Process workbook

Principles of design

Use of AI statement

I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

Introduction to design

Task; choose a genre, choose a show/film under that genre, choose a character from that production and merge their name with your own.
My choices; fantasy, His Dark Materials, Lee Scoresby
I combined my name with Lee Scoresby to create the name Gill Scoresby which I then recreated with letters found around campus to create a ‘fantasy font’;
the majority of the font was constructed from natural objects like branches and flowers. I really enjoyed this task and searching for symbols within the natural world. I find myself drawn to nature and find an interest within the fantastical aspects of the world around us, therefore I found this task invigorating as I had an opportunity to scratch this itch. Attached below is a picture of this final product.

Gill Scoresby

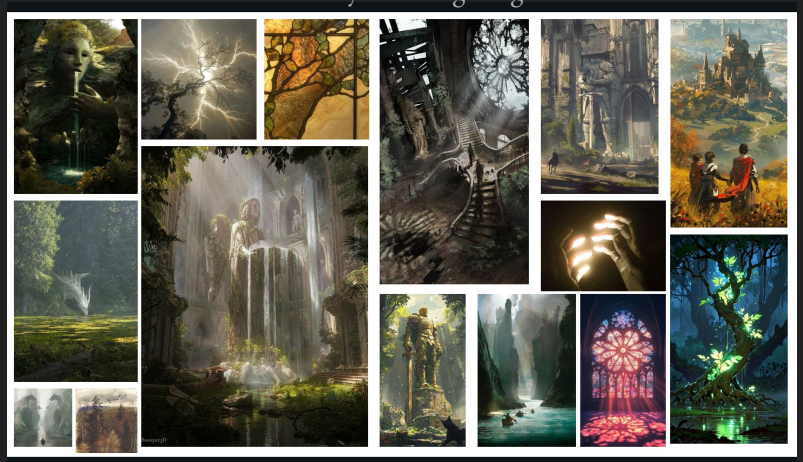


Come on
Hopping fences we ran, sipping swigs of our cans
Can you pass me the lighter, mate? Give me your fire
Filming shit on that camera you nicked (it's my dad's)
We can both barely stand
Over hedges, we'd headlong (we hear)
And on ledges, we'd land (our legends)
From every height I'd fall, I'd call (we hear them, they call)
I'd reach out for your hand, you sing
If I have to be who I was (you're not)
Do I have to be who I am?
Didn't the trees tell us their stories?
Yeah, but we, we called them all liars
And they said, "Come down now"
But we climbed so
High, high into the night
I look at those secret worlds you call eyes
And wonder if we might
There's something changed (there's something weaved)
The leaves like broken shards of stained glass (into our)
Windows, oh, shining in your light
You were a king and his castle, I was every dirty rascal
If you asked me for my lighter mate, I gave you my fire
I'd call as you climbed
And I'd catch you every time you fell
'Cause I will suffer silence for the strings you tune
And I'll withstand what's written for the writer in you
Write me well, my love, write me weird
Write me willing, write me well

Task: choose lyrics - think about the storytelling & condensed imagery, bring in the track and lyrics, develop a picture library of condensed imagery.

Song chosen; Secret worlds by The Amazing Devil

I absolutely adore this song and I find I am more drawn to songs with a fairytale aspect where they seem to tell a story; this song specifically tells the story of two people who are so deeply in love they find a fantasy within the embrace of each others affection which then constructs this fantasy tale that I have attempted to capture within this moodboard; or at least the thoughts and feelings that come to mind as I listen to this absolutely stunning song of love and adventure.



Didn't the trees tell us their stories?
Yeah, but we, we thought you were mental
You were talking to trees
And they said, "Come down now"
But we climbed so
High, high into the night
I look at those secret worlds you call eyes
And wonder if we might
There's something changed (there's something weaved)
The leaves like broken shards of stained glass (into our)
Windows, oh, high
And on that tree, I'll carve your name
'Cause in years to come, we both know we won't be the same
You asked me to climb, I never learned
But if you ask me for my fire
Just watch me, just watch me
Just watch me burn
Just watch me burn, oh-oh
There's something changed (there's something weaved)
The leaves like broken shards of stained glass (into our)
Windows, oh
'Cause we climbed so high
We climbed so high, oh
There's something changed (there's something weaved)
The leaves like broken shards of stained glass (into our hearts, into our)
Windows, oh, shining, shining
oh

