Tom Cairns, Light Wolfgang Göebel (who left the production before it opened.). The Lighting was completed by Mark Henderson.

Sunset Boulevard, 1993, Director Trevor Nunn, Design John Napier, Light Andy Bridge.

T

Tectonic Plates, NT, Robert Lepage.

The Chairs, 1997, The Royal Court at The Dukes Theatre, Director Simon McBurney.

The Emperor of Assyria, 1971, Director Victor Garcia, Design Michel Launay, Light David Hersey.

The Hunting of the Snark 1991, Light Andrew Bridge.

The Lady Dragon's Lament, 1995, Director Nona Shepphard, Design Marsha Roddy, Light Christine White.

The Lights, 1996, Royal Court, Director Ian Rickson, Design Jeremy Herbert.

The Secret Garden 1991, Theatre Centre UK Tour, Director Nona Shepphard, Design Jenny Carey, Light Christine White.

The Skriker Cottesloe, NT, 27th January-26th April 1994, Director Les Waters, Designer Annie Smart, Light Chris Toulmin.

Three Birds Alighting on a Field Royal Court, 5th September 1991, Director Max Stafford Clark, Designer Sally Jacobs, Light Rick Fisher.

Time, 1986, Director Larry Fuller, Design John Napier, Light Andy Bridge.

W

War and Peace , RNT Director Nancy Meckler

The Winter's Tale, 1991, Lyric Hammersmith & Tour, Theatre de Complicite Director Annabel Arden, Design Ariane Gastambide, Light Ben Ormerod.

Bibliography

A

Lionel Able, 1962, <u>A View of Dramatic Form</u>, Hull and Wang, New York.

Chinua Achebe, 1988, <u>The African Trilogy</u>, London Pan Books with Heinemann.

W. Theodor Adorno, 1975, 'Culture industry reconsidered', <u>New German Critique</u>, No.6, pp12-19

Theodor W. Adorno, 1984, <u>Aesthetic Theory</u>, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

Ian Alberry, 1961, 'Theatre in the Round', Volume 19, no.1, pp.16-19.

Ralph G. Allen, 1960, <u>The Stage Spectacles of Philip James de Loutherbourg</u>, Yale dissertation.

Louis Althusser, 1971, <u>Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays</u>, translated by Ben Brewster, New Left Books, London

Altieri, 1973, 'From Symbolist Thought to Immanence: The Ground of Postmodern American Poetics', <u>Boundary</u> 21, Vol.3, pp.605-641.

I. Ang, 1989, <u>Watching Dallas</u>, Routledge, London.

Peter Ansorge, 1975, <u>Disrupting the Spectacle:Five Years of Experimental and Fringe Theatre in Britain</u>, Pitman.

Karl Von Appen, 1971, 'On Arrangement Sketches (Uber)', <u>Stage Design in The German Democratic Republic</u> IFTR, unpublished conference papers for International Quadrennial of Scenography, Prague, in Thomson 1994.

Adolphe Appia, 1968, <u>Prophet of the Modern Theatre - A Profile</u>, Translated by Walther R. Volbach, Middletown, Conn: Wesleyan University Press.

Adolphe Appia, 1989, <u>Adolphe Appia : Essays, Scenarios and Designs</u>, translated by Walther R. Volbach, Edited and with notes by Richard C. Beecham, U.M.I. Research Press, Ann Arbor

Arnold Aronson, 1991, 'Postmodern Design', Theatre Journal, Vol.43,
No.1, March, pp.1-13.

Arnold Aronson, 1993, '100 Years of Stage Lighting: Why We Cannot
Light Like Appia', pp.46-58, OISTAT Nederland, Lectures held on the
occasion of the symposium: Aspects Of Theatre Lighting Since Adolphe
Appia, Amsterdam, November 27th. Published by Vereniging voor
Podiumtechnologie, Opleiding Theatertechniek (OTT) Hogesschool
voor de Kunsten, Amsterdam.

Arnold Aronson, 1993, 'The 1991 Prague Quadrennial', The Drama
Review, Vol.37, No.1 T137, Spring, p.61-73.

Brian Arnott, 1973, 'A Scenography of Light, The Architect and the
Emperor of Assyria', The Drama Review, Vol.17, No.2 , T58, June

Brian Arnott, 1975, Towards a New Theatre, The National Gallery of
Canada.

Antonin Artaud, 1958, Theatre and its Double, translated by Mary
Richards, 1993, Montreuil:Calder, New York.

Arts Council of Great Britain, [ACGB] 1993, A Creative Future: The
way forward for the arts, crafts and media in England, HMSO.

Arts Council of England,[ACE] 1996, 'Arts Council News National
Lottery Supplement', April 1996.

Arts Council of England, [ACE] 1998, Arts Lottery, Spring, ACE,
London

Elaine Aston & George Savona, 1991, Theatre as Sign System,
Routledge, London.

B

Denis Bablet, 1966, Edward Gordon Craig, translated by Daphne
Woodward, London, Heinemann.

H.C.Baldry, 1971, The Greek Tragic Theatre, Chatto & Windus.

Martin Banham, Editor, 1992, The Cambridge Guide to Theatre,
Cambridge University Press.

Roland Barthes, 1970, S/Z, Seuil, Paris, in Collini 1992.

Roland Barthes, 1977, <u>Image Music Text</u>, essays selected by Roland Barthes, translated by Stephen Heath, Fontana, London.

Roland Barthes, 1979, 'Barthes on Theatre', Translated and introduced by Peter W. Mathers, <u>Theatre Quarterly</u>, Vol.IX, No.33, Spring, pp.25-30.

