

DESIGN FOR A THEATRE PRODUCTION

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACT I. SETTING THE STAGE.	4
The World of Theatre	4
Research Objectives	5
Preliminary Brainstorming	5
ACT II. BEHIND THE CURTAIN	8
The Role of Set Designer	8
The Visual Styles and Underlying Theories	9
The Stage Structure	10
The Stage Direction	10
The Types of Theatre Stage	11
ACT III. BUILDING THE WORLD	13
The Set Design Workflow	13
Technical Tools and Skills	17
Practical Problems in Production Design	18
Case Studies and Observations	19
<i>The Wasp's Nest</i> Script Analysis Practice	23
ACT IV. THE PRODUCTION BRIEF OF <i>BLACK COFFEE</i>	24
Project Overview	24
Design Objectives	24
Project Requirements	25

Deliverables	26
ACT V. INVESTIGATING THE STORY WORLD	27
A Character Research on Sir Claud Amory	27
Early 20th Century Domestic Interiors: Historical Reference.	28
ACT VI. FROM PAGE TO STAGE	31
Script Analysis	31
Inspirations and References	34
Ideations	35
The Set Design	36
The 1:25 Scale Model	40
Material Recommendations	44
Technical Drawings	46
Poster	49
ACT VII. CURTAIN CALL	50
WORKS CITED.	51
APPENDIX.	53

ACT I

Setting the Stage

THE WORLD OF THEATRE.

Theatrical performance did not begin with a stage or an auditorium; it begins whenever a story is told (Brewster and Shafer 2011, 21). As simple as one person conveying a story to another through words, actions, and gestures, the occupied place transforms into a stage. One of the most remarkable qualities of theatre is that everything is momental. A live performance creates a form of two-way communication in which the performers narrate the plot, set the tone, and convey atmosphere, and the audience responds emotionally, completing the cycle of storytelling. This project investigates how a story can be transformed into a theatrical performance through the lens of industrial design. It focuses on the core components of production design, such as set, light, sound, props, and atmosphere, and how these elements work together to translate narrative into lived experience.

The research extends beyond the stage to include backstage workflows, communication systems, and the collaborative dynamics between directors, designers, and technicians. The outcome will result in a tangible design product informed by these processes. These operational layers are essential for shaping a cohesive performance and enhancing audience engagement.

As a designer, I am deeply interested in storytelling and how it can be converted into a visual and spatial experience. Production design provides a unique framework to study this relationship in depth, revealing how concept and material interact to evoke emotion and meaning. With my long-term goal in architecture and interior design, this project allows me to develop valuable transferable skills such as spatial awareness, user experience on a physical level, material application, and construction methods. My interest in narrative also drives this investigation to further understanding of play structure and character interaction will help me apply similar storytelling logic to future design projects.

By treating play production as a design problem, my objective is to investigate a spatial solution that conveys the story's environment, atmosphere, and emotional tension, while also considering how technical systems and time management can optimize the flow of live performance. Ultimately, the project seeks to understand the designer's role as a bridge between imagination and execution, turning written script into space, and performance into experience.

This research examines the production designer's role in transforming a script into a performative environment. Due to the overlap in project scope, I am collaborating with my peer Marielle Abad, who is focusing on prop design research, to conduct interviews and share the data where applicable. This study combines theoretical understanding, stylistic exploration, technical processes, and professional practices to form the research foundation for the later scenic design project, *Black Coffee* by Agatha Christie.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.

- Understand the social and artistic functions of theatre art and set design.
- Examine major theories that influence the stage and theatre performance.
- Study scenic stylewvns and analyze their applications in theatre production.
- Research technical workflow, collaboration, and practical problems.
- Conduct preparatory work before developing the final scenic design.
- Apply research findings toward a design concept for a theatre production.

PRELIMINARY BRAINSTORMING.

Before moving into formal research, I went through the several brainstorming methods to identify personal interests, skills, and potential directions for the project. This stage allowed me to open some research directions through mapping ideas, reflecting on motivations, and recognizing patterns that could lead to a meaningful design focus.

THE MIND MAP.

I began the process with a mind map to reflect on my personal interests, skills, and long-term goals as a designer. The exercise helped me identify subjects that could sustain a term-long research project with a tangible outcome. Through this process, I realized that my curiosity revolves around Stage and Performance, with a focus on particularly how storytelling can be transformed into spatial and visual experiences. The mapping stage clarified not only what I am drawn to but also how design could become a bridge between narrative and material form (Fig. 1).

THE ICEBERG EXERCISE.

To deepen this initial insight, I conducted an Iceberg Exercise to explore what lies beneath the visible act of performing. Beyond what the audience sees on stage, there is a complex network of backstage work, including research, collaboration of the theatre staff, coordination, timing, and technical planning, that makes performance possible. This layer of unseen labour revealed the depth of production design and the essential teamwork that connects creative vision to a live performance. The exercise also highlighted how many of these aspects often go unnoticed, even though they greatly contribute to shaping the entire audience experience.

THE TARGET TECHNIQUE.

The third method I use is the Target Technique, which encourages me to ask myself a series of guiding questions: *What do I want to deliver through this project? What is my end goal? What are the means to achieve it?* During the attempt to answer these questions, I was able to determine a clearer direction and focus. My main target is to design a project that portrays a narrative through spatial design, and deliver an experience where the audience lives in the story (Fig. 3). This is a process that requires extensive research and produces a design that combines creativity and functionality. This technique helped translate broad interests into specific objectives, setting the foundation for the research and the upcoming design stages.

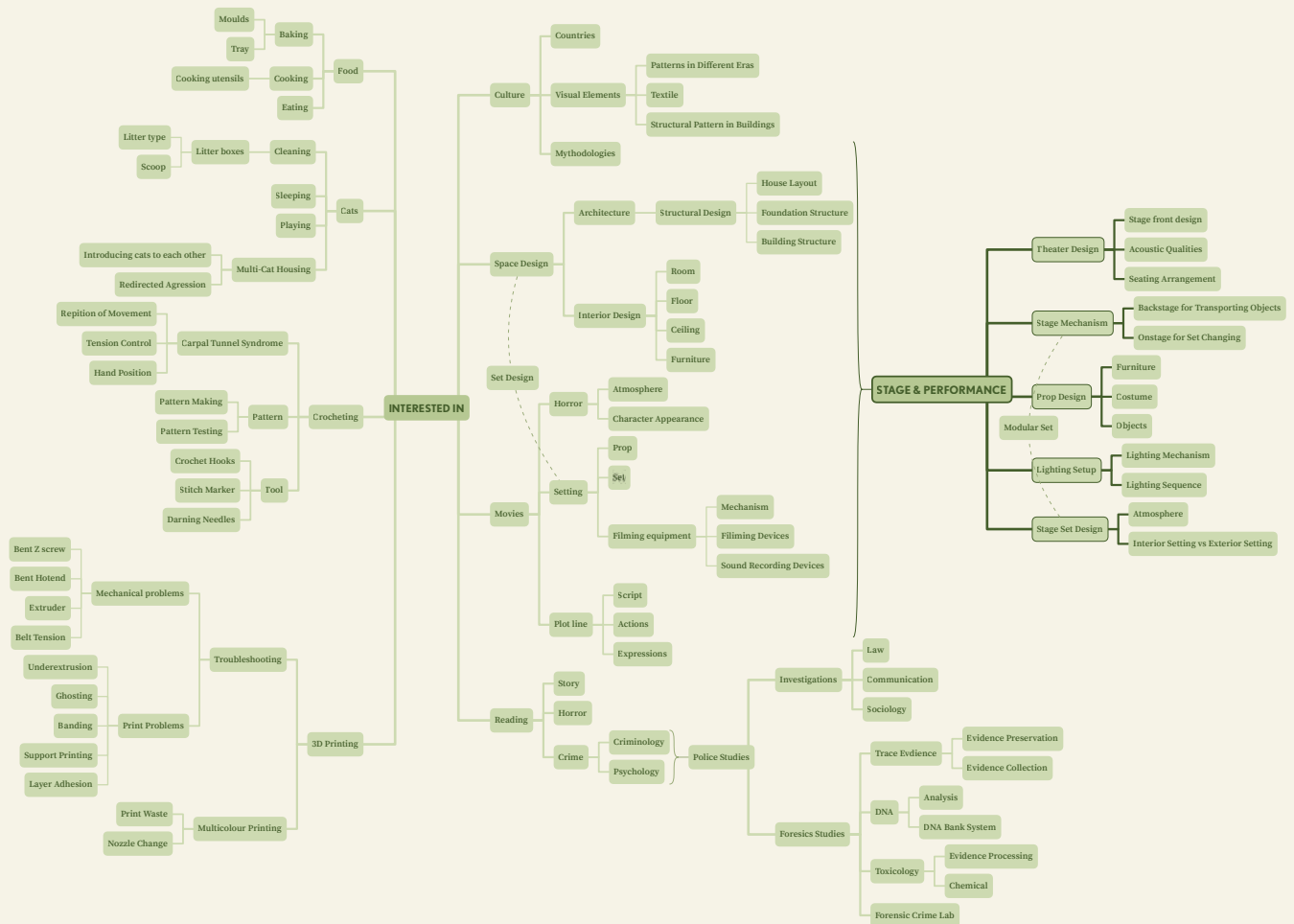


Figure 1. Mindmapping Exercise.



Figure 2. Iceberg Exercise.

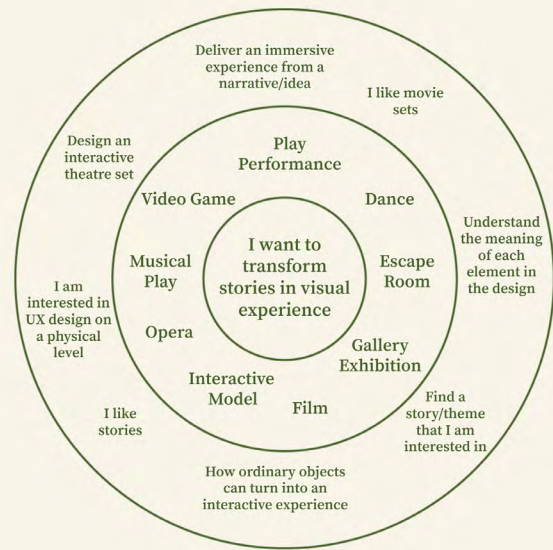


Figure 3. Target Technique Exercise.

I concluded the brainstorming phase by deciding to explore stage and theatre design as my research direction. This field unites spatial thinking, emotional expression, and collaboration, while also nurturing my creativity as a designer. After proposing the idea to my instructors, I was advised to pursue the potential direction of selecting a play that I had never watched before as the foundation for developing a new set design in the second part of this project.

ACT II

Behind the Curtain

THE ROLE OF SET DESIGNER.

“Theatre art is something based on *fakery*” (Winslow 2006, 95), describing it as an act of make-believe in which the designer becomes the creator of a world. The set plays a crucial role in this illusion, providing locale information and context while visually defining the setting of the play. It transforms both actors and audience into the world of the story, assisting the production in delivering a believable and immersive experience. As Brewster and Shafer explain, scenic design gives the audience an impression of the play’s overall style and mood, grounding the narrative through visual cues (Brewster and Shafer 2011, 37). The set also functions as the characters’ “living space,” revealing their background, social status, and personality through environmental detail. A set designer’s duty is to merge artistic vision with technical precision to produce a tangible, functional stage environment. This process involves close collaboration with directors, technical directors, stage managers, and performers to communicate the play’s intent, while simultaneously addressing practical constraints such as safety, budgeting, scheduling, and legal requirements.

THE VISUAL STYLES AND UNDERLYING THEORIES.

Set design is often an imitation of real-life space. For interior settings, it shares certain similarities with interior design, such as spatial planning, furniture arrangement, and the coordination of visual elements. However, the distinct advantage of set design is that the designer knows precisely what actions will occur within that space, allowing the environment to respond directly to movement and performance (Winslow 2006, 95).

The concept of imitation, or *mimesis*, originates from the writings of Plato and Aristotle, who debated how art replicates real-world forms. Plato regarded art as an incomplete copy of truth, which a reproduction of one’s appearance rather than the underlying idea. On the other hand, Aristotle, viewed imitation as a creative and selective process through which artists reveal universal truths using multiple media. In set design, this philosophical tension manifests through Realism and Naturalism (Rasmussen 2025).

REALISM. This style seeks to reproduce the look of physical environments, that create an illusion of reality as a result. Linking back to Plato's perspective, realist staging presents a convincing image of the physical world, yet it remains a copy of the core idea, making it visually accurate but not necessarily truthful.

NATURALISM. The main goal of Naturalism is striving for "as little artifice as possible" (Winslow 2006, 98). It aims to capture ordinary life with minimal illusion, emphasizing authentic gestures, lighting, and objects to achieve empathy from the audience. Both approaches connect the stage to lived experience, drawing viewers into a believable world.

When designers move beyond representation, they enter the expressive realms of Symbolism and Abstraction. Aristotle suggested that art should maintain a distance from reality, granting artists freedom to express emotion through their own means (Rasmussen 2025). These design styles are particularly effective in opera, experimental theatre, or introspective plays that rely on inner reflection and poetic imagery.

SYMBOLISM. This style communicates emotion through colour, texture, and metaphorical imagery, externalizing invisible thoughts and feelings. It amplifies the psychological dimensions of a story by representing mood rather than material truth.

ABSTRACTION. The set design reduces form to geometry, shadow, and light, transforming the stage into an undefined environment rather than a literal space. This approach allows the audience to interpret meaning freely, guided by visual composition rather than grounded realism. Both Symbolism and Abstraction align well with Aristotle's belief that design shapes emotional response through any available visual means.

ALIENATION EFFECT. Although it is not a visual style, Bertolt Brecht's Alienation Effect (*Verfremdungseffekt*) expands on these theories by rejecting immersion altogether. Brecht encouraged audiences to think critically rather than lose themselves emotionally in the story. The theatre-in-the-round configuration often applies this concept in practice. By maintaining visible distance between audience and performer, it turns the viewers into witnesses who analyze rather than empathize with the characters (Britannica 2019).

Together, they form a spectrum of presentation styles. While realism and naturalism mirror reality, symbolism and abstraction evoke imagination and emotion, and alienation invites critical judgement. The designer's role is to determine where along this spectrum their work belongs, depending on the play's theme, style, and dramatic intention.

THE STAGE STRUCTURE.

Behind every stage lies the effort of an entire creative and technical team, a “fun factory,” which is operating beneath the spectacle (Winslow 2006, 27). Beneath the polished surface, the theatre is a network of cables, mechanisms, and structural systems hidden behind scenery and lighting. Below is the breakdown of a typical proscenium stage structure (Appendix D1).

- MECHANISM.** The stage floor is often built to be replaceable and paintable to suit different productions. Some theatres include trap doors within the floor for lifting or lowering actors and props. Overhead, ceiling grids or fly rails are used to mount lighting, drapery, and backdrops, with pin rails on the side for flying props and attaching counterweights to control height and position.
- STAGE WINGS.** Legs and borders frame the stage opening and conceal the backstage area; these are usually movable to adapt to various set designs. Beyond the legs lies a wing area, providing space for crew movement, prop handling, and temporary set storage during performance.
- FRONT AND BACKSTAGE.** Under standard safety regulations, the set does not extend past the safety curtain line, which protects the audience from potential fire or falling scenery. The apron, or forepart of the stage in front of the curtain, may be detachable or removable to accommodate scene variations. Behind the backdrop, there are usually doorways and corridors leading to dressing rooms.

THE STAGE DIRECTION.

Stage direction is always described from the actor’s point of view. The *upstage* referring to the area furthest from the audience and *downstage* to the area closest to them (Fig. 4). Traditionally, the stage floor was built with a slight inclination, or raked stage, to improve audience visibility. This meant that the back of the stage stood higher than the front, a feature that influenced the origin of the terms *upstage* and *downstage* (Winslow 2006, 32).

Off-stage right	USR (Up-stage right)	USC (Up-stage centre)	USL (Up-stage left)	Off-stage left
	RC (Right centre)	C (Centre)	LC (Left centre)	
	DSR (Down-stage right)	DSC (Down-stage centre)	DSL (Down-stage left)	
Pros.		⌄	Pros.	

Figure 4. Stage Directions. (Winslow 2006, 31)

THE TYPES OF THEATRE STAGE.

Although there are eight general types of stages (including proscenium, arena stage, black box, transverse stage, thrust stage, amphitheatre, promenade stage, and site-specific), this section focuses on the four most common stages used in contemporary theatre. Each type establishes a distinct relationship between performer, audience, and space, influencing both design approach and bringing out different storytelling effects.

PROSCENIUM STAGE.

