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ASSIGNMENT: SUMMARISE NOTE ON THEATRICS

The essence of theater is to be able to convince the audience to believe that their ‘play’ is real and to be able to actors must believe in the play and in the characters they are playing. The role of the director towards this is to know and believe in the play as well as have creative ideas towards bringing the play to life (ideas which he should be able to change at any time during the course of the rehearsals). In Peter Brooks’s book the *empty space* he tells us that the play development processes can be divided into three:

**Director=Subject=Designer**; In this stage the director shares his vision with the stage hands and the actors and ensures that everyone understands his intentions, since he has the final authority on the selection of the stage manager, the job is very important because on the run of the play the director leaves everything to the stage manager to maintain the interpretation of the show that has been achieved by the director and the cast, the stage manager provides the continuity between the rehearsals and the production. The director also selects his cast and once the play is cast it is important that the director and the cast share the same basic interpretation of the play.

***Actor=*Subject*=*Director; during** the rehearsal process the director acts as audience because the actors cannot watch themselves while acting at the same time. Sometimes a director will see that an actor’s idea doesn’t just work and that is the importance of a director, he serves as a guide because if at the end the actor doesn’t believe in what he or she is doing there is no way the audience will believe. A well directed play should not appear to have been directed at all, the play should appear spontaneous and natural, and it should have its own energy and drive. A director must be able to fully empathize with what an actor is experiencing. When the production starts, the director has no specific duties. However, it is important that he or she continues to offer encouragement and support to the cast.

**Actor= Subject=Audience**; this is now the performance. The audience has replaced the director. Three of the French words that mean: rehearsal, performance and audience literally mean: repetition, representation and assistance. In many ways this process better than the English words. The audience provides the assistance needed to transform the performance into real theatre. The actors give the audience the assistance they need to, just for a while, believe in something beyond their own lives. However, it is the actors and the audience who create theatre. The director simply helps.

**The role of the director**

The director has two basic responsibilities. (1) To bring about a unified vision within the finished production and (2) to lead others toward its ultimate actualization. To meet these charges, the director must decide upon the interpretation to be given the play; work with the stage hands and coordinate all elements into the finished production. Directing is not easy. The director is the leader, the visionary and the person that gets blamed if the final product is garbage (ways to recognize if your show is garbage): 1- people leave at intermission. 2- Your dramatic high point gets laughs. 3- It’s described as ‘cute’ or “nice”. 4- Your audience tells you it sucks. 5- Your mother tells you it sucks, and worst of all. 6- Your audience has no opinion. Focus and preparation is the key, talent doesn’t hurt.

Some important lessons that I’ve learned are listed here -7 tips to remember before directing a play :

1. **Casting is 90% of everything:** having the right people, in the right roles will eliminate most of the artistic problems. The cast needs to feel as passionately about their individual characters as you do about the entire play. And it’s the director’s work to guide them through it all.

1. **Know the script better than you know yourself:** you have to master the script properly and have it at your finger tips, so that whenever a question arises it would be easy to render answers. Make researches and know the story like it’s your own life, also know the characters better than you know your own relatives.
2. **If you don’t have a solid vision right away, no one else will, either:** you’re telling a story. Know the who, what, when, where, and why. But most importantly, know how you’re going to tell it
3. **Consider a rehearsal as a laboratory: hypothesize, experiment, and repeat:** Rehearsals are the bubbles where the real magic happens, where characters are built, relationships are formed, and the stage turns from elevated wooden plank to a living universe. This is a place to take risks and try everything; a creative atmosphere will make rehearsals the most difficult yet most rewarding experiences.
4. **There is no ‘I’ in theatre. There is no ‘I’ in team. This is not a coincidence:**  theatre is all about collaboration. Be easy to work with, listen to everyone, and give praise when it’s deserved. Yes, you are a leader, but if your team doesn’t respect you, or worse, hates your guts, the show will suffer. If they share your vision and they feel motivated to perform and create, they share in your vision and they feel motivated to perform and create, they are your best recourses and their age doesn’t matter.
5. **Get off book as quickly as possible. It won’t be pretty.** No matter how experienced your actors are the first rehearsal off script is scary. Encourage your actors to begin memorizing their lines immediately upon receiving their scripts. You can’t build character if your actors are still reading; internalize the character and build upon it.
6. **Mind the budget:** sets and costume and props etc and other unforeseen costs. It may be someone else’s responsibility to deal with the money, but your artistic choices need to fit into the budget. This is harder than you think.

PROXEMICS: This means the position of people in relation to each other onstage.

BLOCKING: Traditionally, the stage space is divided up into sections and referred to in shorthand, for ease of use by actors and directors and simple recording by stage management. The layout is assigned from the audience’s point of view.

PLANNING A REHEARSAL

PRODUCTION MEETINGS

RUN-THROUGHS

DIRECTING

SELECTING A PLAY: a lot of thought has to be devoted to making the right choice of production. The main factors to consider are the available talent and the potential audience.

MAKING CHANGES: do not expect to change the script to make the play fit your facilities and performers.

VENUE: in amateur theatre details like selecting the venue and production dates are often dealt with by the committee of the society, unless the director has a special reason for performing in a specific location.

CAST AND CREW: once the play is chosen the director has the initial responsibility for selecting a cast and stage crew from the volunteers and conscripts available.

REHEARSALS: rehearsals will usually take place in the evenings but not necessarily on stage that will be used for performances, so with the assistance of the set designer and stage manager, the director needs to make sure the cast knows where the entrances are and where significant features like furniture will be.

BLOCKING: back on stage the director will have to concentrate on making the stage directions in the script feasible on the stage at their disposal.

GROUPING: grouping of actors will also help project their character and relationship with other cast members.

WORKING WITH PROPS: one of the most difficult tasks to achieve on stage is handling objects. Something as simple as pouring a cup of tea becomes complicated and problematic.

DIRECTOR’S GOALS: the stage director’s goal is one of the most recent additions to the central team of interpretive artists who bring a play to life.

DEVELOPMENT DEAL: often a director is brought in to help create a concept for a production that is still being developed.

PERSPECTIVE

OTHER DIRECTIONS

ADAPTABLE BARD

ADVICE AND IDEAS: in summary there are many ways to reinvent plays with a directorial concept. Examples

* Use nontraditional and multiracial casting.
* Set the play in a different time or era
* Set the play in a different place or location
* Change the sexes or ages of the characters
* Envision how a famous director would stage the show, then take your cues from that style until you can adapt them and make them your own
* Ask fellow directors what their takes on the material would be, which will serve as a sounding board and could lead to brainstorming ideas
* Go see a different play or movie taking the ideas of your current project with you to the Cineplex or theatre. Etc.

IDENTIFYINGTHE PIVOTAL WORD: if an actor is saying a sentence or phrase and there is no commitment in how they are saying it , then chances are they’re not sure what that text means or why it is being said. Analyze the pivotal word so that they can realize the energy they need to use in saying the pivotal word to give it meaning and importance.

GO TO THE EXTREME: although you may end up playing that section in a new manner, it may offer you and the actors how to find more nuance and energy.

SIMPLE SOLUTIONS: the tips designed to offer solutions to stage directors in this piece are fairly simple and yet they are effective. The challenge, excitement, and joy of directing is working towards that end with your actor.