Christopher Baugh, 1994, 'Brecht and stage design: the Bühnenbilder and the Bühnenbauer', <u>The Cambridge Companion to Brecht</u>, Peter Thomson and Glendyr Sacks, Editors, Cambridge University Press.

Christopher Baugh, 1990, <u>Garrick and Loutherbourg</u>,Chadwyck-Healey, Theatre in Focus, Cambridge.

John Beattie and John Middleton, 1969, <u>Spirit Mediumship and Society in Africa</u>, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

Monroe C. Beardsley, 1973, <u>The Possibility of Criticism</u>, Wayne State University Press, Detroit.

Sally Beauman, 1982, <u>The Royal Shakespeare Company: A history in ten decades</u>, Oxford University Press .

Bell, 1976, <u>The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism</u>, Heinemann.

Daphne Ben Chaim,1984, <u>Distance in the Theatre: The Aesthetics of Audience Response</u>, Ann Arbor, UMI Research Press.

Susan Bennett, 1994, <u>Theatre Audiences: A Theory of Production and Reception</u>, Routledge, London.

G.E.Bentley, 1941-68, <u>The Jacobean and Caroline Stage</u>, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 7 Volumes.

Fred Bentham,1976, <u>The Art of Stage Lighting</u>, Pitman Second Edition.

Kent T. van der Berg, 1985, <u>Playhouse and Cosmos: Shakespearean Theater as Metaphor</u>, Newark, New Jersey.

Gosta M. Bergmann, 1977, <u>Lighting in the Theatre</u>, Rowman and Littlefield, Ottowa, New Jersey, Almquist & Wiksell International, Stockholm.

D.E.Berlyne, 1960, <u>Conflict Arousal and Curiosity</u>, N.Y. McGraw Hill.

D.E.Berlyne,1966, 'Notes on intrinsic motivation and intrinsic reward in relation to instruction', New York Department of Health Education and Welfare.

Richard J. Berstein, 1985, Habermas and Modernity, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Ralph Berry, 1977, On Directing Shakespeare: interviews with contemporary directors, Croom Helm, London.

Ralph Berry, 1981, Changing Styles in Shakespeare, London: Allen and Unwin.

Michael Billington, 1993, One Night Stands, A critics view of British Theatre from 1971-1991, Nick Hern Books.

Michael Billington, 1969, 'The Designer Talks - Ralph Koltai', Plays and Players, Vol.17, No.2, November, p.53.

Johannes Birringer, 1991, Theatre, Theory, Postmodernism, Indiana University Press, Bloomington & Indianapolis.

Herbert Blau, 1983, 'Universals of Performance; or, Amortizing Play', Sub-stance, pp.37-38.

-, 1990, The Audience, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore & London.

Peter Blundell, 1986, 'Beyond the Black Box', Architectural Review, Vol.180, No.48, July.

Peter Bogatyrev, 1976, 'Semiotics and the Folk Theatre', in Semiotics Of Art: Prague School Contributions, Editors, Ladislav Matejka & Irwin R.Titunik, Cambridge Mass. MIT Press, pp33-50.

Michael R. Booth, 1979, 'Spectacle as Production Style on the Victorian Stage', Theatre Quarterly, Vol.VIII, No.32, pp.8-20

Wayne C. Booth,1983, The Rhetoric of Fiction, Chicago Press.

M. Borsa, 1908, The English Stage Today, Milan & London.

Eleanore Boswell, 1966, The Restoration Court Space, Barnes and Noble, New York

Edward Braun, 1969, Meyerhold on Theatre, Methuen, London.

Edward Braun, 1979, <u>The Theatre of Meyerhold:revolution on the</u> <u>modern stage,</u> Eyre Methuen, London.

Edward Braun, 1995, <u>Meyerhold: A Revolution in Theatre,</u> Methuen, London.

Bertolt Brecht, 1964, <u>Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an</u> <u>Aesthetic,</u> editor and translator John Willett, Methuen Drama.

Ellen Breitman, Editor, 1981, <u>Art and the stage in the Twentieth century:</u> <u>painters and sculptors work for theater,</u> Cleveland Museum of art Indiana University Press, documented by Wolfgang Storch, Graphic Society 1968, Greenwich Conn.: NewYork.

Osip Brik, 1924, 'Ne v teatre, a v klube', <u>Lef,</u> no.1, 5, Translated and published in Kleberg, 1993.

Vicki Bruce and Patrick R. Green,1987, <u>Visual Perception Physiology,</u> <u>Psychology and Ecology,</u> Lawrence Eribaum Associates Ltd.

Robert Buckhout, 1973, 'Psychology of Perceptions' in <u>Psychology:the</u> <u>science of mental life,</u> George A. Miller, 2nd Edition, Prentice Hall.

Edward Bullough, 1912, 'Physical Distance as a factor in Art and an Aesthetic Principle', in <u>British Journal of Psychology,</u> No.5, June, pp87-118

Jarka Burian, 1974, <u>The Scenography of Josef Svoboda,</u> Middletown Conn., Wesleyan University Press.

Edward Bullough, 1912, 'Physical Distance as a factor in Art and an Aesthetic Principle', in <u>British Journal of Psychology,</u> No.5, June, pp.87-118.

Alfred Bunn, 1840, <u>The Stage: both before and behind the curtain,</u> London.

J.M. Burian, Editor and Translator, 1993, <u>The Secret of Theatrical</u> <u>Space: the memoirs of Josef Svoboda,</u> New York, Applause Books.

BBC1, 1996, <u>The House.</u>

C

Simon Callow, 1984, <u>Being an Actor,</u> Methuen, London.