A proscenium stage features an architectural arch built as the “fourth wall”, separating the audience from the performance space. This form creates a sense of distance, where the audience becomes the invisible spectator, observing the events on stage as if watching through a television screen. The proscenium’s framed composition emphasizes architectural order and symmetry, echoing the theatre’s classical structure. For performers, this layout simplifies blocking since they only need to project toward one direction. It also allows designers to hide lighting, rigging, and scenery behind the arch or wings, maintaining a clean visual presentation. However, the proscenium also reinforces the concept of the “fourth wall,” which can make it challenging to establish direct engagement with the audience.

ARENA STAGE.

Also known as theatre-in-the-round, the performance space is placed at the centre, with the audience seated on all sides. Actors may enter and exit from multiple directions or through openings below the stage. This configuration often incorporates Bertolt Brecht’s alienation effect, encouraging the audience to maintain emotional distance and observe events critically rather than immersively. The format is ideal for high-energy productions and promotes audience involvement by eliminating the ‘fourth wall’ altogether. However, the designer must address unique challenges in sightlines, lighting, and choreography, ensuring that every audience member has an unobstructed view. Minimal set design is typically required to preserve visibility and smooth transitions.

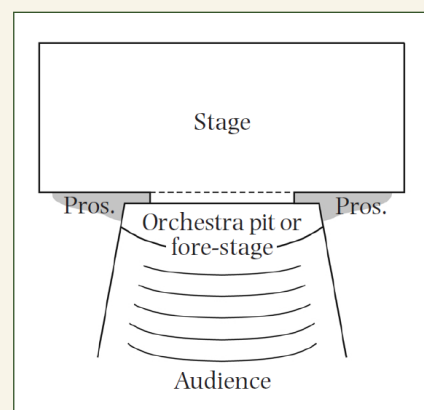


Figure 5. Proscenium Stage Diagram.
(Winslow 2006, 30)

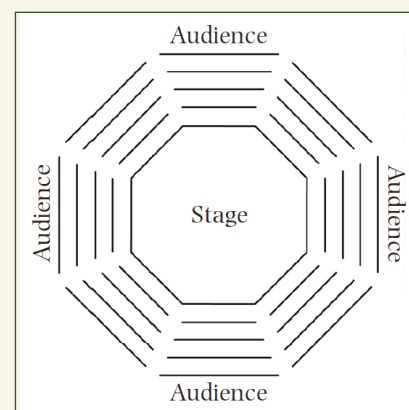


Figure 6. Arena Stage Diagram.
(Winslow 2006, 30)

THRUST STAGE. A thrust, or platform stage, extends outward into the audience with seating on three sides. Actors may enter from backstage or through vomitory entrances that run through the seating area. This layout balances intimacy and spectacle, which partially breaks the fourth wall while still maintaining the structure of traditional theatre. The configuration invites audience interaction and creates a sense of inclusion, as performers share the same spatial envelope as viewers. At the same time, the backstage area remains functional, allowing for controlled entrances, exits, and technical support.

BLACK BOX STAGE. A black box is a simple, flexible performance space defined by black walls, neutral flooring, and minimal scenery. Originating in the American avant-garde movement of the 20th century, the black box is designed to evoke “any place,” allowing maximum creative freedom. Seating arrangements can be reconfigured to suit each production, and the absence of fixed architectural features enables experimentation with both staging and audience perspective. Its minimalism makes it ideal for fringe or experimental theatre, where intimacy, affordability, and adaptability take precedence over illusion.

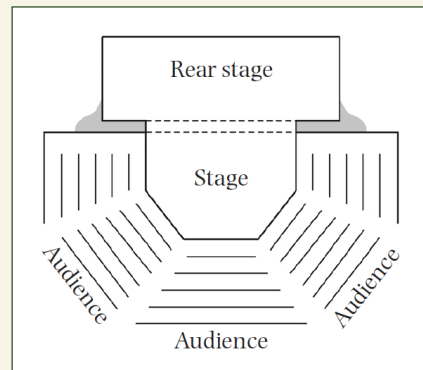


Figure 7. Thrust Stage Diagram.
(Winslow 2006, 30)

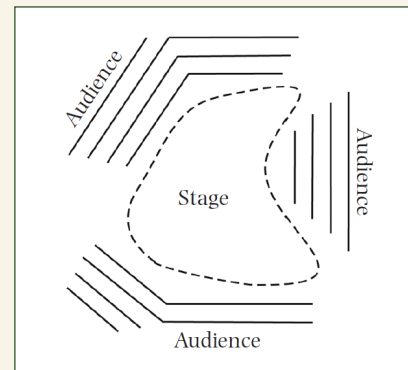


Figure 8. Black Box Stage Diagram.
(Winslow 2006, 31)

Regardless of stage configuration, audience sightlines remain critical to the stage planning process. Every seat in the theatre should provide an unobstructed view of the performance, ensuring that visual storytelling remains clear and engaging from all angles. Set designers must anticipate how height, depth, and spatial composition influence visibility, adapting each stage type to maintain focus and balance between performer, space, and spectator. As Winslow notes, a good practice is to identify the *worst* seats in the theatre and ensure that every crucial detail of the set design remains visible from those vantage points (2006, 33) (Appendix D2).

ACT III

Building the World

THE SET DESIGN WORKFLOW.

A theatrical production depends on the collaboration of many specialists, each contributing to the shared vision of the play (Fig. 9). The director and set designer interpret the story and cooperate to lead the creative direction, while the technical team ensures that all structural and mechanical systems operate safely. Actors give life to the story, interacting directly with the set and shaping its emotional tone. The lighting and projection designers define atmosphere and focus, integrating visual media when needed. The prop master manages all movable objects, and the stage manager coordinates timing, cues, and backstage operations. Finally, the audience ends the cycle in which their reactions transform the set design and performance into a living experience. Together, these collaborators form the backbone of production design, where artistic intention and technical precision must align seamlessly (Brewster and Shafer 2011, 41).

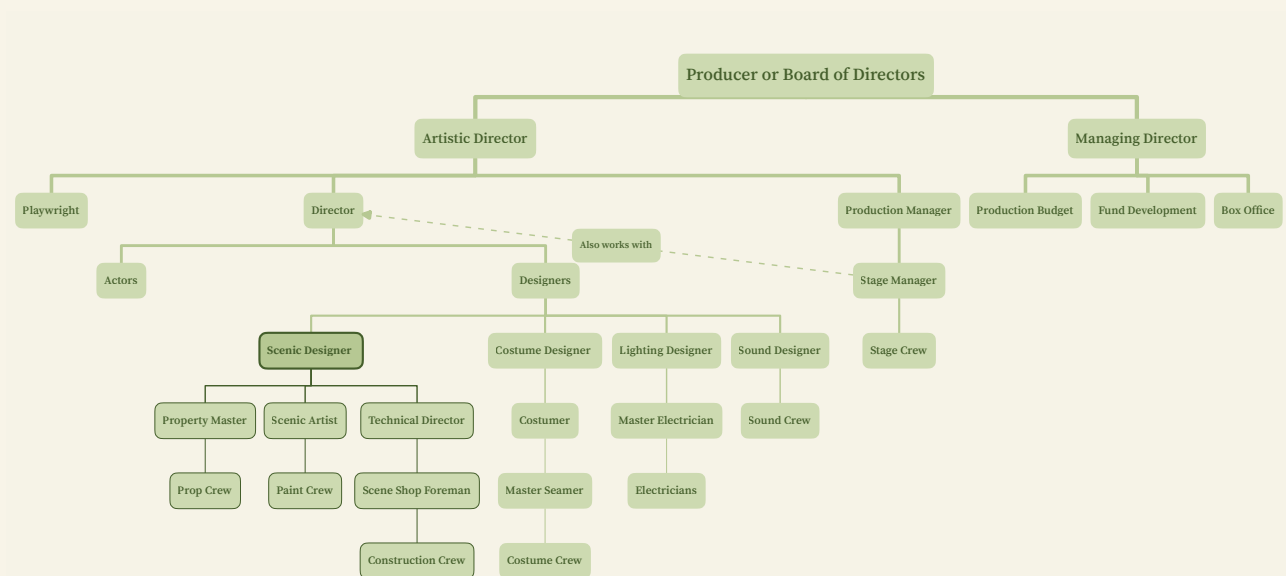


Figure 9. The Organizational Structure of a Typical Theatrical Production Company. (Gillette and Dionne 2020, 7)

The following outlines the general process of set design for a theatrical production, and a brief description of how the set designer collaborates with other key roles to bring the story from written script to stage:

SCRIPT ANALYSIS AND BRAINSTORM.

The design process starts with script reading and brainstorming. The designer reads through the play multiple times to understand its structure, themes, and emotional rhythm. During the second reading, a preliminary prop and set list is created to note essential objects and spatial cues. This stage may also include quick sketches to visualize moments or transitions and the exploration of potential colour palettes that could define the play's atmosphere. Discussions with the director are crucial to align with their artistic vision and interpretive direction (Winslow 2006, 35). As Dree Beaudry emphasized in the interview, brainstorming around specific "little moments" in the script often sparks the most original design ideas.

MEETING WITH THE DIRECTOR.

After completing the initial script analysis, the designer meets with the director to discuss the artistic direction and narrative tone of the play. This meeting establishes a shared understanding of the production's goals, clarifying the story's key emotional beats, time period, and stylistic approach. The discussion may include references to visual inspirations, performance rhythm, or staging challenges. Winslow highlights that "the designer must fully understand the director's intention before shaping the visual world of the play" (2006, 40). Early alignment ensures that the set supports both the narrative and the director's vision, creating a cohesive design foundation before further concept development begins. Further on into the project, more meetings will be required to update with the director and technical team, as well as making sure the artistic direction is going in the desired direction.

VISUAL AND CONTEXT RESEARCH.

Once a direction is decided, the designer moves into concept research. This involves gathering visual and material references, like images, objects, and documents, preferably from primary sources to ensure historical or contextual accuracy (Winslow 2006, 36). Material research should be conducted firsthand to capture details that may not appear in digital sources (38). Designers are encouraged to collect imagery from magazines, archives, and visual media, gradually developing a personal reference library that evolves across projects. It is important to keep a record of any element that sparks visual interest and appeal, rather than solely focusing on the tailored vision.

THUMBNAIL SKETCHES AND SKETCH MODELS.

Rough Sketch Development.

The next phase involves sketch development. Designers begin with thumbnail sketches, exploring composition, spatial rhythm, and relationships between objects and performers. A storyboard may be used to visualize transitions between scenes, though Beaudry advises not to make these sketches overly specific to allow creative flexibility.

White Card Model.

To test spatial organization, sketch models are built from white paper or a card (Fig. 10). These serve as layout studies, helping the designer visualize form and proportion in three dimensions. Another meeting with the director and design team will happen during this process to finalize direction. Many of the miniature furniture pieces or cutouts made during this phase can be reused in future projects to save effort and optimize the efficiency.

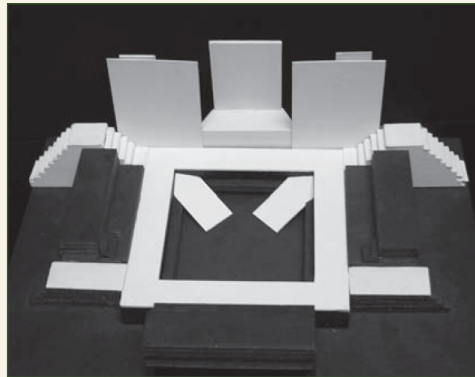


Figure 10. Paper model for the University of Virginia at Wise's production of *Metamorphoses*. Scenic designer Jonathon Taylor. (Brewster and Shafer 2011, 140)

DRAFTING.

After the conceptual model is approved, the designer proceeds to technical drafting. According to Winslow, all technical drawings are typically made on A-size paper, most often A1, at a scale of 1:25 for metric units or 1:24 for imperial units (2006, 50, 59). These drawings follow the architectural drafting style and annotations (Beaudry 2025). Adhering to this guideline will ensure a cohesive format and clear communication among all theatre staff.

Stage Plan.

The stage plan is the most essential drawing (Winslow 2006, 50; Brewster and Shafer 2011, 141), and multiple copies (usually ten to twenty) should be distributed to the director, stage manager, and technical team. The plan represents a horizontal cut approximately 1–1.5 meters (3–4 feet) above the stage floor (Winslow 2006, 64). Flats should be indicated with double lines to show thick-

ness, small stopping lines to mark ends, and broken lines for any objects not touching the floor. Doors are typically drawn at a 30-degree angle to indicate openness (Appendix D3).

Elevations.

Next, the elevations provide the front and rear view of the set. It is the most useful drawing for visualizing how the stage will appear to the audience and for constructing other views (Winslow 2006, 66; Brewster and Shafer 2011, 142). These are drawn adjacent to the stage plan to maintain spatial consistency. The proscenium arch should be marked with heavy broken lines for reference.

Sections.

Sectional drawings show a vertical slice through the set, usually along its central axis. They are convenient for checking vertical sightlines and for communicating information about lighting angles, hung objects, and flying props (Winslow 2006, 68; Brewster and Shafer 2011, 144).

Besides the drawings above, additional technical drawings may be produced as per request and are handed to the technical team for consultation and construction reference.

SCALE MODEL.

The next phase is scale model making. These models are built as accurately as possible, usually at a 1:25 scale to match the technical drawings and simplify dimensional reference (Winslow 2006, 50). Including small human figure cut-outs based on costume sketches helps visualize proportion and movement. All structural elements should be glued in place, while furniture remains detachable in case layout revisions are needed later. This model allows testing and adjustment before final approval.

TECHNICAL REVISION AND ADJUSTMENTS.

Once finalized, the process transitions into technical coordination and revision. The designer works closely with the technical director to resolve any construction issues, finalize materials, and determine the building methods for all scenic pieces.

SET BUILDING.

During construction and installation, the technical team fabricates the set according to the approved drawings. The designer monitors the progress, ensuring that all components match the design intent and can be safely assembled on stage.

REHEARSALS. Following installation, technical and dress rehearsals are conducted to ensure a smooth transition and avoid dangerous potential accidents. This stage allows designers to test the set's interaction with lighting, sound, and actor movement. Adjustments are made to ensure the performers' safety and the efficiency of scene changes. The designer notes any issues and meets with the director afterward to discuss potential improvements.

THE FIRST PERFORMANCE. During show operation and maintenance is where the design reaches its full realization. The designer's work transitions into supervision, ensuring that the set remains functional and visually consistent throughout the production's run. At this point, the team can celebrate their effort in the collaboration, problem-solving, and artistry that transform ideas on paper into an environment.

TECHNICAL TOOLS AND SKILLS.

CAD SOFTWARES. Hand drafting and drawing remain valuable skills that allow designers to "communicate ideas with ease" (Winslow 2006, 57). However, with the rapid development of digital technology, many designers now turn to computer-aided design (CAD) for efficiency and precision. AutoCAD is widely regarded as the industry standard for technical drafting and modelling (Winslow 2006, 116), though modern alternatives such as Fusion 360, Rhino, and SolidWorks have made the workflow more accessible and adaptable across disciplines.

PROTOTYPING. As discussed in the interview with CarrHunger, proficiency in 3D modelling provides a major advantage in visualizing and reproducing complex forms. Digital models not only facilitate clear communication between departments but also support rapid prototyping through virtual testing or 3D printing. These tools accelerate the iteration process and help verify construction details before any physical materials are cut or assembled.

MANUAL SCALE MODEL. Nevertheless, manual model-making continues to play a crucial role in the design process. Building models by hand provides a tangible sense of scale and material interaction that digital environments cannot fully replicate. This practice also allows designers to simulate assembly processes, identify potential construction issues early, and reduce errors during the final build. Using two adjustable lamps with different filters or coloured gels can simulate stage lighting conditions, helping the designer evaluate the atmosphere and mood of the set before full installation.

PRACTICAL PROBLEMS IN PRODUCTION DESIGN.

BUDGET.

Budgeting in set design involves strategic resource management, material reuse, and contingency planning. At this stage, financial efficiency becomes a creative exercise in itself. This remains a gap in the current research, as I was unable to interview practicing set designers or stage managers. Thanks to professional insight from Dree Beaudry suggests that using existing props from the theatre's prop shop or building reusable scenic elements is an effective way to reduce costs. Utilizing stock materials already available in the theatre workshop can also significantly minimize expenditure. Optimization of workflow further supports cost efficiency, particularly during preparatory stages such as scaled-model testing and early error detection. As Wilson states, "time saved in preparation translates into money saved in production" (Wilson 2006, 44). Careful planning of materials, measurements, and assembly methods ensures that both the creative and technical teams work within their limits without compromising artistic quality.

SAFETY.

Actor safety is the foremost priority in any stage production. The set and all constructed elements must be structurally stable to allow confident movement during performance. Railings should be installed wherever platforms are elevated, and stairs should have broader treads and lower risers than typical architectural standards to ensure a graceful and secure movement. All props must be durable enough to withstand repeated use and physical interaction throughout rehearsals and performances.