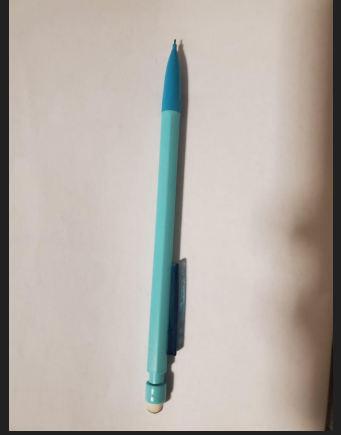
Model making tools and materials



Craft blade



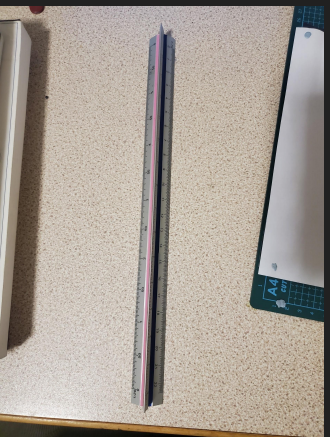
Metal ruler



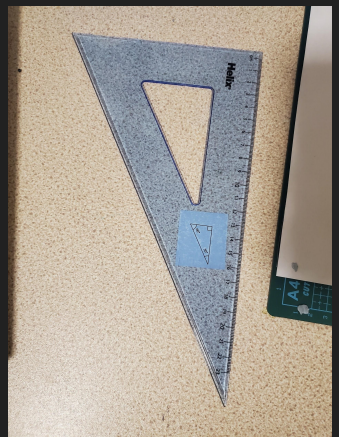
Mechanical pencil

- Mountboard
- Foamed PVC sheet
- KAPA line foamboard
- Foamboard/Polyboard
- Styrofoam
- Ticketcard
- Stencil paper
- Specialty paper
- Acetate sheeting

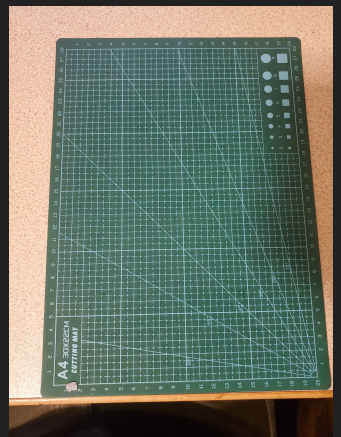
Scale ruler

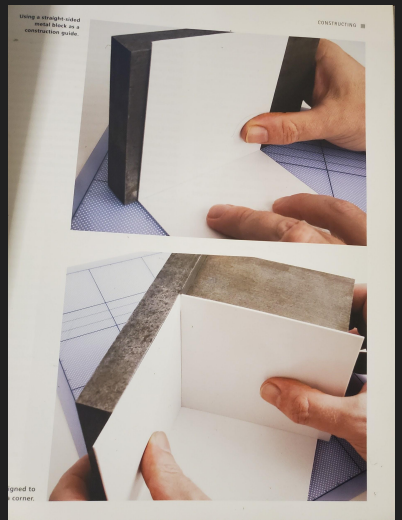


Set square/triangle

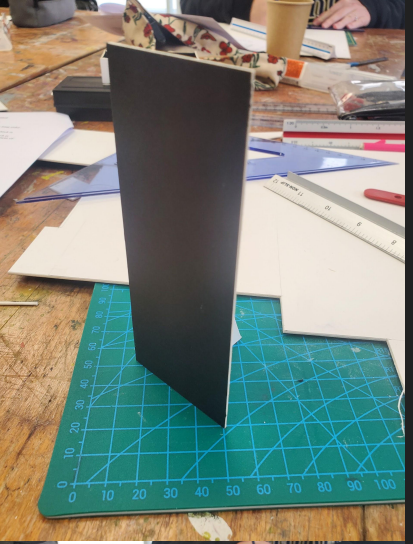


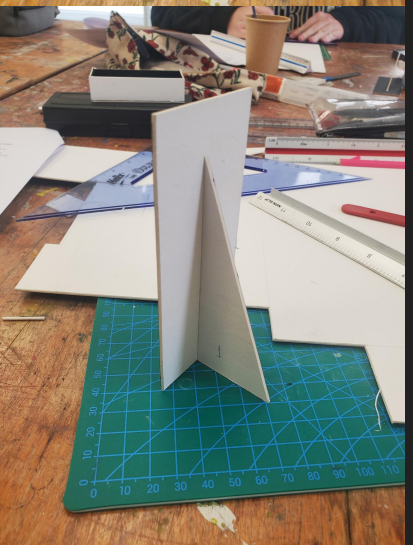
Cutting mat





(David Neat 2008)