Marvin Carlson, 1984, Theories of Theatre: A Historical and Critical Survey from the Greeks to the Present, Cornell University Press.

Marvin Carlson, 1989, Places of performance: the semiotics of theatre architecture, Ithaca N.Y., Cornell Press.

Mosco Carner, 1958, Puccini A Critical Biography, Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., London.

Frantisek Cêrny, 1977, 'Lighting that creates the scene and the lighting as an actor', IFTR collection of papers.

Colin Chambers, 1980, Other spaces: New Theatre and the RSC, Eyre Methuen Theatrefile.

Tony Chase, 1994, 'Ian McNeil', Theatre Crafts International, April, p.28.

Sarah Jane Checkland, 1995, The Guardian, 13th February.

City University Box Office Survey undertaken for SWET.

Amaya Clunes, 1995, 'Le Corps et le costume Comme Métcorps', Performance Analysis research group, Montreal, Canada, FIRT/IFTR.

Amaya Clunes, 1995, 'La Mise en Scène de Costumes', International Meeting on Scenography, Prague Theatre Institute, FIRT/IFTR.

Toby Cole, Editor, 1963, Playwrights on Playwriting: The meaning and making of modern drama from Ibsen to Ionesco, N.Y. Hill & Wong.

Toby Cole and Helen Krich Chinoy,1970, Directors on Directing: A Source Book of the Modern Theater, Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis.

R.G. Collingwood,1938, The Principles of Art, Oxford University Press

Conservative Political Centre, 1978, The Arts - the way forward, A Conservative Discussion Paper with a foreword by Norman St John Stevas MP.

Stefan Collini, Umberto Eco, 1992, Interpretation and Over-interpretation, Cambridge University Press.

Steven Connor, 1989, Postmodernist Culture: An Introduction to Theories of the Contemporary, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

Judith Cook, 1974, Directors' Theatre, Harrap, London.

Tony Coult and Baz Kershaw,1983, Engineers of the Imagination:The Welfare State Handbook, Methuen.

W.L.Courtney, 1892, 'Prof. Herkomer, Royal Academician, his life and work', The Art Annual.

Michael Coveney, 1997, 'Play Fighting', The Observer, 20th April

Edward Gordon Craig, 1957, On the Art of the Theatre, Heinemann, London

Jonathan Culler,1992, 'In defence of overinterpretation', in Interpretation and Over-interpretation, Editors, Stefan Collini, Umberto Eco, Cambridge University Press.

D

W.T.O'Dea, 1958, A Short History of Lighting, London, HMSO.

Basil Dean, 1962, 'Recollections and Reflections', Tabs, Vol. 20, No.3, pp.5-23.

Roger Deldime, 1990, 'A Psychological Approach to the Memory of the Spectator', in New Directions in Theatre Research: Proceedings of the XIth FIRT/IFTR Congress (selection), editor Willmar Sauter, Copenhagen Munksgaard.

Jacques Derrida, 1978, Writing and Difference, translated Alan Bass, University of Chicago, 1990, Routledge, London.

The Design Research Society, 1995, 4D Dynamics: An International interdisciplinary conference on design and research methodologies for dynamic form, conference proceedings, 21st September 1995, De Montfort University, Leicester, Editor Alex Robertson. Also published on the INTERNET at http://www.dmu.ac.uk/ln/4dd, 1995.

Alan C. Dessen, 1991, 'Resources and Images: Shakespeare in 1990', Shakespeare Quarterly, Vol.42, No.2, p.221.

Richard Digby-Day, 1983, 'Sponsorship and Fundraising' in The TMA Marketing Manual, Volume 4, Edited by Glyn V. Robbins and Peter Verwey, Theatrical Management Association Ltd. with assistance from the Arts Council of Great Britain.

Keith Diggle, 1980, <u>Only Connect, The arts provision system in the UK,</u> Calouste

Gulbenkian Foundation & Commonwealth Branch 1980.

E

Terry Eagleton, 1985, 'Capitalism, Modernism and Postmodernism', <u>New Left Review</u>, No.152, pp60-73.

Umberto Eco, 1977, <u>A Theory of Semiotics</u>, Bloomington Indiana University Press, London Macmillan.

Umberto Eco, 1977, 'Semiotics of Theatrical Performance', <u>The Drama Review</u>: Theatre and Social Action Issue, T73, March Volume 21, No.1, pp107-117.

Umberto Eco, 1992, 'Between Author and Text', in <u>Interpretation and Over-interpretation</u>, Editors, Stefan Collini, Umberto Eco, Cambridge University Press.

Umberto Eco, 1992, 'Hyprereal', in <u>Interpretation and Over-interpretation</u>, Editors, Stefan Collini, Umberto Eco, Cambridge University Press.

David Edgar, 1979, 'Towards a Theatre of Dynamic Ambiguities', Vol.IX, No.33, Spring, pp.3-23

David Edgar, 1979, 'Ten Years of Political Theatre, 1968-78', Vol.VIII, No.32, Winter, pp.25-33.

David Edgar, 1993, 'New State of Play', <u>The Guardian,</u> 1st March.

Robert Edmond Jones, 1969, <u>The Dramatic Imagination: reflections and speculations on the art of the theatre,</u> Theatre Art Books, New York.

Per Edstrom, 1990, <u>Why Not Theatres Made for People?,</u> Varmdo Sweden.

Jane Edwardes, 1994, interview in Shank, 1994.

Keir Elam, 1980, <u>The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama,</u> Methuen, London.

John Elsom, 1980, <u>Post-War British Theatre Criticism,</u> Routledge & Kegan Paul, London

R.K. Elliott, 1966, 'Aesthetic Theory and the Experience of Art', in Osbourne, H., Editor, 1972, <u>Aesthetics</u>, Oxford University Press.