Beaudry notes that open flames are strictly prohibited on stage without extensive documentation and safety clearance. Similarly, as discussed in the CarrHunger interview, the live nature of theatre requires designers to anticipate every possible risk, and design for failure as much as success. Unlike film, where multiple takes can correct mistakes, theatre relies on proactive safety design to protect both actors and the audience. Regular technical rehearsals allow the team to identify potential hazards, refine transitions, and confirm that every element performs safely before opening night.

LEGAL AND CONTRACTUAL DUTIES.

In professional theatre practice, copyright ownership for set design typically belongs to the designer, while the constructed set and materials become the property of the theatre. According to Winslow, "any reconstruction or reuse of the set design requires the designer's written consent" (Winslow 2006, 112). Designers may choose to sign over these rights to another party, but this decision must be made with caution, as doing so forfeits future royalties or commissions from subsequent performances (113).

For employment and project management, working through a theatrical agent can provide essential professional representation and contract support. However, it is vital to select legitimate agencies and understand all contractual obligations before signing. Self-employed designers are also responsible for independent tax filing, maintaining organized financial records, and preserving all receipts related to design work. Make sure to read every clause and fine print ensures legal protection and fair compensation within the collaborative structure of the theatre industry.

CASE STUDIES AND OBSERVATIONS.

Referencing the analytical framework from Visual Storytelling and Spatial Design in Live Performances, this section applies Napanda and Somaiya's structure to evaluate the visual style and design intention of four theatrical productions. Each case is examined through the categories of concept, space planning (set elements), lighting and sound, technique and material, and an additional category of prop elements, due to the significant role of set and object interaction in these examples.

THE MOORS.

by Jen Silverman. Set Design by Robert Shannon.

This production employs symbolic minimalism through a multi-purpose arrangement of set pieces. The simple layout heightens dramatic tension and allows lighting and projection effects to dominate, using flat surfaces and unobstructed sightlines for efficiency. After viewing the play, I studied the script to understand how the designer arrived at this concept. Subtle prop decisions, such as using two mismatched chairs, one tall and one low (usually for propping feet up), emphasize the family's internal hierarchy: the seat of power belongs to whoever occupies the higher chair. In the middle of the play, the black drop panels were lifted to reveal the bleak moors as the characters were moving, adding depth to the set design and delivering a visual impression of the dangerous moors surrounding the mansion (Fig. 11b). Lighting design and the red cloth representing blood are powerful symbolic devices that also comply with safety constraints; the fabric doubles as a prop in musical sequences. The simplified structure enables seamless transitions between the mansion's interior and exterior scenes, aligning design practicality with narrative rhythm.



Figure 11a. *The Moors* Stage Set at The Beginning



Figure 11b. *The Moors* Stage Set in The End

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE.

by Tennessee Williams. Set Design by Magda Willi.

This version presents realism fractured by light and movement, mirroring the chaos within Blanche's mind. The production modernizes a period play, staging it on a central platform furnished with white IKEA furniture to represent the Kowalskis' apartment (Fig. 12). Despite the realism style of the objects, the cramped layout and absence of walls create a sense of unreality. The rotating set, depicting the absence of privacy, enhances the audience's exposure to Blanche's psychological unravelling. Actors enter and exit via a staircase leading to the theatre's second level, referencing from the fact that this is a lower level apartment unit, allowing a natural way to access the stage. One notable idea is allowing actors to rearrange furniture in dim light between scenes, a gesture that strengthens continuity while subtly invoking Brecht's alienation effect by reminding viewers of the play's constructed nature.



Figure 12. *A Streetcar Named Desire* Stage Set. (Pinterest 2025)

ROMEO + JULIET BROADWAY.

by Sam Gold. Set Design by dots.*

In this arena-stage production, the design collective, dots, reimagines Shakespeare's tragedy through abstraction and symbolism. The set is minimal, composed of a round platform and LED walls that serve as both architecture and emotional canvas. The focus lies on dialogue and human connection using a non-literal setting. A creative reinterpretation transforms Juliet's balcony into a floating bed on a two-tiered platform, surrounded by scattered flowers symbolizing fragile beauty (Fig. 13). Overhead, the electrical rig is arranged in a cruciform shape, suggesting both the church and the inevitability of fate. The lighting design functions as both backdrop and cyclorama, shaping the emotional tone of each scene and distinguishing this production from more literal adaptations.



Figure 13. *Romeo + Juliet* Stage Set. (Murphy and Zimmerman 2024)

*The collective's name is intentionally styled in lowercase.

PINOCCHIO MUSICAL.

by Farren Timoteo. Set Design by Cory Sincennes.

This production embraces spectacle symbolism through modular abstraction. Ambiguous, multi-purpose props invite the audience's imagination, producing a whimsical interpretation of the classic fairy tale. The vibrant colour palette and bold striped patterns immediately capture children's attention (Fig. 14). A memorable practical innovation is the inflatable balloon nose, a humorous yet simple solution requiring no complex mechanism. Designed for touring, the set consists of compact, flat components, while certain costumes and props (such as the fish and jellyfish) are deliberately oversized to aid quick changes and emphasize the story's playful tone. The result is a visually engaging performance that merges storytelling, practicality, and fantasy.



Figure 14. *Pinocchio (Musical)* Stage Set.

THE WASP'S NEST SCRIPT ANALYSIS PRACTICE.

The script *The Wasp's Nest* by Agatha Christie was studied as an exercise in collaboration with Marielle Abad to simulate the real-world process in which the production crew develops a prop list collectively (Fig. 15). This short play provided some practical exposure to the working process before I work on the final scenic design project, *Black Coffee*.

THE WASP'S NEST by Agatha Christie					
Set/Prop Items	Qty.	Script Page	Description	Location	Notes
Wall	1	2	exterior garden, warm sunset, 1930s style, wall with a door leading to the road, near the door is the tall scrub	Upstage	
Doorway	1	2		Poirot enters from backstage through the doorway. (Upstage right)	Doorway should be able to open and shut by the characters.
Road	1	2		starts from the doorway, leading downstage or upstage left.	Can be fake aggregate or stoned road
Tall Shrub	1	2		next to the door, visible to the audience.	Big enough for Poirot to hide behind
Table	1	2	antique garden table.	In the center of the stage, slightly right center, but must not cover the tall scrub.	
Drinks	3	2	In the bottles	On the table	
Garden Chairs	2	2	set of garden chairs for description, slightly angled to the audience, needs back rest, matching with the table	Charles and Poirot sitting on chairs	
Old Tree Root	1	2	big tree root that contains the wasp nest	end of the garden, opposite from the door (center or downstage left)	
Wasp Nest	1	2	Has a hole, exaggerated to be bigger than life	Inside tree root	Poirot pours liquid down
Drinking Glass	3	5	contain the drink		At least 3, for Claud, Poirot, Charles
Watch	1		Poirot wrist watch	On Poirot's wrist	
Glass Syringe	1	11	small, made of clear material	In Claud's hand or pocket	Claud enters carrying the glass syringe
Whisky Bottle	1	12	glass, square and stubby	On the table before Charles grabs it.	Charles pours a whiskey and soda and gives it to Claud
Soda Bottle	1	12	glass, cylindrical, small neck, like Coca-Cola		
Small Wide-Mouthed Bottle	2	13	Have crystals inside, pocket-sized	First one is in Charles' pocket. Second one is in Poirot's pocket.	
Hankerchief	1	13		In Charles' pocket (potentially)	Charles wipes fingerprints on the wide-mouthed bottle
Water Bottle	1	16	Should be distinguishable from the whiskey and water bottle	On the table before Poirot grabs it.	Poirot fills cyanide bottle with water

Figure 15. *The Wasp's Nest* Combined Set and Prop List.

ACT IV

The Production Brief for *Black Coffee*

PROJECT OVERVIEW.

Following my interest in interior space and architectural environments, *Black Coffee* is selected as the hypothetical production for the second part of this project. The play, set in 1934, takes place entirely within the library of Sir Claud Amory's English suburban mansion, where is shaped by family tension, secrecy, and competing motives surrounding a stolen formula. Since the story unfolds over a short period of time, it is dense with action, character interplay, and prop-based clues that drive the investigation forward.

In this hypothetical scenario, *Black Coffee* is imagined as a production that belongs to a theatrical season at Timms Centre for the Arts, the proscenium stage is chosen to support the play's emphasis on observation, detail, and controlled dramatic pacing. Theatrical concepts of realist *mise-en-scène*, motivated movement, and spatial dramaturgy inform how the interior environment must function onstage, ensuring that narrative information remains visible and coherent from the audience's perspective. Because the entire mystery depends on what the audience can see, understand, and interpret, this project establishes the contextual and theoretical groundwork needed to explore how a single domestic room can sustain the dramatic and narrative demands of a classic Agatha Christie detective story.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES.

- Deliver a realistic, period-appropriate 1930s interior that complements Christie's intricate, detail-driven plot.
- Support story flow through clear spatial layout, optimized blocking paths, and unobstructed sightlines.
- Reflect Sir Claud Amory's style, personality, and social class through décor, furniture selection, and architectural detailing.

- Ensure actor safety through thoughtful spacing, stable construction, and hazard-free movement within the stage environment.
- Employ additional or modified props where necessary to support character actions and narrative clarity.
- Use a coherent colour palette, lighting strategy, and material choices to enhance realism and underscore the production's mysterious yet subtly humorous tone.
- Produce a stage set within a condensed timeline, prioritizing clarity, practicality, and technical feasibility.

Additionally, I also aim to optimize the budget. However, due to the fact that this is a gap in research, there would be no accurate cost estimation of the set construction.

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS.

- The set must function as a single-room environment with no scene changes.
- All clue objects and actions must remain visible to the audience throughout the performance.
- The space must follow logical 1930s English domestic layout conventions, with believable door placement and circulation paths.
- Furnishings must reflect an old-fashioned, upper-class English household appropriate to the period and express Sir Claud Amory's character.
- Doors, French windows, and the fireplace must operate reliably to optimize the characters' entrances, exits, and narrative beats.
- Actor traffic and prop handoff locations must be accommodated within the room's spatial organization.
- All pathways must be safe for fast movement, and major set pieces must be stable and secured, space clutter must be avoided.
- Any liquid use onstage must be handled safely and integrated into the blocking.
- The design should suit a hypothetical production at the Timms Centre for the Arts, aligning with the theatre's proscenium stage structure.
- Materials, textiles, and finishes must be consistent with early 20th-century English interiors. Scenic painting will be employed to optimize budget, and adjust the existing props to fit in.
- Drafting, physical modelling, and rendering must follow standard scenic design conventions for clarity and accuracy.

DELIVERABLES.

SET AND PROP LIST.	A complete breakdown of all scenic and prop elements required for the production, developed through script analysis and action mapping.
TECHNICAL DRAWINGS.	A ground plan of the scenic design, accompanied by either a section or a front elevation drawing, whichever best communicates the spatial layout, architectural detailing, and overall design intention.
1:25 PHYSICAL SET MODEL.	Providing a realistic depiction of the scenic design, including spatial proportions, furniture placement, and architectural detailing.
DIGITAL RENDERS.	Rendered views of the set design demonstrating lighting, materiality, and overall spatial atmosphere.
MATERIAL SUGGESTIONS.	A curated selection of relevant materials, finishes, textiles, and surface treatments to support the visual style of the production.

ACT V

Investigating the Story World

A CHARACTER RESEARCH ON SIR CLAUD AMORY

The interior of Abbot's Cleve Library is shaped by the identity and background of Sir Claud Amory, whose social position, personality, and household context determine how the room should function and feel within the world of the play as well as the plot line.

CULTURAL CONTEXT.

Sir Claud belongs to the upper-class in English society, a group defined by lineage, stability, and cultural conservatism. The mansions of this class, specifically in the early 20th century, often preserved furnishings and traditions from earlier decades rather than following contemporary trends. This adherence to tradition reflects the values of propriety, order, and continuity that underpin Sir Claud's worldview. Understanding this cultural backdrop provides insight into how the household functions and how its members navigate authority, etiquette, and inherited roles.

SCHOLARLY PERSONALITY.

Although his scientific career drives the plot, Sir Claud's library represents his domestic life rather than work. His personality suggests an environment marked by discipline, structure, and intellectual order, depicted through the arrangement of books, papers, and architectural details that imply a rigorous mind at work. The room must feel like a place where he reads, writes, receives guests, balancing his authority with the social function of a drawing room. His scholarly nature shapes the atmosphere through a sense of vertical structure, decorum, and restrained taste, rather than overt scientific motifs.

HOUSEHOLD IDENTITY.

The library also represents the identity of the Amory household. Decorative objects, collections, photographs communicate lineage and status, serving as quiet markers of the family's history. The environment therefore needs to feel lived-in, layered, and expressive of the family's long-established presence in the house.

'OLD-FASHIONED' FURNITURES.

Christie's script notes that the furnishings are "old-fashioned" (Christie, "The Wasp's Nest") indicating that the Amorys are conservative in taste and have not updated their interior to reflect the modern styles emerging in the 1930s. This suggests a room anchored in early Edwardian or late Victorian sensibilities rather than in contemporary design trends. However, because the story takes place in the 1930s, small touches of more modern details will be introduced to hint at the era without disrupting the traditional tone.

EARLY 20TH CENTURY DOMESTIC INTERIORS: HISTORICAL REFERENCE.

The early 20th century was a transitional period from ornamental Victorian style into a more modern, streamlined architecture. During the 1910s to 1920s, Western Europe developed a bold design movement named Art Deco, with a more geometric, structured approach representing luxury and production technique advancement (Brittania 2025, "Art Deco"). In England, this aesthetic evolved into a composed domestic style characterized by symmetry, proportion, and extravagant luxury.

Since the furniture and place are old-fashioned in the 1930s (Christie, *Black Coffee* 7), the neo-Jacobean style is another good option to look into. It is an English Revival style that highlights wealth, power, and intricate craftsmanship. Dark-stained wood with bold colours, such as forest green, burgundy and navy blue, further accentuates the luxurious status of Amory's house and the dramatic nature of the story. For instance, the library at President's Tower in Penhurst Place, Kent, will be a great inspiration for the library's look, with sturdy, structured wooden chairs and the statement book table (Fig. 16).



Figure 16. The interior of Penhurst Place's library. (Pryce 2025)

Another notable example is Queen Mary's Library (part of Queen Mary's Doll's House, c.1924, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens). Despite its miniature scale, the model is an accurate representation of the high-class interior style in the early 20th century: walnut panelling, built-in bookcases, with hardcover book collections and decorations from around the world create an impression of scholarship and great social connection (Fig. 17). Common domestic interiors followed this philosophy: dark-stained woods, geometric inlays, patterned rugs, and leather upholstery for the armchairs, which is colour coordinated with the wood panels.



Figure 17. The Library in Queen Mary's Dolls' House, panelled in walnut and featuring 588 custom-made books upon its shelves © Royal Collection Trust (Frances 2024)

Through a recommendation from Brandi Goddard, an art historian at the University of Alberta, I visited the Rutherford House (Fig. 18), a historic residence occupied by the Rutherford family from 1911 to 1940. Its preserved interiors offered an authentic example of early 20th-century domestic design, aligning closely with the atmosphere and aesthetic required for Black Coffee. The home's dark wood moulding, period furnishings, and muted green tones when paired with the dimly lit lighting provided a strong spatial reference for Abbot's Cleve Library, capturing the scholarly and mysterious environment that suits Sir Claud Amory's world.



Figure 18. The Library in Rutherford House

Several film and theatre set designs from the same period, mood, and tonal palette were also examined (Fig. 19) (Appendix F), studying how designers transformed domestic spaces into environments that communicate character, tension, and atmosphere. Across these references, the visual language remained consistent: dark-stained wood panelling, abundant set dressing, and muted colour palettes dominated the interiors, creating a sense of long lived-in environments. While theatre and film differ in technique and scale, both rely on similar period details to inform the audience in early 20th-century England. Architectural details like crown moulding was significant, as they establish the perception of a full, enclosed room for a theatre box set that might otherwise appear as freestanding flats. These observations assist the design choices for *Black Coffee* and reinforce the atmosphere of an English country household filled with history, tension, and concealed motives.



Figure 19. A scene from *Invitation to a Murder* (2023)

ACT VI

From Page to Stage

SCRIPT ANALYSIS.

I began the project by reading the script multiple times and performing a comprehensive script analysis to understand the story flow and identify the crucial elements required for the set design. The set pieces are the skeletal framework of a set, while the props are anything that the actors interact with (Krystofiak 2025). The table below presents the intended set and prop pieces that belong to the environment of Black Coffee, outlining how each object supports the story's setting and character interaction (Fig.20)(Fig. 21). Establishing these lists as the first deliverables is important, as this production relies on a significant number of props and set dressings, which are often overlooked despite being crucial to creating a realistic household setting (Kline 2025). A more comprehensive prop list and reference images will be included in the Appendix E1.