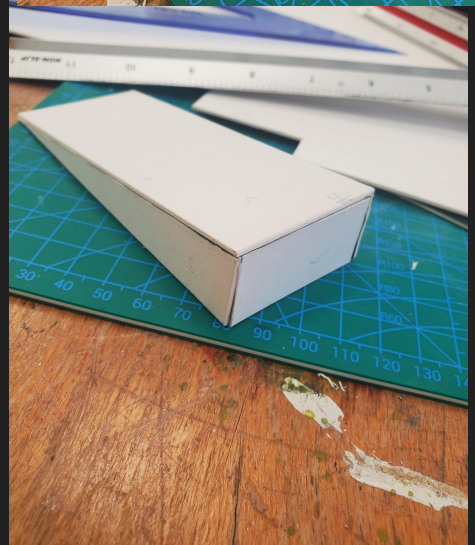


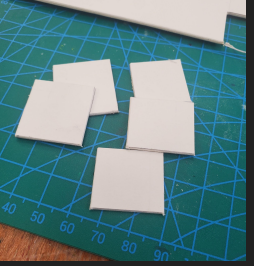
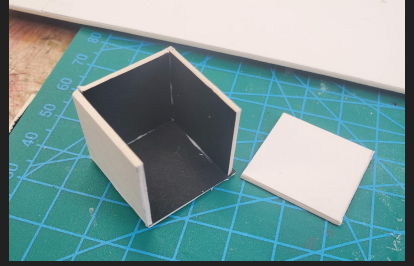
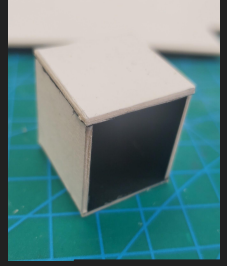
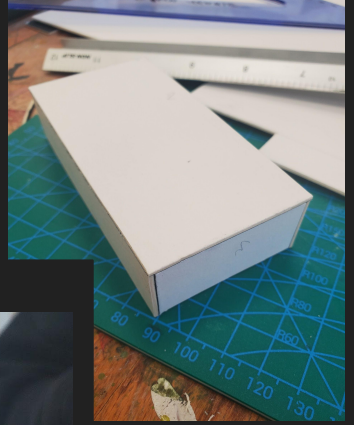


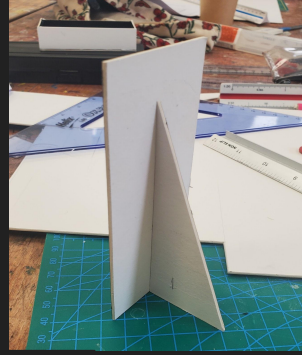
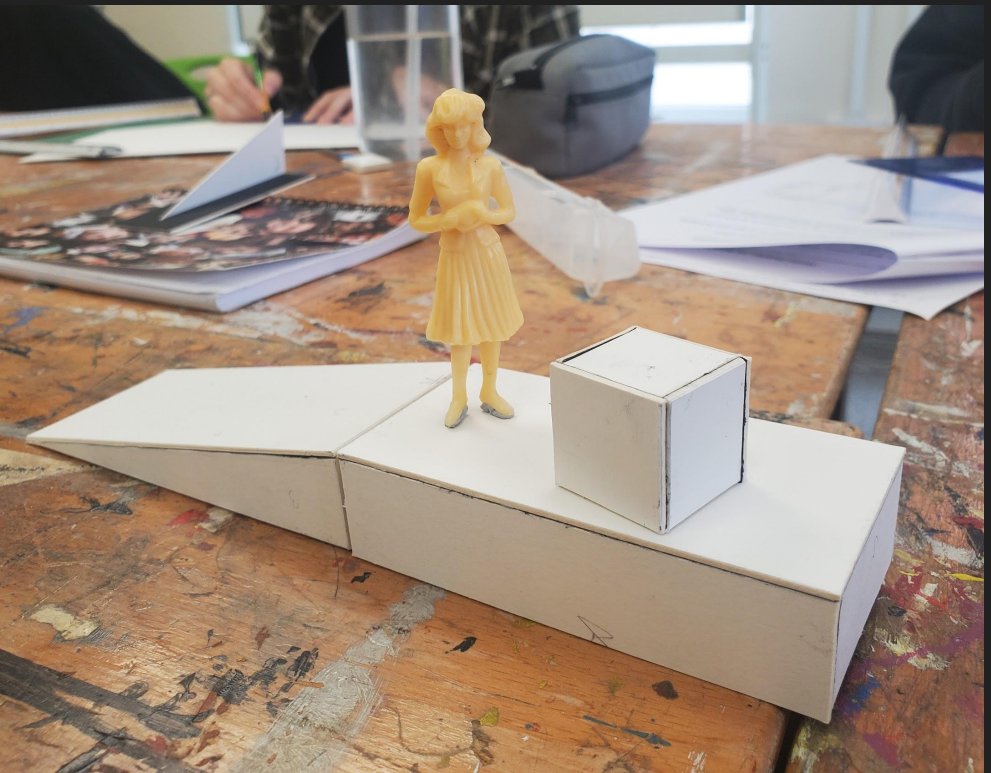
Building simple forms