Eable Ernst, 1974, <u>The Kabuki</u> Theatre, originally published OUP 1956, Honolulu University Press of Hawaii.

Martin Esslin, 1977, 'High Priest of Theatricality', <u>The Drama Review</u>, Vol.21, No.2, T74, pp.5-24.

Martin Esslin, 1980, <u>The Theatre of the Absurd</u>, Harmondsworth Penguin.

Martin Esslin, 1987, <u>The Field of Drama:how signs of drama create meaning on stage and screen</u>, Methuen, London.

Peter G.F. Eversmann, 1980, 'Basic Problems in Reception Studies: Some Methodological Remarks', in Elam 1980.

Peter G. F. Eversmann, 1984, 'A History of Theatre. A Drama in Three Acts', in <u>Semiotics of Drama and Theatre</u>, Editors, Herta Schmid and Aloysius Van Kesteren, Linguistic and Literary Studies in Eastern Europe,Vol. 10, John Benjamin, Amsterdam and Philadelphia.

F

Featherstone, 1988, 'Consumer Culture and Postmodernism', Special issue on Postmodernism, <u>Theory, Culture & Society</u>, Vol.5, No.2-3, June.

Andrew Feist & Robert Hutchinson, 1990, <u>Cultural Trends in the Eighties</u>, Policy Studies Institute.

Francis Fergusson, 1949, <u>The Idea of a Theater: a study of ten plays the art of drama in changing perspective</u>, P.U.P., Princeton New Jersey.

Joachim Fiebach, 1984, 'Theater as Cultural Performance, Anthropology, Ethnography and Studies in Performing Arts', in <u>Semiotics of Drama and Theatre</u>, Editors, Herta Schmid and Aloysius Van Kesteren, Linguistic and Literary Studies in Eastern Europe,Vol. 10, John Benjamin, Amsterdam and Philadelphia.

Edward Fitzball, 1859, <u>35 years of a dramatic authors life</u>, London

Percy Fitzgerald, 1972, <u>The World behind the Scenes</u>, London Chatto & Windus, re-issue C&W, Blom.New York.

Tim Fitzpatrick, 1991, 'The Dialectics of Space - Time: Dramaturgical and Directional Strategies for Performance and Fictional World', Performance : From Product to Process. Series: Altro Polo, University of Sydney; Frederick May Foundation for Italian Studies, pp.49-111.

Erika Fischer-Lichte, 1984, 'The Dramatic Dialogue - oral or literary communication?', in Herta Schmid and Aloysius Van Kesteren, Editors, Semiotics of Drama and Theatre, Linguistic and Literary Studies in Eastern Europe,Vol. 10, John Benjamin, Amsterdam and Philadelphia.

Michael Forsyth, 1987, Auditoria : Designing for the Performing Arts, Mitchell London.

Foster, 1984, 'Postmoderninsm, on the logic of late capitalism', in Art After Modernism:Rethinking Representation, Brian Wallis, David R.Godine, Boston and New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York.

Richard Foulkes, Editor, 1992, British Theatre in the 1890's: essays on drama and the stage, Cambridge University Press.

Martin Friedman, 1983, Hockney paints the Stage, Thames & Hudson.

Walter René Fuerst & Samuel J. Hume, 1928, Twentieth Century Stage Decoration, London, A.A. Knopf.

G

Erving Goffman, 1969, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, Allen Lane, London, originally published Doubleday, New York.

Erving Goffman, 1975, Frame Analysis and essay on the organisation of experience, Penguin Harmondsworth.

Nicholas Gogol, 'To the director and playwright Chekov', Authors Confession, Vol.8.

E.H. Gombrich, 1977, Art and Illusion: a study in the psychology of pictorial representation, Phaidon, London.

Howard Goorney, 1981, The Theatre Workshop Story, Eyre Methuen, London

Mordecai Gorelik, 1947, New Theatres for Old, editor, Denis Dobson, London.

Judith Greenwood, 1984, <u>Am I Lit Here? - An historical survey of the theory and practice of lighting the actor on stage, from the age of gas to the age of electricity</u>, M.A. thesis Leeds University.

A.J.Greimas, 1979, <u>Du Sens,</u>Seuil, Paris, cited in Collini,1992.

Jerzy Grotowski, 1976, <u>Towards a Poor Theatre</u>, Edited by Eugenio Barba, Eyre & Methuen, London.

W.K.C. Guthrie, 1950, <u>A History of Greek Philosophy</u>, Cambridge University Press, Methuen.

H

Jurgen Habermas, 1985, 'Neoconservative Culture Criticism in the United States and West Germany: An Intellectual Movement in two Political Cultures', in Richard J. Berstein, 1985, <u>Habermas and Modernity</u>, Polity Press, Cambridge.

René Hainaux and Yves-Bonnet, 1973, <u>Stage Design Throughout the world since 1960</u>, 1960, George C. Harrap & Co, Ltd; 1973, Theatre Arts Books, New York.

Edward T. Hall, 1969, <u>The Hidden Dimension: man's use of space in public and private</u>, Bodley Head, London.

Stuart Hall and Paddy Whannel, 1964, <u>The Popular Arts</u>, London Hutchinson Educational.

Rob Halliday, 1993, 'Cyranno', <u>Lighting and Sound International</u>, February, P.L.A.S.A. pp.25-28.

Robert Halliday, 1993, 'ShowCAD: The PC Takes Control', <u>Lighting and Sound International</u>, February 1993, pp.36-37.

Rob Halliday, 1996, 'C'est la Guerre', <u>Lighting and Sound International</u>, August, P.L.A.S.A., pp.33-40.