BLACK COFFEE Set List						
Set Items	Qty.	Act	Script Page	Description	Location	Notes
Room Wall	1	1	N/A	The wall of the library.	Upstage	
Hall Door	1	1	7	Single door, open into the stage	Center or downstage left/right	
Dining Room Door	1	1	7	Single door, open into the stage	Placed opposite to the study and hall door.	
Study Door	1	1	7	- Single door.- Open into the stage, slightly hidden compared to the other doors.	Same side with the hall door, upstage	
French Windows	1	1	7	- Double door, with clear glass panels.- Has curtains on the sides, actors should be able to hide inside the curtains.	Nearby the dining room door	Garden or outdoor backdrop on the back.
Fireplace	1	1	7	Close to life fireplace, can show fake	Next to the dining room door	
Mantelpiece	1	1	7	Wooden panel, attached to the fireplace.	On top of the fireplace	

Figure 20. *Black Coffee* Set List.

BLACK COFFEE Prop List						
Prop Items	Qty.	Act	Script Page	Description	Location	Notes
Clock	1	1	7	Old-fashioned. One of the decorations on the mantel piece.	On the mantelpiece.	
Vase of Tapers	1	1	7	Should be more visible to the audience compared to the clock. Has some tapers inside.	On the mantelpiece.	
Desk	1	1	7	Small working desk that has a chair with it.	Preferably near a wall.	
Telephone	1	1	7	Rotary phone.	On the desk.	
Bookcase	1	1	7	Tall, made of wood, sturdy. Dust on top of the shelf	Upstage against the flat.	Should be fixed to the floor.
Tin Box	1	1	7	Black, made of metal.	On top of the bookcase.	
Cabinet	1	1	7	Has a big surface for the gramophone. Have storage for the records.	Preferably against a wall.	
Gramophone	1	1	7	Antique looking gramophone with switches.	On the cabinet.	
Records	3-5	1	7	Vinyl records.	On the cabinet beside the gramophone, or inside the cabinet.	Barbara will look through the records.
Settee	1	1	7	Big lounge chair, fancy sofa with cushion.	Center area of the stage (left or right).	Be able to accommodate 2 people.
Coffee Table	1	1	7	Lower than other desk and table.	In front of the settee.	
Book Table	1	1	7	Largest table, sturdy. Has a plant pot and books on the top.	Can be in front of the bookshelf.	
Armchair	1	1	7	Biggest chair in the room.	Behind the book table.	
Chair	3	1	7	Old-fashioned. Light enough for the actors to move the chair and easily overturn. sturdy enough for the actors to stand on top.	Two on the sides of the book table. One with the desk.	
Books	3-5	1	7	Can be fake books. One needs to be an actual book with leaves.	On the book table.	
Plant and Brass Pot	1	1	7	Having some foam or a container to hold the liquid. Big enough to hide a coffee cup.	On the book table.	
Telephone Book	1	3	83	Big, hardcovered book.	On the desk.	Carelli pretends to search for a phone number.
Ornamental Pieces	2	3	100	A small jug and some knick knacks.	On the mantelpiece.	Poirot interact with them.
Match Box	1	3	107	Slightly bigger than life.	One on the mantelpiece.	Lucia throws the match into the fireplace. (Special Effect)

Figure 21. *Black Coffee* Prop List.

Since this production involves frequent character movement and numerous entrances and exits, I also created a tracking list to determine an optimized door and furniture layout for the set (Fig. 22). This helps prevent onstage obstruction and provides the most efficient circulation paths for the actors. This method is also commonly used in theatre to plan traffic flow and accommodate quick costume changes (Beaudry 2025). The full list can be found in Appendix E2.

BLACK COFFEE Prop List								
Act	Study	Dining Room	Study	Hall	French Windows	Page No.	Scene Notes	Plan
1	Tredwell	Enter				7		Turns on the light and moves to the desk.
1	Lucia	Enter				8		Stays near the dining room door.
1	Tredwell	Exit				8		
1	Aunt Caroline	Enter				8	Intercepts with Tredwell exiting.	She moves to the settee with Lucia.
1	Richard	Enter				9		He holds the door for Aunt Caroline to exit and moves behind the settee. He moves to the French windows and tries to open them.
1	Aunt Caroline	Exit				10		
1	Aunt Caroline, Barbara	Enter				14		They moves to the settee.Barbara goes to the bookcase and takes the tin box. She puts it on the coffee table.
1	Richard	Exit				14	Intercepts with Aunt Caroline and Barbara.	
1	Tredwell, Raynor	Enter				17		Raynor moves to the coffee table.Tredwell stays nearby the dining door.
1	Carelli, Sir Claud	Enter				17		Sir Claud talks to Tredwell at the door.
1	Tredwell	Exit				17	After talking to Sir Claud	
1	Sir Claud, Raynor			Exit		17		Sir Claud talks to Carelli. Sir Claud and Raynor exit.Carelli moves to the coffee table.
1	Richard, Tredwell	Enter				18	Richard holds the door for Tredwell.	Tredwell puts the coffee tray down to the coffee table. Lucia pours the coffee.Richard takes a coffee cup from Lucia and moves to the book table.
1	Tredwell	Exit				19		
1	Barbara, Aunt Caroline, Carelli					19		Moves to the gramophone.
1	Raynor		Enter			20		
1	Raynor		Exit			20		
1	Raynor		Enter			20		Moves to the coffee table and pick up a coffee for Sir Claud.

Figure 22. *Black Coffee* Entrance and Exit List.

INSPIRATIONS AND REFERENCES.

Before entering the creative development stage, I assembled a moodboard and visual reference board to gather spatial, material, and object cues relevant to the 1930s period (Fig. 23)(Fig.24). These references established the atmospheric direction of the production and grounded the design in historically informed visual language.

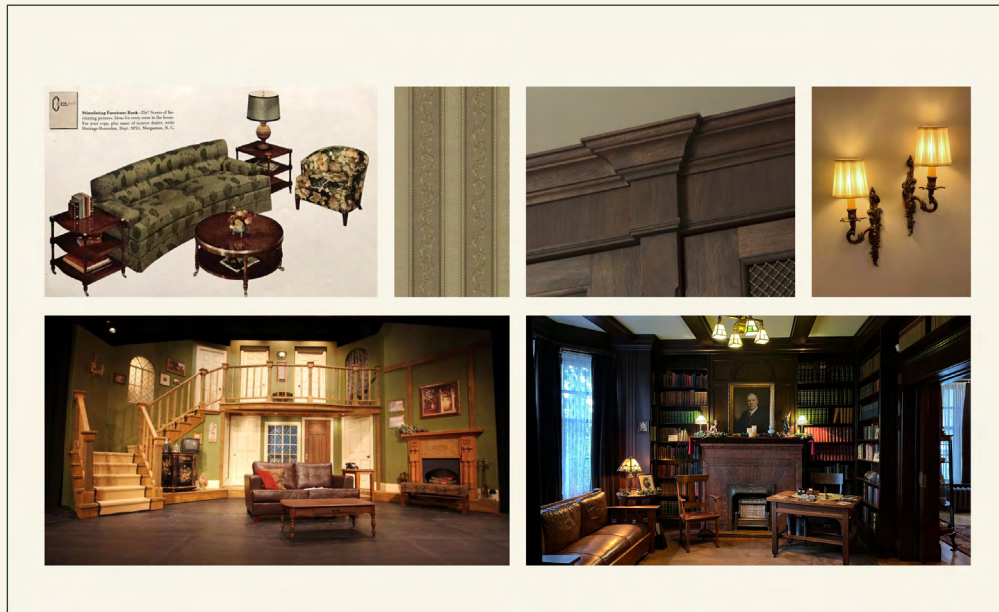


Figure 23. Reference Board.



Figure 24. Moodboard.

IDEATIONS.

Next, I moved on to the ideation stage for the set design. Since I already had a clear image of the furniture pieces and set dressing appropriate to the period, this phase focused primarily on exploring spatial layout and testing how the room could function dramaturgically. I tested the set out with different arrangements to determine how props and furniture should be placed onstage, prioritizing audience visibility, narrative clarity, and the logic of character movement. *Black Coffee* contains multiple entrances, exits, and tightly timed interactions, the furniture layout needed to support efficient circulation without overcrowding the space. Part of this work involved planning how objects being placed the room so that the environment feels lived-in but not visually overwhelming. This 3D model stage served as the equivalent of a *white card model* study, using digital instead of physical models to be more time efficient, and allows me to refine the concept before moving forward into technical drawings and model building.

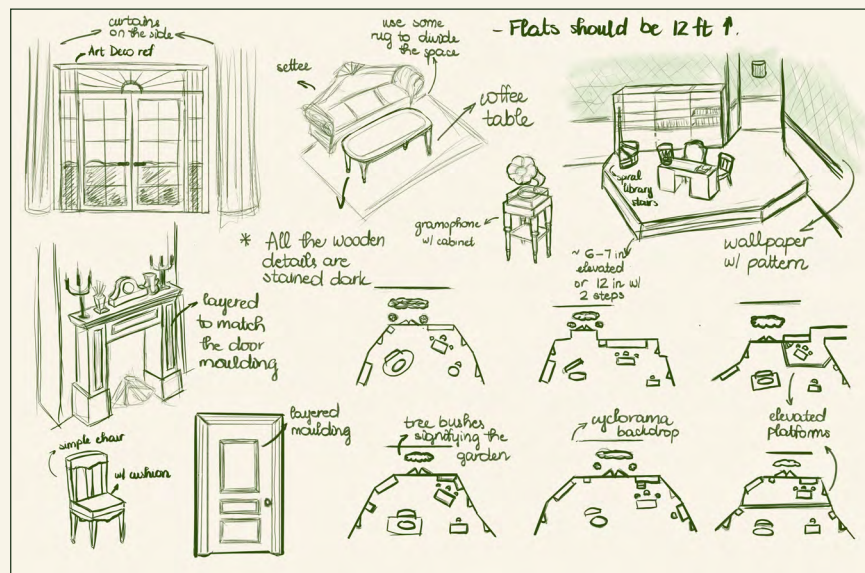


Figure 25. Exploration Sketches



Figure 26. 3D Model of the Set Design

THE SET DESIGN.

The final set design features a green-and-gold colour palette, which is a characteristic of the period (Fig. 27). Architectural elements, such as the doors, moulding, and fireplace, are scene-painted to resemble walnut, as using actual solid walnut would be too heavy and not budget-efficient. A striped wallpaper is employed to reflect Sir Claud's upright, orderly personality, while also filling the walls visually without requiring excessive set dressing. The book table area is elevated to emphasize Sir Claud's authority within the household, and to create a more private zone leading toward the study; the study door is intentionally omitted to streamline character movement and reduce the construction workload for the build team.

A library stair unit is added for actor safety, since the script requires characters to reach the upper shelves, preventing the unsafe practice of standing on chairs. The green settee is positioned at centre stage to signal that the room also functions as a drawing room. It is deliberately the most ornate furniture piece, softening the structured environment. A carpet helps divide the stage into readable zones without making the space feel cluttered. Multiple wall lamps establish the period atmosphere and fill the blank wall areas, while framed photographs and paintings suggesting the family's tradition, history, and wealth.

The French windows are designed taller than normal doors, incorporating subtle Art Deco motifs in the transom. All metal details are rendered in brass to provide refinement without the ostentation of gold. A scene painted hedge sits upstage of the windows to suggest the garden beyond the library. At the upstage area, a cyclorama serves as the sky backdrop, allowing lighting transitions to convey day and night without relying heavily on scene-painted flats (Fig. 30).



Figure 27. *Black Coffee's* Set Design in day lighting



Figure 28. *Black Coffee's* Set Design in night lighting



Figure 29. *Black Coffee's* Set Design in bird eye view



Figure 30. A comparison between day and night sky



Figure 30. Close up view at the fireplace

THE 1:25 SCALE MODEL.

The scale model was built at a 1:25 ratio, following industry standards and the guidance outlined in Colin Winslow's *The Handbook of Model-Making for Set Designers* (2008) with a simplified stage model made of foamboard. Due to the time constraints of this project, the model was not fully finished with realistic material depiction. However, it remained highly effective as a working tool throughout the design process. The model supported essential tasks such as layout testing, sightline evaluation, lighting trials, tab-curtain placement, and proportional reference. It also served as a useful guide when considering how certain set pieces might be constructed. For these reasons, physical scale models continue to be a core practice in theatre design, even with the increasing availability of digital 3D modelling and rendering technologies, because they offer an immediate, tactile method of evaluating spatial relationships and design feasibility.



Figure 31. The 1:25 scale set model with replicate stage lighting

Most furniture pieces were 3D printed, then hand-finished with gouache and sealed with gloss varnish to achieve realistic textures. These furniture models can be stored and reused in future productions. The functional doors were crafted using paper-hinge techniques described in Winslow's model-making guide (Appendix D4). They also use dollhouse's drawer handle and jewelry beadings and door knobs following the guide. A paper human figure was included as a scale reference, reflecting the common professional practice of incorporating costume-sketch silhouettes into models to coordinate proportion, style, and visual coherence across departments.



Figure 32. 3D printed furniture models and the hedge made from model grass bed



Figure 33. 3D printed furniture models finished with gouache paint and gloss varnish



Figure 34. Functional door models using dollhouse's drawer handles as door knobs.



Figure 35. Functional French windows model using brass painted jewelry beads as door knobs.



Figure 36. Front and back view of the paper human figure model

MATERIAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

Since most period furniture can be reupholstered, I collected a set of fabric samples that align with the visual language of *Black Coffee* and the aesthetics of early 20th-century English interiors. These samples serve both as material references and as guides for selecting affordable alternatives during construction. In addition, I gathered examples of architectural wood patterns to support scene-painting treatments that replicate walnut finishes and beech wood flooring, as well as reference swatches for brass metal detailing used on hardware and decorative elements. Together, these materials provide a cohesive palette for achieving the set's period accuracy and overall atmosphere.



Metal Embellishments



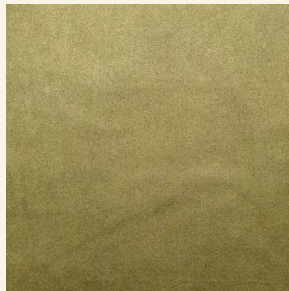
Curtain Fabric



Chair Fabric



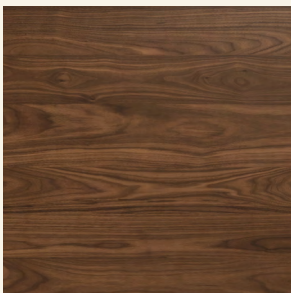
Beech Wood Flooring



Settee Fabric



Chair Fabric



Walnut Mouldings
and Furnitures



Settee Fabric



Armchair Fabric

Wallpaper is a special element in theatrical settings, as commercial wallpaper patterns often appear too small or visually weak on stage. Instead of using pre-made rolls, stylized wallpaper are typically scene painted, using motifs gathered by the set designer and translated into stencils. These stencils can be stored and reused for future productions, allowing flexibility in colour palettes and pattern arrangements (Winslow 2008). The wallpaper pattern I chose using only striped motifs without any organic element. Therefore, it can be produced using multiple methods and flexibility, even though the straight line would require high precision from the scene painters.

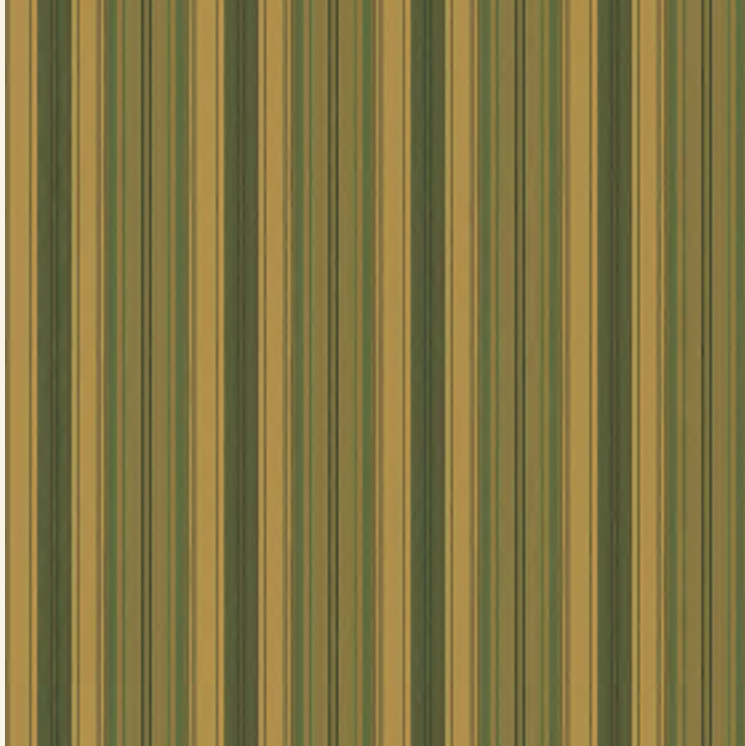


Figure 37. Wallpaper pattern of *Black Coffee*

TECHNICAL DRAWINGS.