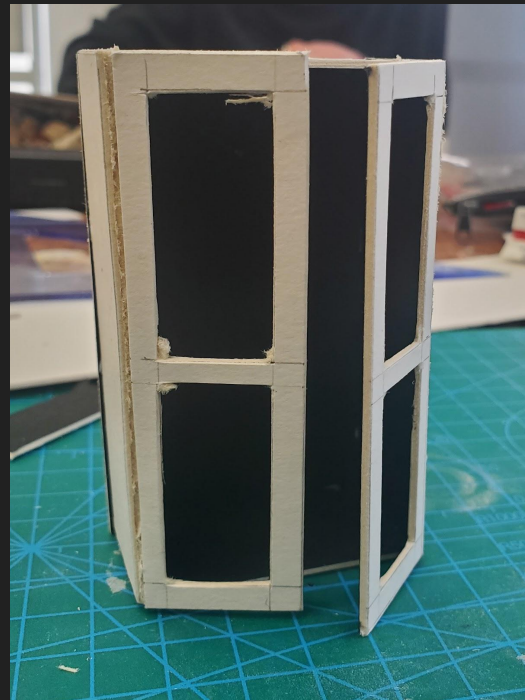
Working with 1:25 scale to create flats and ramps, ensuring that the scale remains prevalent and coordinated. As an introduction to this craft we used mountboard, however, *"the best rule of thumb is to use what you can find and what works best for you"* *(Lynn Pecktal 1995)* we started with simple forms to build up our skill and understanding; building flats, ramps, blocks and levels and using PVA glue to fasten them together. What I struggled more with this task was the strict rule to stay within the scale and retain accuracy down to the milemetere; my work is often not so carefully thought out as I prefer to jump straight into a task, often without carefully planning out my exact intentions and proportions, this talk allowed me to improve these skills and think carefully before I construct.







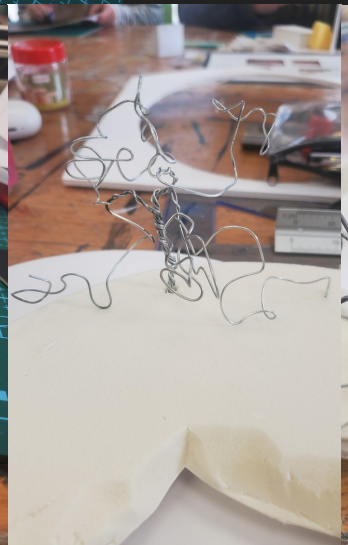
‘Shipwreck’

The idea of this module was to give us an introduction into using materials for model making. The prompt was shipwreck so I built a spaceship wreck out of card, sponge, floral wire, tissue, mount board, KAPA line foamboard, and ticketcard.
I enjoyed constructing the trees out of a combination of floral wire and tissue paper to create the texture of the branches, I also really enjoyed carving the foam to construct the illusion of a natural environment. The model itself is mounted on a circular foamed PVC sheet with PVA glue used to fix everything to the base. One of the challenges of this model was that we had to place a model staircase somewhere in the model and I chose to use them not as stairs but as a ‘spoiler’ on the back of the ship. For this, we were given a technical drawing to cut out and implement, but I didn't want to follow this linear rule and decided to model my own stairs in a differing proportion to the original technical drawings.