Junius N. Hamblin, 1986, <u>The Artistic Approach of the Grieve Family to Selected Problems of Nineteenth Century Scene Painting</u>, The Oliver State University Phd. 1966 Speech - Theater, Ann Arbor Published University Microfilms International.

Peter Handke,1971, <u>Theatre and anti-theatre</u>, translated Nick Hern, Maden German Titles Oswald Wolff.

Joseph Cunningham Harker, 1924, <u>Studio and Stage</u>, Nisbet & Co.

Baxter Hathaway, 1962, <u>The Age of Criticism: The Late Renaissance in Italy</u>, Ithaca, New York.

Bethany Haye, 1986, 'Les Miserables', <u>Theatre Crafts</u>, Vol. 20, No.9 November.

Ronald Hayman, 1979, <u>Theatre and Anti-Theatre</u>, London, Secker & Warburg.

Peter Harlock, 1983, 'The Product' in Glyn V. Robbins and Peter Verwey.

Phyllis Hartnoll, 1967, <u>The Oxford Companion to the Theatre</u>, Third Edition.

Bethany Haye, 1986, 'Les Miserables' in <u>Theatre Crafts</u>, Vol 20, No.9 November, p.33-34.

Dick Hebdige, 1991, <u>Subculture:the meaning of style</u>, Routledge, London.

Andre Helbo,1987, <u>Theory of Performing Arts</u>, Amsterdam;Philadelphia:Benjamins, Series:Critical Theory, Vol.5.

H. Von Helmholtz, 1968, R.M. & R.P. Warren, Editors, <u>Perception:its physiology and development</u>, Wiley.

Ian Herbert, 1993, 'Two by Crowley', <u>Theatre Crafts International</u>, April, p.41.

Ian Herbert, 1995, 'Asleep in the Stalls', <u>Lighting and Sound International</u>, p.225.

Hubert Herkomer, 1889, 'The Pictorial Music-Play: An idyll',<u>Magazine of Art</u>, No.12.

Hubert Herkomer, 1895, 'Scenic Art', lecture to architectural association, <u>Architect and Contract Reporter</u>, No.54.

Melville J. Herskovits, 1943, 'Dramatic Expression among Primitive People', <u>The Yale Review</u>.

- 1950, <u>Man and His Works</u>, Alfred A. Knopf, New York.

Barnard Hewitt, 1958, <u>The Renaissance Stage</u>, University of Miami Press.

Francis Hodge, Editor, <u>Innovations in Stage and Theatre Design</u>, Conference 1969, New York: Papers of Congress, American Society for Theatre Research, 1972.

Peter Uwe Hohendahl, 1982, <u>The Institution of Criticism</u>, Ithaca:Cornell University Press.

Peter Holland, 1978, 'Brecht, Bond, Gaskill, and the Practice of Political Theatre', <u>Theatre Quarterly</u>, Vol.VIII, No.30, Summer, pp24-35.

Jindrich Honzl, 1940, 'Dynamics of the Sign in the Theater',in Ladislav Matejka and Irwin R. Titunik, Editors, 1976, <u>Semiotics of Art: Prague School Contributions</u>, Cambridge Mass. MIT Press, p.74-93.

Jessmin Howarth, 1961, <u>Jacques Copeau Apostle of the Theatre</u>, Phd. New York University, Norman Henry Paul.

Linda Hutcheon, 1988, <u>A Poetics of Postmodernism History, Theory, Fiction</u>, Routledge, New York and London

Will Hutton, 1996, <u>The State We're In</u>, fully revised edition with a new introduction and a new final chapter, Vintage.

I

Wolfgang Iser, 1974, <u>The Implied Reader: patterns of communication in prose fiction from Bunyan to Brecht</u>, Baltimore John Hopkins University Press.

Catherine Itzin, 1979, <u>Twentieth Century Polish Theatre</u>, J. Calder, London.

Catherine Itzin, 1980, <u>Stages in the Revolution:political theatre in Britain since 1968</u>, Eyre Methuen, London.

George Izenour, 1977, <u>Theatre Design</u>, N.Y. McGraw-Hill.

J

Hans Robert Jacess, 1982, 'Aesthetic Experience and Literary
Hermeneutics', in Interpretation of Narrative, Editors, Mario J. Valdes &
Owen J. Miller, University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Roman Jakobson, 1976, 'What is Poetry' in Ladislav Matejka and Irwin
R. Titunik, Editors, Semiotics of Art: Prague School Contributions,
Cambridge Mass. MIT Press.

Frederic Jameson, 1977, 'Reflections in Conclusion' in Taylor 1977,
pp.196-213.

- 1984, 'Postmodernism, Or The Cultural Logic of
Late Capitalism', New Left Review, No.146, p.53-92.

Johansson, 1973, in Vicki Bruce and Patrick R. Green,1987, Visual
Perception Physiology, Psychology and Ecology, Lawrence Eribaum
Associates Ltd.

C.G.Jung, 1966, 'Two essays on Analytical Psychology', Collected
Works, translated R.F.C. Hull,Volume 7, Editor, Sir Herbert Reed, 2nd
Edition, revised and augmented, Routledge & Kegan Paul,London.

C.G.Jung, 1968, part1 'The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious',
Collected Works, translated R.F.C. Hull, Vol.9, Editor, Sir Herbert
Reed, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

K

Michal Kabialka, 1977, 'Theatre Historiography: The Function of
Diachronic/Synchronic Temporality and Spatial Reflexivity in
Post-Modern Cognizance', in Theatre Space:an examination of the
interaction between space, technologies performance and society;
contributions to the congress, General Editors James F. Arnott [et al],
Prestel-Verlag, München, p.59.