Below are the technical drawing package for this production, following the drafting conventions and format in Winslow's textbooks (2006, 2008) (Appendix D5). The drawings are done in A0 size paper, so the text might appear small and illegible in smaller size.

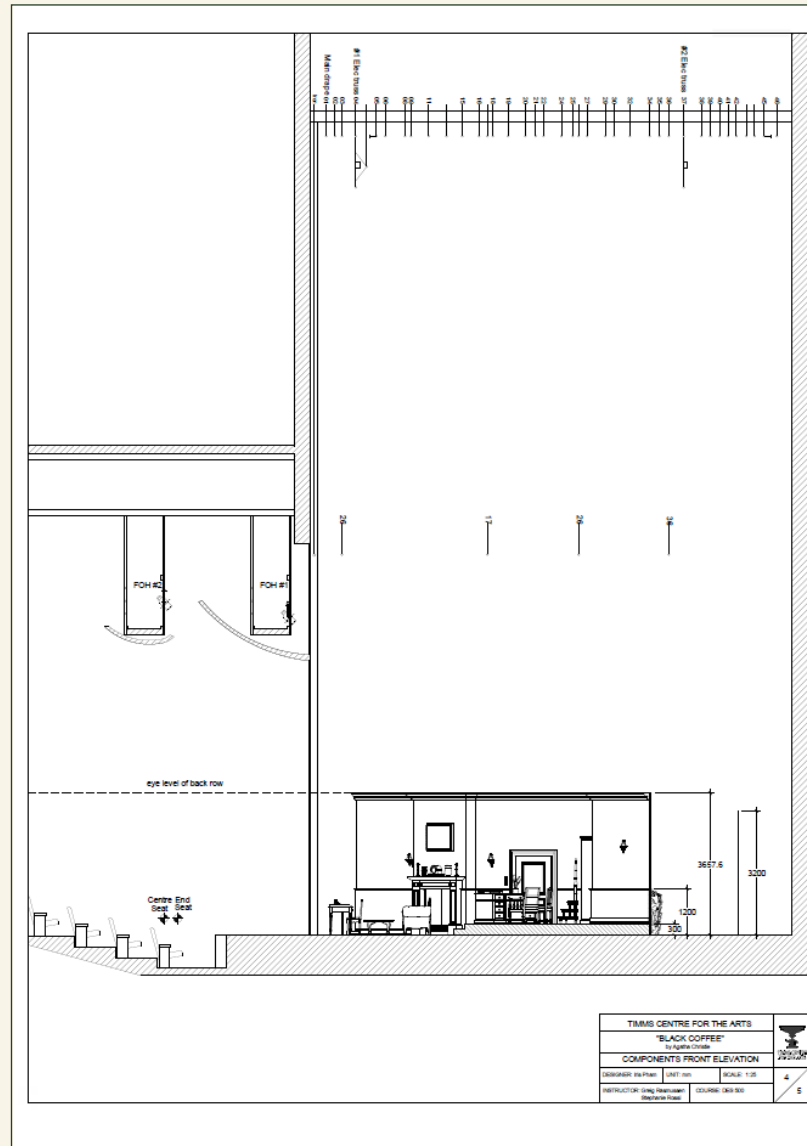


Figure 38. Section View

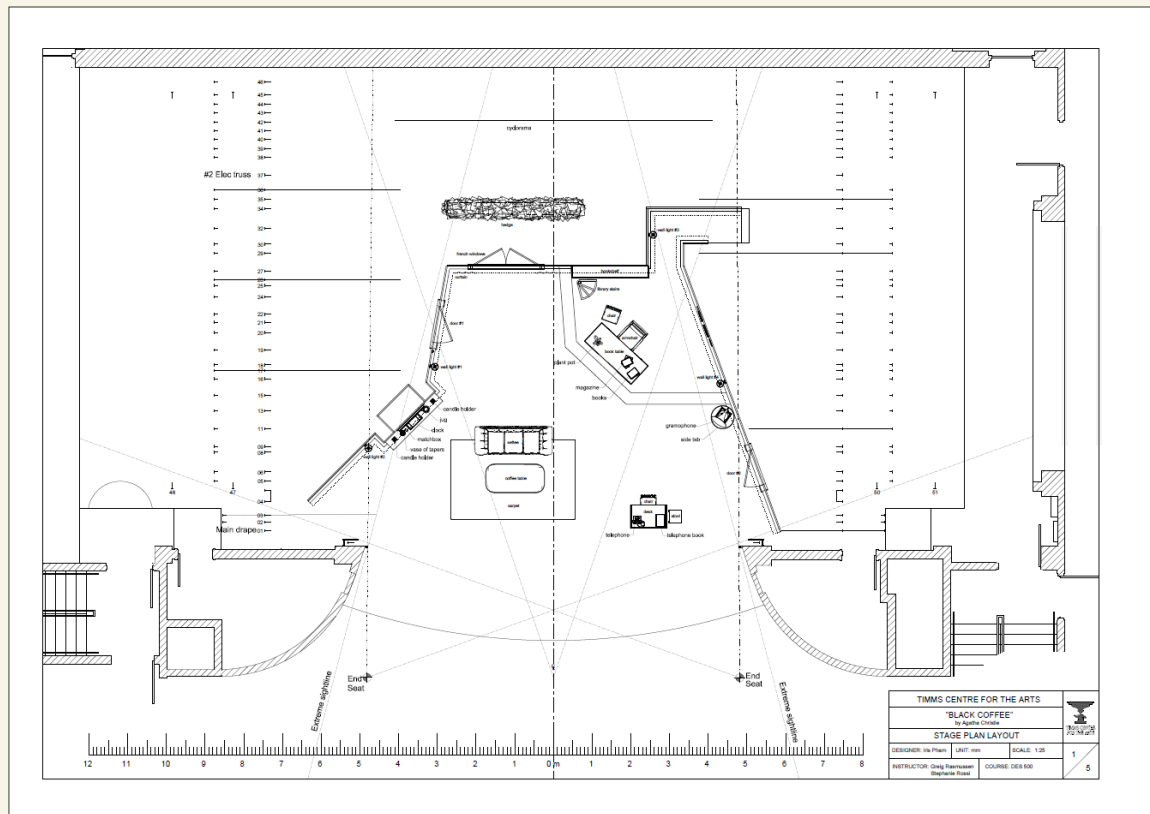


Figure 39. Stage Plan with component notes

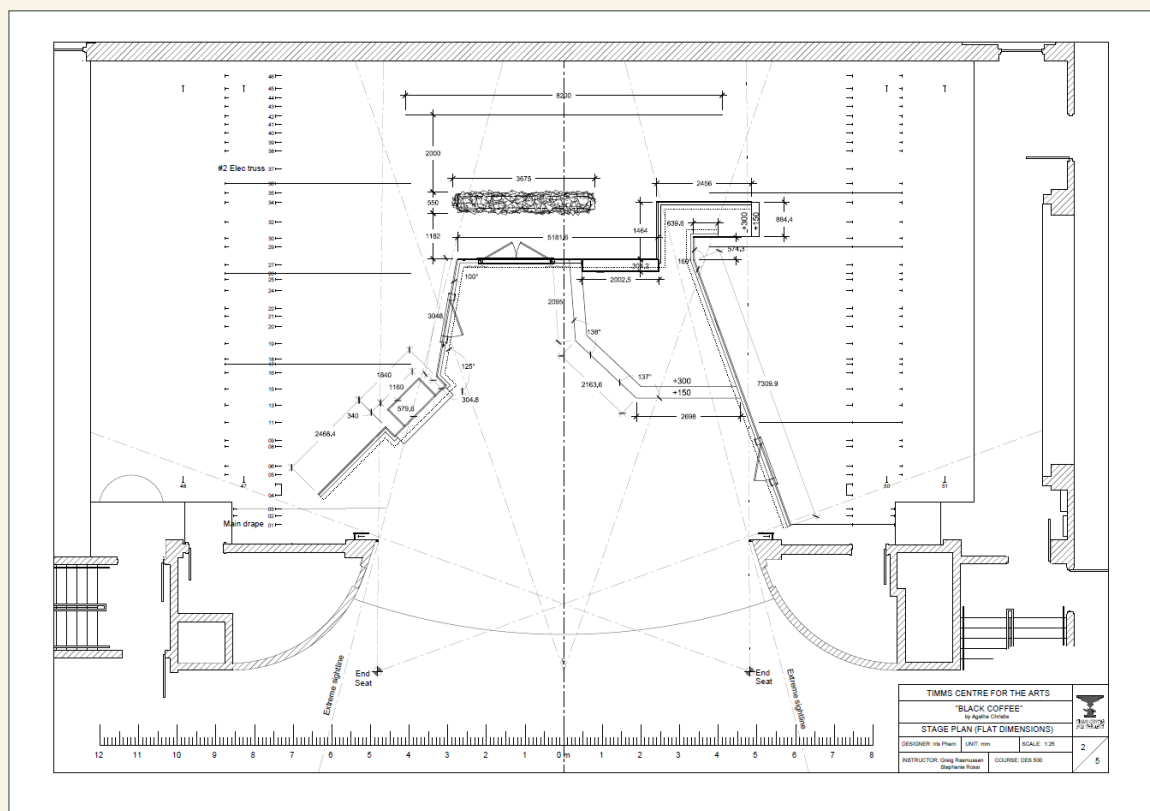


Figure 40. Stage Plant with flat dimensions

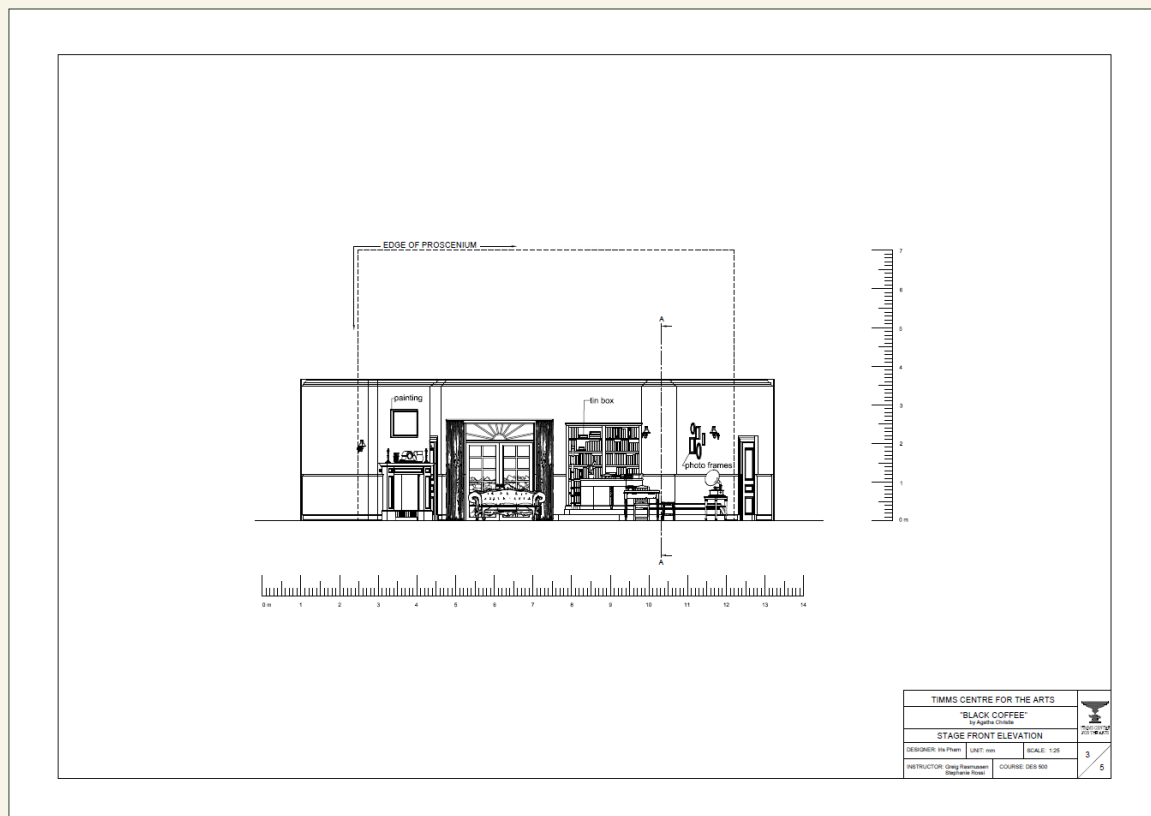


Figure 41. Front Elevation

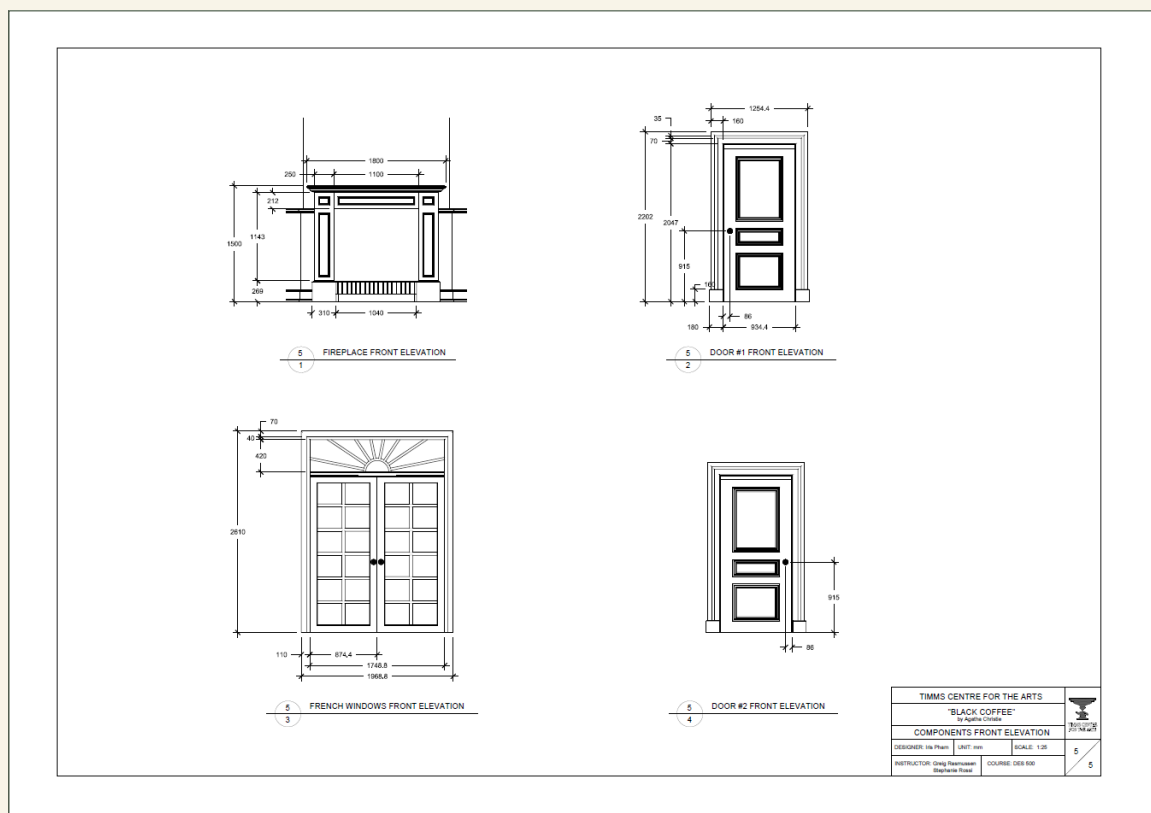


Figure 42. Components Front Elevations

ABBOT'S CLEVE LIBRARY.

A Scenic Design for the Production of *Black Coffee*.

This design represents a realistic box set of Abbot's Cleve Library for Agatha Christie's *Black Coffee* theatre production. It was built from scenic-painted dark wood, functional doors and French windows, with curated set dressings to evoke the space of an English country mansion. A muted yellow and green palette, which were significant colours of the 1930s, sets the tone for a fast-paced murder mystery that carries a touch of light humour.

Warm lighting enhances the painted wood textures and maintains clear visibility for clues and character movement. Every element, from the detail-filled fireplace area to the bookshelf, helps create a lived-in, period-authentic space designed to support both plot tension and narrative clarity.



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Figure 43. The Promotional Poster

ACT VII

Curtain Call — Reflection

This project has been an immersive journey into the craft, discipline, and imagination behind scenic design. Approaching *Black Coffee*, a play by one of my favourite authors, as a hypothetical production for the Timms Centre allowed me to combine research, critical analysis, and creative exploration into a fully developed scenic concept. What began as a broad investigation into theatre as a performative space gradually evolved into a deeper understanding of narrative-driven spatial design and a user- and character-centred approach.

Throughout the process, I was reminded that design is inherently collaborative. Even in a hypothetical setting, the workflow demanded an awareness of how directors, stage managers, prop masters, and technical teams shape the final outcome. The resulting design reflects the research completed so far, meaning it remains a work in progress. In future practice, I hope to engage more closely with working professionals, particularly technical directors, to gain a clearer understanding of budgeting, an area that remains a gap in this research.

As my first scenic design project, this experience also highlighted the importance of continual testing and accumulated experience. Model-making, for instance, revealed both its usefulness and the need for refinement in my craftsmanship. Time limitations meant I could not fully explore scene-painting techniques or develop drafting skills beyond the basics required for this project. These are areas I aim to strengthen moving forward.

Overall, this project taught me far more than scenic design alone. It deepened my knowledge of collaborative theatre workflow, sharpened my spatial thinking, and expanded my understanding of user-centred and a bit of architectural design principles. These learnings will accompany me into future design projects, not only in theatre settings, but also industrial, interior or architectural design practice.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A. Lecture Notes

MIMESIS LECTURE NOTES.

Imitating the way nature function. → Mimesis.

Socrates.

Plato's concept of Imitation

- ↳ Looking into a copy & make a copy of it
- ↳ Further from the truth.

↳ The image of reality

↳ Copy of the copy of the ideal form.

⊗ Aristotle's Concept of Imitation.

↳ Not only art but also math & science.

↳ Create a distance b/w reality & art.
↳ more or less beautiful than they are

Idea of how things should be imitated

↳ Decoded

↳ Understand the ideal → the nature of things.

↳ Explore!!

Abandonment of imitation.

↳ Some art was construction → modernists.

↳ art was expression.

↳ none was imitation

Art & Design 'should' improve upon nature.

APPENDIX B. Script Notes

B1. A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE.

Using the vanity & shelf as a divider into the washroom.

A Streetcar Named Desire

Front door has metal net
The bathroom door is solid

by Tennessee Williams

The version starred by Gillian Anderson was a modernized version but in a naturalism style

And so it was I entered the broken world

To trace the visionary company of love, its voice

An instant in the wind (I know not whither hurled)

But not for long to hold each desperate choice

"The Broken Tower" by Hart Crane

SCENE ONE

The exterior of a two-story corner building on a street in New Orleans which is named Elysian Fields and runs between the L & N tracks and the river. The section is poor but, unlike corresponding sections in other American cities, it has a raffish charm. The houses are mostly white frame, weathered gray, with rickety outside stairs and galleries and quaintly ornamented gables. This building contains two flats, upstairs and down. Faded white stairs ascend to the entrances of both.

It is first dark of an evening early in May. The sky that shows around the dim white building is a peculiarly tender blue, almost a turquoise, which invests the scene with a kind of lyricism and gracefully attenuates the atmosphere of decay. You can almost feel the warm breath of the brown river beyond the river warehouses with their faint redolences of bananas and coffee. A corresponding air is evoked by the music of Negro entertainers at a barroom around the corner. In this part of New Orleans you are practically always just around the corner, or a few doors down the street, from a tinny piano being played with the infatuated fluency of brown fingers. This "Blue Piano" expresses the spirit of the life which goes on here.

Transition in dim light w/ music

The actors who don't rearrange the scene will

[Two men come around the corner, Stanley Kowalski and Mitch. They are about twenty-eight or thirty years old, roughly dressed in blue denim work clothes. Stanley carries his bowling jacket and a red-stained package from a butcher's. They stop at the foot of the steps.]

STANLEY [bellowing]:

Hey, there! Stella, Baby!

[Stella comes out on the first floor landing, a gentle young woman, about twenty-five, and of a background obviously quite different from her husband's.]

STELLA [mildly]:

Don't holler at me like that. Hi, Mitch.

STANLEY:

Catch!

STELLA:

Using green dimmed light like the street light lighting at night & dimmed purple light for dark apartment

act like they are doing daily activity

B2. THE MOORS.

SETTING

The bleak moors...of England?

big or rolling expanse of
infertile land

Think *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre* and the Brontë sisters.

However: the characters all have American accents (or accents native to the country of production). Play the anachronisms. This play is about the present.

TIME

The 1840s...ish

costume
& decor

(Thud!)

the chairs are set design's
ideas

(The sound of a horrible impact that shakes our world – a bird-body hitting glass.)

(Lights up on the parlor of an elegant, ancient mansion on the English moors. 1840-ish, to a degree.)

HULDEY. I just know you'll love it here! The bracing air, and the strange thorny flowers, and the gorse... And there are lots of long walks you might take. Although there's quicksand of course, and also large ravenous birds, and if you walked too far you might get turned around and lost and starve to death, or you might even be eaten by something. But in general, the moors are very pretty.

(A beat.)

↳ dangerous moors

12.

same inside setting

(**AGATHA's** bedchamber. Which appears to be the same room as the parlor. **AGATHA** sits in a very uncomfortable chair. She reads **EMILIE's** letters to herself.)

↳ is the good chair
comfortable
or uncomfortable?

AGATHA. Ah.

(Reads.)

↓ a letter

B3. THE WASP'S NEST.



(The garden of **CHARLES HARBOROUGH**'s house. There is a wall with a door leading to the road. Near the door is a tall shrub. There is a table with drinks and garden chairs and an old tree root can be seen which contains a wasp's nest. **NINA BELLAMY** and **CLAUD LANGDON** are together. She is a pretty girl of twenty. At the moment she looks worried and upset. He is a good looking fellow of twenty-seven. He has a sullen expression on his face and is refusing to look at her.)

CHARLES. Langdon would never –

POIROT. At what time?

CHARLES. At ten o'clock.

(**POIROT** consults his watch.)

POIROT. And it is now half past nine, good.

CHARLES. But I tell you Langdon would never –

POIROT. Ah, mon dieu! Langdon would never, Langdon would never! Have it your own way. Langdon would never! C'est entendu!

(He readies himself to leave.)

All the same, I return here at ten o'clock.

CHARLES. But really –

POIROT. Langdon would never! C'est entendu. I return only to amuse myself by seeing one of your English sports – the taking of the wasp's nest. I do not stay to argue with you now, because I should only enrage myself. Au revoir till ten o'clock.

(He bows and makes to exit. **CHARLES** shrugs his shoulders and turns away. He picks up a glass from the table. **POIROT** opens the door but as he is about to go, he draws quickly back, shutting the door behind him and hiding behind the shrub. **CLAUD** enters carrying a small glass syringe.)

CHARLES. (Turning.) Hullo, you're late.

a prop / costume

big enough to
hide a male actor

CHARLES. Goodbye.

(**CLAUD** exits. Left alone, **CHARLES**' expression slowly changes. He laughs silently. His face becomes the face of the devil. He looks not quite sane. After his mirth is over he takes a *small wide-mouthed bottle* from his pocket. It has a few crystals in it, which he shakes into his whisky and soda.)

the bottle must be clear but durable to be thrown

(Then with a *handkerchief* he carefully wipes fingerprints from the bottle and throws it into the garden. **POIROT** emerges from behind the shrub, coming up noiselessly behind him. **CHARLES** picks up his glass and puts it to his lips. Before he drinks, **POIROT** deftly seizes it from him.)

(Turning.) What –

(**POIROT** steps out of **CHARLES**' reach.)

POIROT. I think I had better drink this.

(He raises the glass to his lips. **CHARLES** screams in frenzy.)

CHARLES. Don't drink it! For God's sake don't drink it! It's poisoned, I tell you, poisoned!

(**POIROT** with a smile drinks. **CHARLES** stands appalled shaking all over. **POIROT** makes a grimace, wipes his lips with his handkerchief and replaces the glass on the table.)

My God, cyanide of potassium.

POIROT. No, my friend, you are in error. You see, just now, I made a little exchange.

(He takes a bottle from his pocket.)

↳ another small wide-mouth bottle

(He fills the cyanide bottle with water, shakes it, then tip-toes to the wasp's nest with exaggerated caution. Averting his head, he pours it down a hole in the root. He contemplates the results.)

↳ debatable to be actual water or not

B4. BLACK COFFEE

ACT I

base of the set

(entrances)
door positions
will determine
the set layout

(The library at Abbot's Cleve, Sir Claud Amory's house, about twenty-five miles from London. The time is 8:30 in the evening. There are doors leading to the hall, dining room and Sir Claud's study. There are also French windows that open on to the garden. There is a fireplace with a bell push next to it. On the mantelpiece there is an old-fashioned clock and some ornaments, including a vase of tapers. The furniture consists of a desk with a telephone on it, a tall bookcase with a tin box on top, a cabinet with a gramophone and records, and a settee and coffee table. Dominating the room is a large book table with an armchair and two chairs round it. The table is littered with books and has a plant in a brass pot on it. The furniture is old-fashioned but of no particular period. The room is empty and in darkness. After a few moments the door to the dining room opens and TREDWELL enters, speaking off.)

TREDWELL. Sir Claud. Very good, Sir Claud.

(The faint hum of voices is heard until he closes the door behind him. He switches on the lights, moves to the desk and lifts the telephone receiver.)

a light switch

Market Cleve four-three... Four Three... Yes, please... Is that Jackson's garage? ...I'm speaking from Sir Claud Amory's, Abbot's Cleve. Will you send a taxi to

BARBARA. Well, we might as well have a look at the things now I've got it down.

(She opens the box, taking out various bottles as she speaks.)

black tin box

It's a motley collection. Iodine, Friar's Balsam, Tinct, Castor oil. *(Grimacing.)* Ah, now we're coming to the hot stuff.

contain
different substances

(She takes out some small brown glass tubes.)

Coffee cup: Barbara Carelli
Richard Aunt Caroline
Coffee Table 6 2

BLACK COFFEE

19

*coffee and gives one to RICHARD. TREDWELL
exits.)*

AUNT CAROLINE. You make my flesh creep, Doctor. I
suppose you know a lot about poisons, being Italian?

CARELLI. Ah, dear lady, you are going to mention the
Borgias!

*(He hands her a cup of coffee and takes one
for himself.)*

AUNT CAROLINE. Lucrezia Borgia – that dreadful creature!
I used to have nightmares about her when I was a
child – very pale and tall with jet black hair like our
dear Lucia.

(CARELLI bows to LUCIA.)

CARELLI. Lucrezia Borgia.

(There is a pause. CARELLI drinks his coffee.

RICHARD takes a magazine from the desk and
glances through it.)

BARBARA. What about a little tune?

(She moves to the gramophone.)

What shall we have?

(Singing.)

“IKEY-OH! CRIKEY – WHAT HAVE YOU GOT ON?”

AUNT CAROLINE. *(Rising.)* Oh Babs dear, not that vulgar
song.

*(She joins BARBARA at the gramophone and
begins to hunt through the records.)*

Why not that nice Melba record? Or Handel’s Largo?

*(CARELLI joins them. LUCIA moves slowly and
takes the tube of hyoscine out of the tin box.*

in Lucia's
hand

*She glances over to the others. Seeing that no
one is observing her she opens the tube and
pours nearly all the tablets into the palm
of her hand. As she does so, the door to the
study opens. Unbeknownst to LUCIA, RAYNOR*

a few vinyl
covers

visible
to the
audience
spot light

sound of door opening

stands in the doorway watching her. She puts the tube back in the box.)

SIR CLAUD. (*Offstage.*) My coffee.

RAYNOR. Yes, Sir Claud. I'll bring you your coffee.

(LUCIA turns at the sound of RAYNOR's voice, not realising he has been watching her.)

SIR CLAUD. (*Offstage.*) What about that letter to Marshall's?

RAYNOR. It went by the afternoon post.

SIR CLAUD. (*Offstage.*) Raynor!

RAYNOR. I'm sorry, sir.

(He returns to the study. LUCIA drops the tube contains tablets and Richard's magazine cup on the book table she is holding into one of the coffee cups on the coffee table. A tune is heard from the gramophone. RICHARD puts down the magazine, finishes his coffee and puts the cup on the book table before approaching LUCIA.)*

RICHARD. (*Passionately.*) Lucia, I'll take you at your word. We'll go away together.

LUCIA. (*Faintly.*) Richard – you mean it? But my dear, the money?

RICHARD. (*Grimly.*) There are ways of getting money.

LUCIA. (*Alarmed.*) What do you mean?

RICHARD. I mean that when a man wants a woman as I want you, he'll do – anything.

(RAYNOR enters from the study.)

LUCIA. (*Hurt.*) So you still don't trust me?

(RICHARD does not answer. He moves to the fireplace. RAYNOR moves to the coffee table and picks up a cup of coffee.)

BARBARA. (*Turning.*) Coming to dance Mr. Raynor?

* A license to perform *Black Coffee* does not include a performance license to any supplementary music. Samuel French, Inc. recommends that licensees use a recording of a song in the public domain.

APPENDIX C. Interview Notes

C1. DREE BEAUDRY.

Dree Beaudry

A Past Student worked on Scenic Design, Prop Maker

- T DES 370
- Worked on theatre projects before.
- Start with
 - Initial script reading > everyone is present, prop master will make spreadsheet of all th props mentioned, set designer will think about the environments, technical director will talk with both to immediately plan all mechanical scenes
 - Ask director for their vision
 - Read script again to create specific things
 - Make thumbnail sketches with loose examples of what you want > the “vibe”
 - Concept sketching (a very industrial design thing)
 - THERE ARE A LOT OF REGULATIONS IN THEATRE DESIGN > keep the actors safe and the buildings intact
 - Usually the prop master doesn't design the props, the director will sketch smth up and the prop maker will make it based on that vision
- Sourcing props:
 - Timms Centre has a big warehouse > prop master curates a set of props and directors choose which props fit their vision best
 - To keep track of props: use a spreadsheet and list where they are in the warehouse (heavy reliance on prop master's knowledge of the warehouse and collection)
 - Make props and sets through CAD and CNC > 3d printing and laser cutting are gaining popularity
 - Search for fabricators in the city and they'll cut it for you
- Hierarchy:
 - Director (all these directly people work under the director)
 - Costume designer
 - Set designer (usually a contract employee)
 - Months timeline to make and build everything
 - Technical designer
 - Prop Master (usually work for the theatre)

- Usually make things on a short timeline. Weeks to days to prep and make props.
- Stakeholders in a production:
 - The script
 - Will require whatever is in the script, what the script says is different from what the director wants
 - The director
 - Will have a dream one day and decide everything needs to be blue :')
 - Basically your client (dictator)
 - Actors
 - What can they carry, how will they take things in and out of the stage
 - Characters
 - Different from the actors, the story is crucial and what they demand will be different
 - ALL FOR THE STORY
 - The techs
 - Audience
- Safety
 - safety constraints : high platform & railing . fire. NOT POSSIBLE - > or a bunch of paper work
 - Set designers sometimes can be lighting designers & sound designers. Sometimes all 50 ppl do the job
- Some are more involved with the mechanical
 - More industrial design
 - Bigger props
- Things to keep in mind
 - The students know that ualberta theatre doesn't know what they want/ how to build something and the students know that
 - A potential route (how Dree got a job) > find ways to take the best of industrial to improve theatre design and vice versa > what is unique about industrial design?
 - Thinks that ualberta design doesn't teach prototyping well enough

- Doesn't get enough exploration > theatre design has the capacity to make the things look a certain material but is not made out of that material > IT'S OK TO BE FAKE
 - Making the rhino head's tusk: what was the best material and way of making it? Think of something lightweight > clay? Paper mache? Worbla and armature wire?
 - ADVICE: go on reddit and search up what cosplayers do
 - Sometimes costumes and props overlap (what is costume and what is prop?)
 - The U of A theatre space doesn't work like a professional theatre
- Mentioned productions/ other media/ resources
 - Game Changer Set from dropout TV
 - Spinning wheel
 - Romeo and Juliet in the round stage
 - Hamilton the musical
 - The fire in Eliza's burn requires a lot of paperwork. How do I make sure the fire is put out immediately?
 - Terranova (what Dree worked on)
 - How to make snow on stage? Used Tyvec like they used in houses.

C2. MELISSA KRYSTOFIAK.

Melissa Krystofiak

Former Film Production Designer

- The art department, which is run by the production designer who designs the film.
- Art directors take the main sets and supervise the build of each set.
- Set designers draft up the set, and concept artists work with the designer to make illustrations of the mood and feel of the set.
- Props are an entirely different department from set dressing. A prop is anything an actor touches. Set dressing fills in the set with various items.
- Graphics is also an entirely different department, and they do everything that has a picture or text on it. All these jobs are separate unions which require a lot of time to apply for, and then you would, in theory, move your way up to the top position of designer.