Gad Kaynar, 1995, 'The Implied Spectator', Montreal IFTR Conference
- 'Actor Actress on Stage', paper given to the Performance Analysis
Working Group, May, unpublished.

Baz Kershaw, 1992, The Politics of Performance:Radical theatre as
Cultural Intervention, Routledge, London.

John Maynard Keynes, 1936, The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money, London Macmillan & Co. Ltd.

Michael Kirby, 1982, 'Nonsemiotic Performance', Modern Drama, 21, March.

Michael Kirby, 1971, Futurist Performance, Translated by Victoria Nes Kirby, E.P.Dutton & Co., New York.

Lars Kleberg, 1993, Theatre as action:Soviet Russian avant-garde aesthetics, translated from Swedish by Charles Rougle, Macmillan, London, Series New directions in theatre.

Richard Kostelanetz, 1970, The Theatre if Mixed Means, Pitman, London.

Jan Kott, 1988, Shakespeare Our Contemporary, translated Boleslaw Taborski, London Routledge.

Tadeusz Kowzan, 1968, 'The Sign in the Theatre', Diogines, 61, pp52-80.

Rikard Kuller, 1977, 'Psycho-Physiological Conditions in Theatre Construction', in Theatre Space:an examination of the interaction between space, technologies performance and society; contributions to the congress, General editors James F. Arnott [et al], Prestel-Verlag, München, p.158.

L

Ellen Lambert, 1992, 'John Bury designer on design the man who changed the face of British Design', Theatre Crafts International, p.46

David Lancer, 1983, 'Appendix: The Merchandiser's Viewpoint', in The TMA Marketing Manual, Volume 4, Edited by Glyn V. Robbins and Peter Verwey, Theatrical Management Association Ltd. with assistance from the Arts Council of Great Britain.

S. Langer,1957, Philosophy in a New Key, Harvard University Press.

Edmund Leach, 1976, Culture and Communication: an introduction to the use of structuralist analysis in social anthropology, Cambridge University Press.

F.R.Leavis, 1952, The Common Pursuit, London Chatto & Windus.

Vernon Lee, 1913, The Beautiful, Cambridge University Press. (Vernon Lee nom de plume of Violet Paget).

Clifford Leech and T.W. Craik, 1978, The Revels History of Drama in English 1880 to the present day, Vol.7, Methuen,London.

Shimon Levy, 1995, 'Offstage in Beckett', International Meeting on Scenography, IFTR, unpublished papers.

Stephen Levy, 'Naturalism, Poetics Realism Spectacle', New Theatre Quarterly, Vol.X, No.11.

Peter Lewis, 1981, Radio Drama, Longman, London.

Georg Lukács, 1971, History and Mass Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectic, Cambridge, Massachusetts, MIT Press.

Jean-Francois Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis

Colin Lyas, 1995, Philosophical Aesthetics an introduction, ed. Oswald Hanfling, Blackwell Publishers in association with The Open University Press.

M

D. MacDonald, 1957, 'A theory of mass culture', in B. Rosenberg and D. White, Editors, Mass Culture, Glencoe, Free Press.

K. MacGowan and R.E. Jones, 1923, Continental Stagecraft, Harcourt, Brace & Co. N.Y., London, Benn Brothers.

Iain Mackintosh, 1992, Architecture Actor and Audience, Routledge.

Herbert Marcuse, 1978, The Aesthetic Dimension, Beacon Press, Boston Mass.

Marco De Marinis, 1987, 'Dramaturgy of the Spectator', The Drama Review, Vol.31 No.2, Summer, pp100-114.

-, 1991, 'Cognitive Processes in performance Comprehension: Frames Theory and Theatrical Competence', Performance: from product to process, Series:Altro Polo, University of Sydney: Frederick May Foundation for Italian Studies, pp.173-192.

Charles Marowitz, 1978, 'Free Shakespeare! Jail Scholars!', Plays and Players, Vol.25, no.5, February, p.12.

Norman Marshall, 1947, The Other Theatre, London.

Rosanne Martorella, 1977, 'The Relationship Between Box Office and Repertoire:a Case Study of Opera', Sociological Quarterly, No.18, Summer, p.354-366.

Ladislav Matejka and Irwin R. Titunik, Editors, 1976, Semiotics of Art: Prague School Contributions, Cambridge Mass. MIT Press.

Stanley McCandless, 1958, Method of Lighting the Stage, Theatre Art Books, New York, Fourth Edition.

John McGrath, 1979, 'The Theory and Practice of Political Theatre', Theatre Quarterly, Vol.IX, No.35, p.54.

Martin Meisel, 1983, Realizations Narrative, Pictorial and Theatrical Arts in Nineteenth Century England, Princeton University Press.

George A. Miller & K.E.Clark, Editors,1970, Psychology:the science of mental life, Prentice Hall.

Helen Mirren, 1974, 'Letter to the Editor', The Guardian, in Itzin 1980, p.183

T. Modleski, 1986, 'Feminity as mas(s)querade: a feminist approach to mass culture', in C. MacCabe, Editor, High Theory/Low Culture, Manchester University Press, Manchester.

Michael Moriarty, 1991, Roland Barthes, Polity Press.

Patricia Morrisae, 1988, 'Here comes Phantom', New York Times, January 18th.

Henry Morley, 1974, The Journal of a London Playgoer 1851-1866, Routledge, 2nd edition Leicester University Press.

Sheridan Morley, 1987, Spread a Little Happiness: the first hundred years of British Musical, London Thames & Hudson,

A.L.Morton, 1992, A People's History of England, first published 1938, Lawrence & Wishart, London.