C3. CARRHUNGER.

1. General process?

- ↳ Theatre: audience is right there. Live performance.
 - + in public
 - + keep in mind everything that could go wrong.
 - + Set: front gate: budget problem.
 - + Tight deadline.
 - + Second-hand materials
 - + Safety issues.
 - + Tear down the wood.
 - + Insurance → refund tickets.
 - + Paint (include lead).
- ↳ Swords: no sharp edge.
 - + European ≠ Japanese technique.
 - + Hand cut & glue together.
 - + Wrap up w/ leather.
 - + Damaged stuff →
 - + ABS doesn't absorb moisture.
- + Drawing things on paper: ambiguous specs.
 - + Sometimes doesn't add up
 - + Plywood & form.
 - + Things wouldn't match → 40ft tall wall → scaffolding for weight.
- + Film: Art Department → Prop & Set Departments. → Build & rebuild.
 - Theatre: working together.
 - Cannot redo a live performance.
- + Film will bring in an architect → even w/ a miniature set.
 - Stage: you are doing it yourself.
- + Film: start w a production designer.
 - set designer: drawings
 - ↳ prop shops are doing that
 - 99% there was sth has been done before.
 - ↳ figure out the production methods.
 - Umbrella gun: cost them 6k → shipping cross country.
 - ↳ \$100 dollars figuring out the mechanism.
 - ↳ Replace the umbrella fabric.
 - ↳ Cosplay replica (ish)
- + Depend on the prop & the function:
 - ↳ Solidworks → or 3D model file.
 - ↳ or reproduce the model.
 - ↳ mechanism (engineering)
 - ↳ CGI prop: blue-green screens
 - ↳ Prop makers needed ☹
- + Apple shipped 35 units → brand new → cut them open → throw out the guts.
 - ↳ but fake them to be functional.
- + Film is strict w/ agreements
- + Western switch open w/ a screw driver.
- + Pop up the next gadget but in the same design.
- + Stop motion & motion control.
 - ↳ Dissect the stuff
 - ↳ Paint the interior black
 - ↳ Different versions: different movement.
- + iPods need a new set of screwdrivers.
 - ↳ Sometimes they want new set of screwdrivers.
 - ↳ Do not rely on screwdrivers.

- + Saw is nice (reciprocating).
 - + Soldering.
 - + Tweezers.
 - + Spare parts.
 - + Bulbs.
 - + Battery.
 - + Battery holder.
- Don't do sth required programming. → Keep the motor & receiver. Give them the bare bone thing.
- + Go back to the older tech.
 - + Hobby shop.
 - + Shop access.
 - + Team up w/ other cosplayer & buy from suppliers.
 - + Acrylic sheet, ABS, soldering material, wood, hardware?
 - + Know the company ur dealing w/.
 - + Divots! Divalt?
 - + Don't rely on 3D printing. 'u'
 - + SMOOTH - OM
 - + Engraving. → Industrial design. 'u'
 - + Make one gun & cast the rest of them.
 - + Dissect things

- Dissect a prop & mold each part.
 - ↳ learn online courses. 'u'
 - ↳ Digital manipulation
 - ↳ Fault painting → plastic looks like wood
 - ↳ Spray lacquers → automotive paint.
 - ↳ Getting close & intimate w/ the material.
 - ↳ Resin mixing → for some prop finish.
 - ↳ Solid positive + flexible mold
 - ↳ Flexible positive + solid mold.
- ↳ Blender boss example.
 - ↳ Be careful w/ artist (plaster)/(plasticine)
 - ↳ Don't buy from Michael, dollar store.
- ↳ Prototype (miniature) first.
 - ↳ Do a lot of thing before u get the big gig.
- ↳ Depend on the scale = from 1 day to 1 month.

- Sometime on a daily basis.

- A.T.O.M. Suit.

- Scanned the model for fitting.

- Tons of fitting

- One for stuntman & actor & spare parts.

- Stargate.

- Hired prop (huge one) - The day before or the morning of.

↳ Didn't have time on it.

- They have decent timeline for other props.

- More lead time in theatre before the rehearsal

↳ They have seasons to sell tickets.

↳ The week before

- Built-in shop.

- DO NOT procrastinate

- Usually abt months.

- Everything set up for dress rehearsal.

↳ 1 week flex time.

C4. JANE KLINE.

Jane Kline

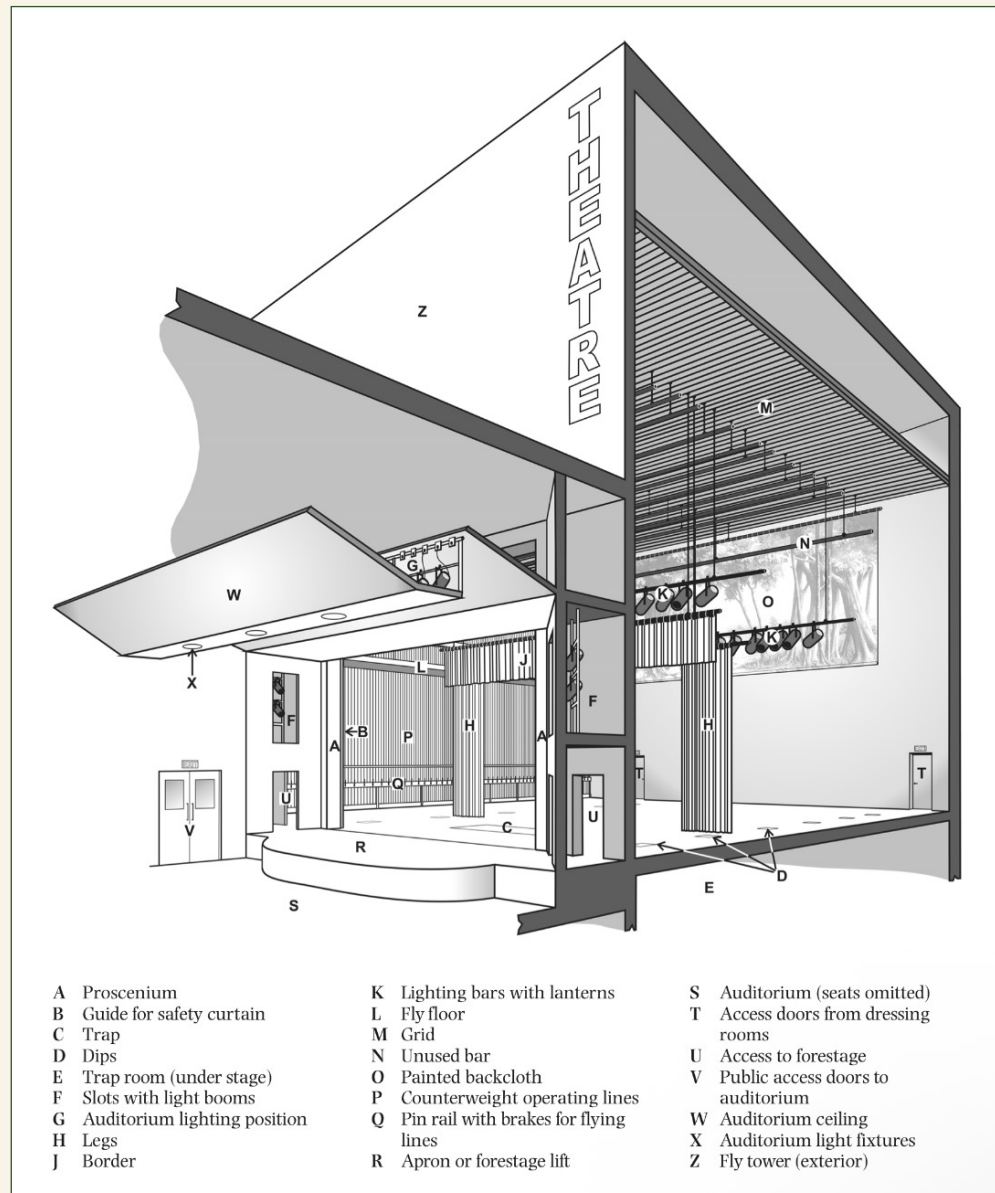
Prop Master at the U of A

- Hazard assessment meetings.
- Props are usually left unnoticed until later.
- Most of the time, the props are fake
- You can find furniture in the Home Depot, dollar stores, thrift stores, and donations.
- See the potential in similar pieces and customize them.
- Some actors have allergies and restrictions, so that needs to be discussed.
- A magic eraser cleans things easily.
- Use materials that give the impression of being sharp.
 - Metallic vinyl for the metal rings.
- Spray adhesive is used a lot.
- Most of the time, you find something available in the prop shop or shop for it.
- Timms Centre is the biggest prop shop in Western Canada.
- The process is really collaborative. You go to someone who can do the job you need, or may help you out.
- Cataloguing
 - They're trying to catalogue items so that they can view inventory on an iPad.
 - Also trying to get rid of stuff that hasn't been used in so long.
- Everything is very project-based and involves constant problem-solving.
- Actors are not recommended to stand on the chair.
- Testing the prop before going into production.
- The goat head.
- The champagne tower.
 - Nail polish was painted on the champagne glass to look like there was champagne inside.
 - Acrylic is better than glass.
 - Glass is discouraged from being on stage due to safety problems.
- Jane thinks of it as a sculpture, adding things on top.
- Sometimes the production team wants a specific piece, and you have to build it.
- Realism usually requires more work.

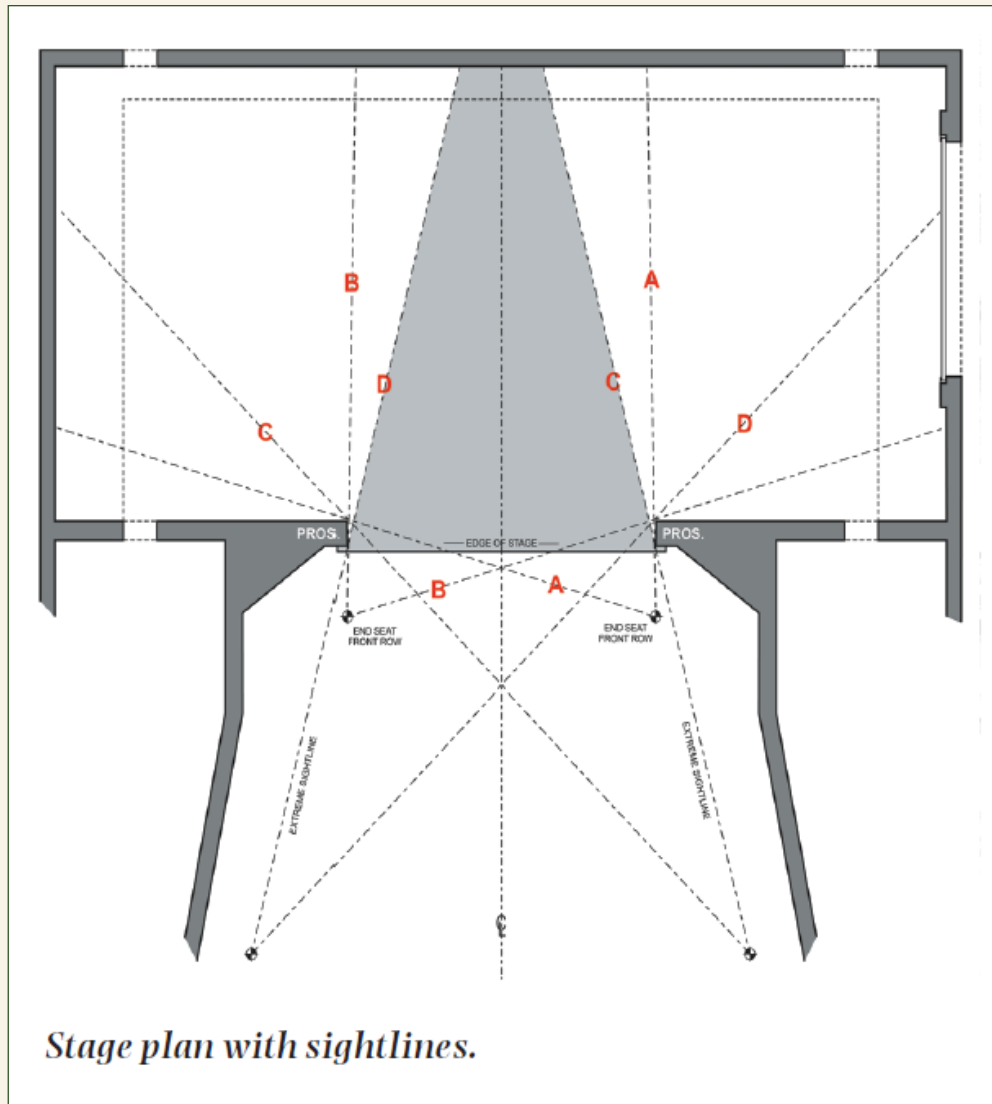
- The subway sandwich is in a refrigerator for 3 days.
- Real fire will include lots of departments, engagements.
- Water for the tub and shower.
 - Just a small amount of water in a bucket hidden inside.
 - The actors cannot sit in water due to the microphone cables.
- Carpet on the exit stairs.
- The legs of the chair are customizable; they detach the seat from the legs and rework it.
- They can turn them into candle legs.
- Hazard assessment
 - Extremely important, always something to think about
 - If there's food, think of allergies
 - Latex allergy exists, make disclaimers in the invitations/ website/ when ppl r buying the tickets (balloons in the play, 250 and all have to be popped by the actors)
 - A spraying booth and a respirator are needed for spray adhesive and spray paint.
- Metal was sold off to be recycled after the show.
- The stairs got dismantled and thrown away
- Jane works with the carpenter a lot.

APPENDIX D. Technical Illustration

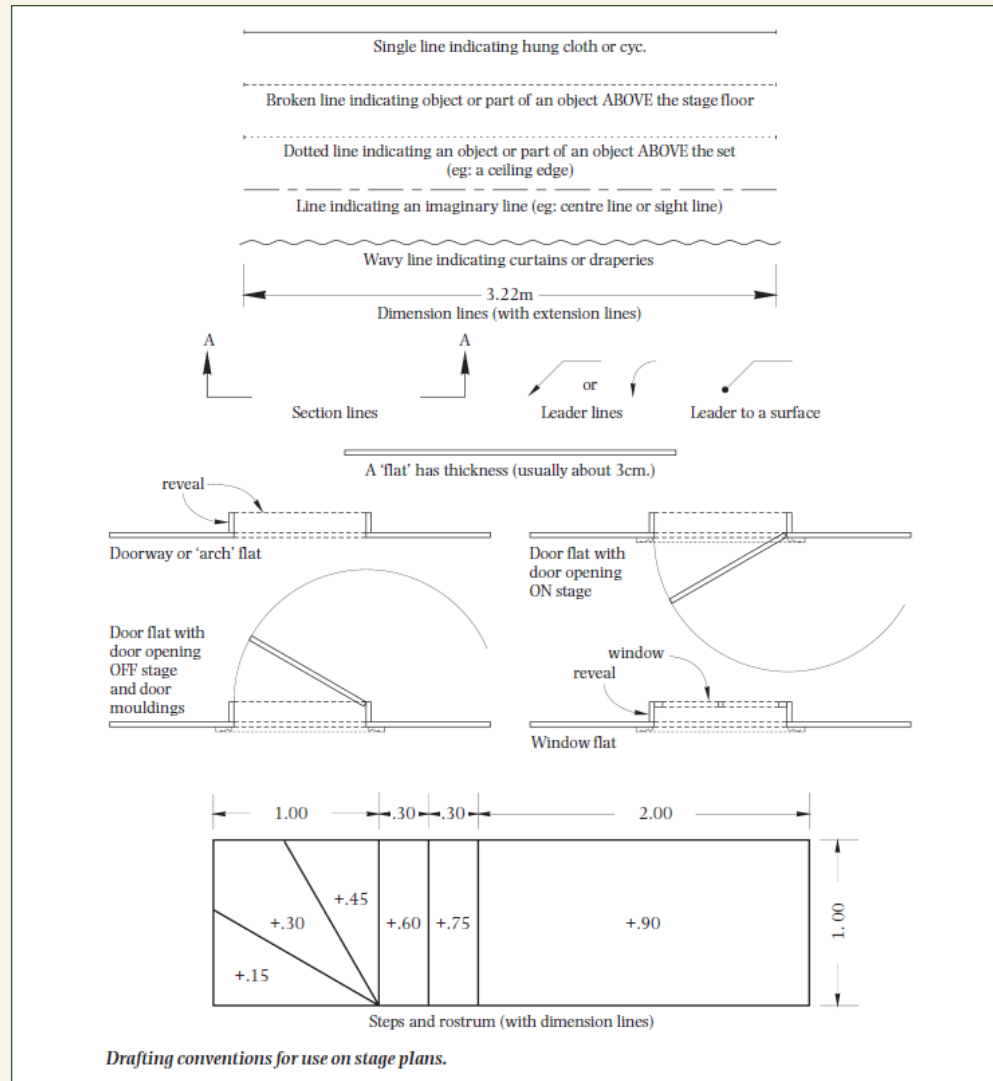
D1. TYPICAL PROSCENIUM STAGE STRUCTURE.



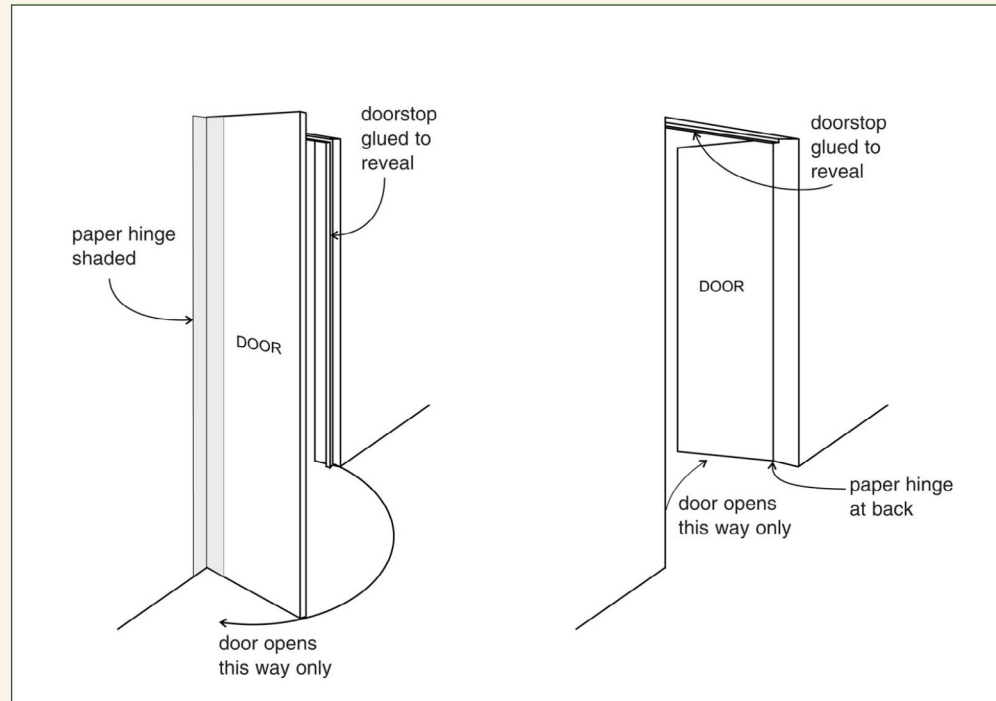
D2. SIGHTLINES.



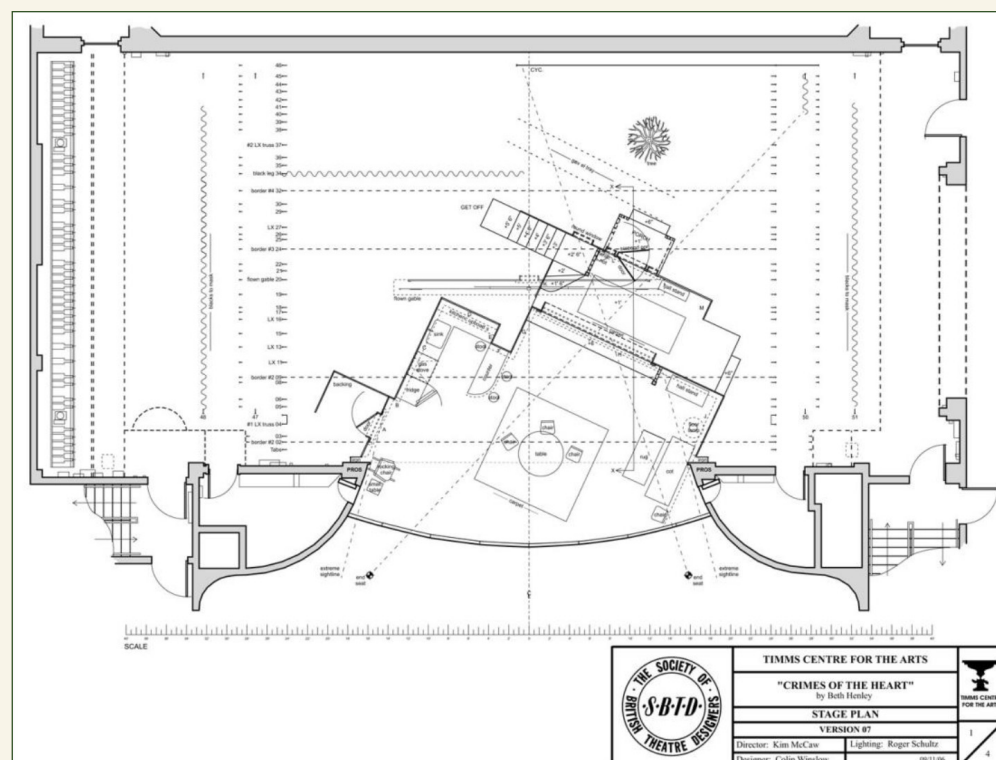
D3. DRAFTING CONVENTIONS.



D4. PAPER HINGE TECHNIQUE FOR DOOR MODELS.



D5. CRIME OF THE HEART STAGE PLAN DRAWING.



APPENDIX E. FULL PROP LIST AND ENTRANCE TRACKING

E1. BLACK COFFEE COFFEE ADDITIONAL AND COSTUME- RELATED PROP LIST.

BLACK COFFEE Prop List						
Prop Items	Qty.	Act	Script Page	Description	Location	Notes
Lucia's Handbag	1	1	8	Small.Coordinated to Lucia's costume.Able to open.	Held by Lucia, left on the settee	
Barbara's Handbag	1	1	14	Small.Coordinated to Lucia's costume.Able to contain small mirror and lipstick	Held by Barbara	
Lipstick	1	1	15	Might be an actual lipstick, similar colour to Barbara's makeup.	In Barbara's Handbag	
Mirror	1	1	15	Small and ornamented	In Barbara's Handbag	
Coffee Tray	1	1	18	Big enough to carry a coffee pot, and a sugar basin.	Tredwell brings the tray in from the dining room.	
Coffee Pot	1	1	18	Has coffee inside	On the tray	
Coffee Cups	6	1	18	Might be some material that is similar to glass or porcelain, but should not break when being dropped.	On the coffee table	Being handled by the character
Magazine	1	1	19	Floppy paper magazine.	On the desk	Richard picked up and went through the magazine.
Basin with Sugar Cubes	1	1	22	Has small tongs or a spoon to pick up the sugar cubes	On the coffee tray	
Key	1	1	23	Metal (brass) key	Kept by Tredwell	
Watch	1	1	23	Male watch	On Sir Claud's wrist	
Envelope	1	1	27	Long, white, empty	Lying on the book table after the blackout	
Key (2nd)	1	1	32	Small, clumsily made	Next to the overturned chair	
Chain with a Bunch of Keys	1	1	32	Brass chain and key, but should be light so they do not make the costume sag.	In Sir Claud's pocket	
Test Tube	1	1	36	Small tube with tight stopper	In Poirot's pocket	
Doctor's Bag	1	2	50	Big enough to fit a small cardboard box.	Held by Dr. Graham	
Cardboard Box	1	2	50	Small but spacious enough to fit a coffee cup, has cotton wool in it	In the doctor's bag	
Rolling Tobacco and Cigarette Box	1	2	57	Small, can contain the cigarette paper only to avoid messiness	In Poirot's pocket	

E2. BLACK COFFEE ENTRANCE AND EXIT FULL LIST.

BLACK COFFEE Entrance and Exit List								
Act	Study	Dining Room	Study	Hall	French Windows	Page No.	Scene Notes	Plan
1	Tredwell	Enter				7		Turns on the light and moves to the desk.
1	Lucia	Enter				8		Stays near the dining room door.
1	Tredwell	Exit				8		
1	Aunt Caroline	Enter				8	Intercepts with Tredwell exiting.	She moves to the settee with Lucia.
1	Richard	Enter				9		He holds the door for Aunt Caroline to exit and moves behind the settee. He moves to the French windows and tries to open them.
1	Aunt Caroline	Exit				10		
1	Aunt Caroline, Barbara	Enter				14		They moves to the settee. Barbara goes to the bookcase and takes the tin box. She puts it on the coffee table.
1	Richard	Exit				14	Intercepts with Aunt Caroline and Barbara.	
1	Tredwell, Raynor	Enter				17		Raynor moves to the coffee table. Tredwell stays nearby the dining door.
1	Carelli, Sir Claud	Enter				17		Sir Claud talks to Tredwell at the door.
1	Tredwell	Exit				17	After talking to Sir Claud	
1	Sir Claud, Raynor			Exit		17		Sir Claud talks to Carelli. Sir Claud and Raynor exit. Carelli moves to the coffee table.
1	Richard, Tredwell	Enter				18	Richard holds the door for Tredwell.	Tredwell puts the coffee tray down to the coffee table. Lucia pours the coffee. Richard takes a coffee cup from Lucia and moves to the book table.
1	Tredwell	Exit				19		
1	Barbara, Aunt Caroline, Carelli					19		Moves to the gramophone.
1	Raynor		Enter			20		
1	Raynor		Exit			20		
1	Raynor		Enter			20		Moves to the coffee table and pick up a coffee for Sir Claud.
1	Richard					20		Put down the coffee and magazine on the book table. Moves to the fireplace. Moves to the gramophone.
1	Raynor					21		Moves to the study. He is stopped by Barbara. He gives the coffee to Richard
1	Richard		Exit			21		Carries Sir Claud's coffee.
1	Richard		Enter			21		Moves to the coffee table and tidies up the tin box.
1	Lucia, Barbara, Raynor, Richard					22		Moves to the hall door.
1	Sir Claud		Enter			22		Moves to the coffee table.
1	Richard					22		Moves to the fireplace.

BLACK COFFEE Entrance and Exit List								
Act	Study	Dining Room	Study	Hall	French Windows	Page No.	Scene Notes	Plan
1	Carelli, Raynor					22		Moves to the desk
1	Aunt Caroline, Barbara					22		Moves to the settee.
1	Lucia, Sir Claud					22		Moves to the book table.
1	Tredwell	Enter				22		
1	Tredwell	Exit				23		
1	Richard					27		Moves to the dining room door.
1	Poirot, Hastings			Enter		27		Poirot moves to the book table.
1	Sir Claud					28		Died.
1	Barbara, Aunt Caroline, Carelli					28		Move to the book table.Barbara and Aunt Caroline go back to the settee.
1	Richard					29		Moves to the desk and picks up the telephone.
1	Poirot					31		Look into the study.
1	Barbara, Raynor, Carelli			Exit		31		
1	Aunt Caroline, Richard, Lucia			Exit		32		Leave the hall door open.Hastings shuts the door.
1	Hastings		Exit			32		
1	Hastings		Enter			32		
1	Tredwell	Enter				33		
1	Tredwell, Poirot, Hastings	Exit				35		Close the door.
1	Lucia			Enter		35		Moves to the book table.
1	Poirot	Enter						Moves to the book table.
1	Lucia			Exit		36		
1	Poirot					36		Moves to the dining room door, opens and shuts it.Hides behind the curtain in French windows.
1	Lucia			Enter		36		Moves to the book table as she watches the dining room door.
1	Richard, Dr. Graham			Enter		36		
1	Lucia			Exit		36	Goes past Richard and Dr. Graham.	Richards and Dr. Graham looks at her as she exits.
1	Poirot, Dr. Graham, Richard					36		Poirot slips from behind the curtain.They shake hand and move to the book table.
2	Hastings, Poirot, Richard	Enter				39		
2	Richard					41		Opens the French windows using the key.
2	Tredwell	Enter				42		
2	Richard, Tredwell			Exit		42		
2	Poirot					43		Moves to the fireplace.
2	Hastings					44		Moves to the desk.
2	Poirot, Hastings					45		Move to the French windows and hide themselves.
2	Barbara			Enter		45		Moves to the bookshelf and take the tin box.
2	Poirot, Hastings, Barbara					45		Moves to the coffee table.

BLACK COFFEE Entrance and Exit List								
Act	Study	Dining Room	Study	Hall	French Windows	Page No.	Scene Notes	Plan
2	Lucia			Enter		46		
2	Lucia			Enter		46		
2	Barbara			Exits		46		
2	Richard, Dr. Graham			Enter		47		Richard holds the hall door for Lucia.
2	Lucia			Exit		48		
2	Richard				Exit	50		The French windows are kept open.
2	Dr. Graham			Exit		51		
2	Tredwell	Enter				51		
2	Tredwell	Exits				51		
2	Carelli	Enter				52		
2	Carelli			Exit		56		
2	Tredwell			Enter		56		
2	Tredwell	Exit				56		
2	Aunt Caroline			Enter		57		Closes the hall door. Moves to the settee with Poirot.
2	Raynor			Enter		63		Moves close to the coffee table.
2	Aunt Caroline			Exit		63		Poirot holds the door for her.
2	Raynor			Exit		65		
2	Lucia			Enter		66		
2	Hastings				Exit	66		
2	Lucia, Poirot					72		Look at the desk.Move to the book table.Poirot moves to the coffee table then moves back to the book table.
2	Tredwell			Enter		75		
3	Poirot, Japp, Hastings, Johnson					77		They stay at the book table talking.
3	Japp, Johnson, Poirot			Exit		78		Poirot follows the other but he pause and signals with Hastings before he leaves. Closes the door.
3	Barbara				Enter	78		
3	Hastings, Barbara					79		Hastings moves to the stage center first, Barbara moves closer to him.
3	Hastings, Barbara				Exit	81		
3	Aunt Caroline	Enter				81		Moves to the settee.
3	Aunt Caroline					82		Moves to the fireplace then returns to the settee.
3	Carelli					83		Moves to the telephone desk.Moves to the coffee table.
3	Aunt Caroline			Exit		84		Carelli opens the door for her.
3	Carelli		Exit			84		Moves to the telephone desk, the moves to the study and exits.
3	Raynor			Enter		84		Moves to the fireplace.
3	Carelli		Enter			85		Moves to the telephone desk.Moves to the coffee table.
3	Raynor			Exit		85		

Act	Study	Dining Room	Study	Hall	French Windows	Page No.	Scene Notes	Plan
3	Poirot, Japp				Enter	85		Poirot stops Carelli at the French windows. Japp holds Carelli when Poirot searches his suitcase.
3	Poirot					86		Moves to the book table.
3	Johnson			Enter		87		
3	Johnson			Exit		87		
3	Poirot					87		Moves to the French windows and stays there as the characters enter.
3	Lucia, Richard, Aunt Caroline, Raynor, Johnson			Enter		87		
3	Barbara, Hastings				Enter	87		
3	Aunt Caroline, Lucia			Exit		91		Johnson Holds the door for them.
3	Barbara, Hastings				Exit	91		
3	Raynor	Exit				91		
3	Carelli, Johnson, Japp			Exit		91		Japp closes the door behind them. Japp exits shortly after.
3	Richard			Exit		94		
3	Barbara				Enter	94		
3	Barbara				Exit	94	Barbara smiles and crosses Hastings.	
3	Hastings				Enter	94		
3	Poirot					97		Moves to the fireplace.
3	Raynor			Enter		98		Moves to the fireplace.
3	Poirot, Hastings					98	They cross Raynor.	Moves to the hall door, the Poirot follows Raynor back to the fireplace.
3	Hastings			Exit		99		
3	Raynor	Exit				100		
3	Raynor	Enter				100	Back with drinks.	
3	Poirot					100		Moves to the hall door, bounce outside and return immediately. Moves back to the book table.
3	Raynor					100		Moves to the dining room door, bounce outside and return immediately. Moves back to the book table.
3	Japp, Johnson				Enter	103		Stop Raynor as he is about to leave.
3	Johnson, Raynor			Exit		105		Johnson escorts Raynor out.
3	Aunt Caroline			Enter		105	Crosses Johnson and Raynor as she enters.	
3	Richard			Enter		105		Holds the door for Aunt Caroline.
3	Aunt Caroline			Exit		105		
3	Barbara				Enter	105		
3	Japp			Exit		105		Takes the glass from Hastings.
3	Barbara, Hastings				Exit	106		Poirot escorts them to the French window.
3	Lucia			Enter		106		
3	Lucia					107		Moves to the fireplace.
3	Lucia, Richard				Exit	108		Poirot calls after them.
3	Poirot					108		Moves to the fireplace and touches the vase of tapers.

APPENDIX F. Visual Research and Moodboard

F1. ATHENAEUM CLUB IN LONDON.



F2. NOISES OFF SET DESIGN BY PAUL BRIGGS.