Jan Mukarovský, 1976,'Poetic Reference', in Ladislav Matejka and Irwin R. Titunik, Editors, 1976, Semiotics of Art: Prague School Contributions, Cambridge Mass. MIT Press, pp.155-163.

Heiner Muller and Oliver Ortolani, 1985, 'Die Form entseht aus dem Maskieren', Theater translated Elizabeth Wright, 1989.

John Myerscough et al, 1988, The Economic Importance of the Arts in Britain, Policy Studies Institute.

J.R.Mulryne & Elizabeth Shewring, Editors, 1991, Theatre of the English and Italian Renaissance, Basingstoke MacMillan.

N

Allardyce Nicoll, 1963, Stuart Masques and the Renaissance Stage, Harrap, 1st published 1938, Blom., New York.

Eric Newton, 1962, The Romantic Rebellion, Longmans.

NPT, 1997, New Playwrights Trust:'Commissioning The Future', London Arts Board.

Lennart Nyberg, 1988, The Shakespearean Ideal, UPPSALA

O

John Offord, 1994, 'The New Glyndebourne', Lighting and Sound International, p.35.

Stephen Orgell and Roy Strong, 1973, Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court Volume 1, Sotheby Park Bernet, University of California Press.

John Orrell, 1988, The Human Stage: English Theatre Design 1567-1640, Cambridge University Press.

P

Jerry Palmer, 1991, Potboilers:methods, concepts and case studies in popular fiction, London Routledge.

Patrice Pavis, 1991, Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture, translated by Loren Kruger, Routledge, London.

Constance Penley, editor, 1988, Feminism and Film Theory, Routledge, New York, London B.F.I.

George Pickering, 1974, <u>The Creative Malady</u>, Allen and Unwin, London.

Richard Pilbrow, 1992, <u>Stage Lighting</u>, Nick Hern Books.

J.E.Pinchen, 1988, <u>The Audience as Critic:A study of audience responses to Popular Theatre</u>, Phd. Thesis, Loughborough University.

Pink Book, 1988, <u>United Kingdom Balance of Payments:The CSO Pink Book</u>, Central Statistical Office (Enterprise Unit), HMSO

Nigel Playfair, 1925, <u>The Story of the Lyric Hammersmith</u>, Chatto & Windus.

R

Roland Rees, 1992, <u>Fringe First Pioneers of Fringe Theatre on Record</u>, Oberon Books, London .

Terence Rees, 1978, <u>Theatre Lighting in the Age of Gas</u>, Society for Theatre Research.

Francis Reid, 1976, <u>The Stage Lighting Handbook</u>, Pitman.

Louis Arnnaud Reid, 1969, <u>Meaning in the Arts</u>, Muirhead Library of Philosophy, Allen & Unwin, London

RNT, 1992, 'Robert Lepage in Discussion with Richard Eyre', <u>Platform Papers 3</u>, RNT, London.

RNT, 1993, <u>Platform Papers: 4 . Designers</u>, Bob Crowley, Jocelyn Herbert, John Napier.

Jonathan Roban, 1981, 'Icon or Symbol :the writer and the medium', in Peter Lewis, 1981.

Glyn V. Robbins and Peter Verwey, Editors, <u>The TMA Marketing Manual</u>, Volume 4, Theatrical Management Association Ltd. with assistance from the Arts Council of Great Britain.

Peter Roberts, with research by Anne Tayler, 1973, <u>Theatre in Britain:A playgoers guide</u>, London Pitman.

Ian Rodger, 1982, <u>Radio Drama</u>, Macmillan, London.

Richard Rorty, 1992, 'The Pragmatists Progress', in <u>Interpretation and Over-interpretation</u>, Editors Stefan Collini and Umberto Eco, Cambridge University Press.

Sybil Rosenfield, 1973, <u>A Short History of Scene Design in Great Britain</u>, Blackwell, Oxford.

George Rowell, 1978, <u>The Victorian Theatre 1792-1914 a survey</u>, Cambridge University Press, 2nd Edition.

John Russell Brown, 1969, <u>Effective Theatre</u>, Heinemann, London.

Joel Rubin, 1990, 'The Platonic Ideal', <u>Theatre Crafts</u>, December.

Leon Rubin, 1981, <u>The Nicholas Nickleby Story: the making of the historic Royal Shakespeare Company production</u>, Heinemann: London.

John Rudlin, 1986, <u>Jacques Copeau</u>, Cambridge University Press.

Konstantin Rudnitsky, 1988, <u>Russian and Soviet Theatre tradition and the Avant garde</u>, translated Roxane Permar, edited Dr Lesley Milne, Thames & Hudson.

S

Mike Alfreds and Clive Barker, 1981, 'Shared Experience:from Science Fiction to Shakespeare', <u>Theatre Quarterly</u>, Vol.X, No.39 Spring Summer, pp12-22.

Sackville-West, 1982, 'The Rescue', the preface, in Peter Lewis, 1981.

Richard Schechner, 1969, <u>Public Domain</u>, Bobbs-Merrill Lee:Indianapolis and New York.

Richard Schechner, 1973, 'Drama, Script, Theatre, and Performance', <u>The Drama Review</u>, Vol.17, No.3 , T59, pp.5-36.

Richard Schechner, 1973, <u>Environmental Theater</u>, Hawthorn, New York.

Richard Schechner, 1978, 'Anthropological Analysis', <u>The Drama Review</u>, Vol.22, No.3 T79, pp.23-32

Richard Schechner, 1988, <u>Essays on Performance Theory 1970-76</u>, Routledge, New York.

Oskar Schlemmer, 1961, <u>The Theater of the Bauhaus</u>, Middletown Conn. Wesleyan University Press.

Henri Schoenmaker, 1984, 'The spectator in the Leading Role, Developments in Reception and Audience Research within Theatre Studies:Theory and Research', in <u>Semiotics of Drama and Theatre</u>,

Editors, Herta Schmid and Aloysius Van Kesteren, Linguistic and Literary Studies in Eastern Europe,Vol. 10, John Benjamin, Amsterdam and Philadelphia.

F. Schumacher, 1977, 'Theatre Building - a psychological approach', in Theatre Space: an examination of the interaction between space, technologies, performance and society, the publication of conference proceedings Munich , 8th World Congress 18th-25th September, General Editors, James F. Arnott [et al], Prestel-Verlag, München.

Gavin Scott, 1996, 'Multimedia DO-IT-BY-YOURSELF HAMLET Canadian playwright Robert Lepage gives Shakespeare's tagedy a once-over and a new name', TIME International, May 20, Vol.147, No. 21.

Select Committee, 1983, House of Commons Select Committee Education, Science and Arts, Public and Private Funding of the Arts, Eighth Report, Session 1981-82, 3 volumes, HC 49-I/II/III, HMSO.

Theodore Shank, 1977, 'The Welfare State Theatre', The Drama Review, Vol.21, No.1, T73, p.3-16.

Theodore Shank, Editor, 1994, Contemporary British Theatre, Macmillan London.

Shared Experience, 1985, Shared Experience 1975-1984, Expression.

Maria Shetsova, 1995, 'The Dancing-Singing Body', IFTR conference Montreal 1995, The Actor, Actress on Stage, 22-27 May.

Lee Simonson, 1950, The Art of Scene Design, Harper Brothers, New York.

Lee Simonson, 1964, The Stage is Set, Harcourt Brace Jovanivich, inc. Rev. Ed., Theatre Art Books, New York .

Susan Sontag, 1961, Against Interpretation and other essays, Dell Publishing Co., New York.

Richard Southern, 1952, Changeable Scenery: Its origins and development in the British Theatre, London Faber and Faber.

Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, 1986, The Politics and Poetics of Transgression, Ithaca:Cornell University Press.

Constantin Stanislavsky, 1980, <u>My Life in Art</u>, translated J.J. Robbins London, Eyre Methuen.

Bert O. States, 1987, <u>Great Reckonings in Little Rooms on the phenomenology of theater</u>, University of California Press.

Michel St Denis, 1960, <u>Theatre: The Rediscovery of Style</u>, Heinemann

Dominic Strinati, 1995, <u>An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture</u>, Routledge, London.

Shirley Strum Kenny, 1984, <u>British Theatre and the Other Arts 1660-1800</u>, Folger Books Washington, Associated University Presses Inc.

Montague Summers, 1964, <u>The Restoration Theatre</u>, New York Humanities Press.

Bram Stoker, 1907, <u>Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving</u>, Heinemann.

Bram Stoker, 1911, 'Irving and Stage Lighting', <u>Nineteenth Century - and After</u>, No.69.

John Stokes, 1972, <u>Resistable Theatres:enterprise and experiment in the late nineteenth century</u>, London, Paul Elek Books.

T

Ronald Taylor, Editor,1977, <u>Aesthetics and Politics</u>, New Left Books, London.

Peter Thomson and Glendyr Sacks, Editors, 1994, <u>The Cambridge Companion to Brecht</u>, Cambridge University Press.

Carlos Tindemans, 1984, 'Coherence Focality. A Contribution to the Analysability of Theatre Discourse' in <u>Semiotics of Drama and Theatre</u>, Editors, Herta Schmid and Aloysius Van Kesteren, Linguistic and Literary Studies in Eastern Europe,Vol. 10, John Benjamin, Amsterdam and Philadelphia.

William Toynbee, Editor, 1912, <u>The Diaries of W.C.Macready</u>, Chapman and Hall.

L.Trotsky, 1960, <u>Literature and Revolution,</u> University of Michigan Press.

Kenneth Tynan, 1964, <u>Tynan on Theatre,</u> Penguin:Harmondsworth.

Kenneth Tynan, 1967, <u>Tynan Right and Left: plays, films, people, places and events,</u> London Longmans.

V

Vitruvius, 1960, <u>The Ten Books of Architecture,</u> translated Morris Hicky Morgan, 1st edition Harvard University Press, N.Y., Dover, Cambridge Mass. 1914.

Walther R Volbach, 1968, <u>Adolphe Appia, Prophet of the Modern Theatre : A Profile,</u> Wesleyan University Press, edited and translated by Richard C. Beacham.

W

Richard Wagner, 1893, <u>Opera and Drama,</u> translated William Ashton Ellis.

Raymond Williams,1976, <u>Keywords: A vocabulary of Culture and Society</u> London, Fontana

Raymond Williams, 1977, 'Realism', <u>Screen,</u> Volume18, No.1, pp.61-74

L. Wittgenstein, 1953, <u>Philosophical Investigations,</u> Blackwell.

Janet Wolff, 1983, <u>Aesthetics and the Sociology of Art,</u> George Allen & Unwin, London.

Hans Wolloch, D.N. Ocaoonell and Ulric Neisser, 1953, 'The Memory Effect of Visual Perception of Three Dimensional form', <u>Journal of Experimental Psychology,</u> XIV May, pp360-68.

Elizabeth Wright, 1989, <u>Postmodern Brecht: A Re-Presentation,</u> Routledge, London and New York.

Z

Otakar Zich, 1931, <u>The Esthetics of Dramatic Art,</u> Prague Melantrich.