Model painting





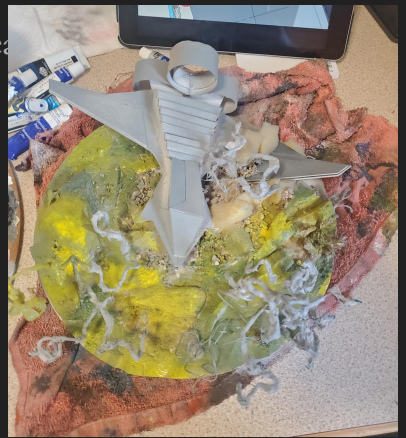




The model was first spray primed with white and grey to create a base coat for the colour to sit on. The colours we could use were limited to two prime colours, therefore I chose blue and yellow; I knew I could create a nice natural feel with the crea and yellows that I could mix.









To reiterate the naturalistic feel I wanted to create, I formed texture through the foamboard by pressing different tools such as the rounded and of a pen intro its surface and late inserted clumps of string to give the illusion of grass and uneven land. Additionally I used materials such as sand and wood chips to scatter across the surface and build the illusion of this field/bog that the ship has crashed into; using sponge ‘rocks’ to tear up the ground around the ship's wake.





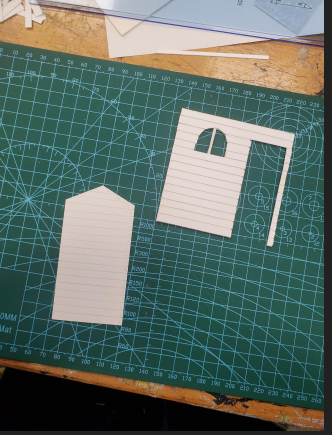


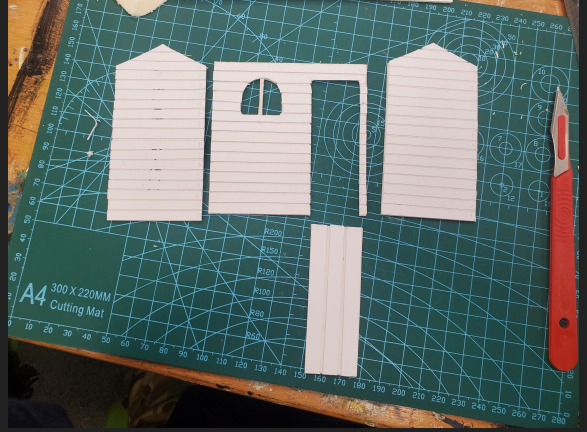




Finished piece







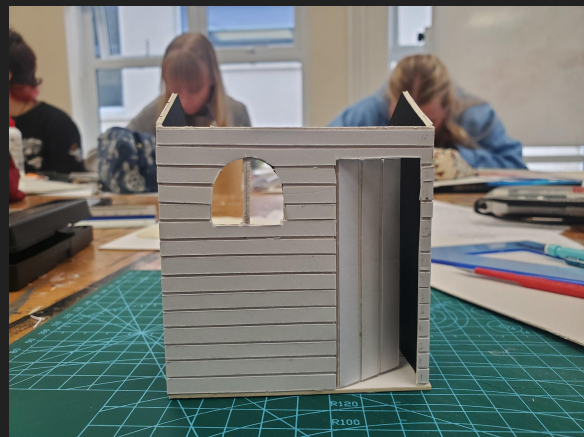
Constructing a model shed



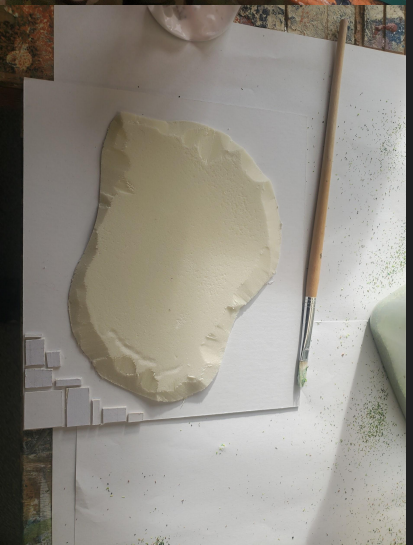


We were instructed to construct a shed model from one of the shows designed by our lecturer Beth Tearle, I was very impressed by her work as she showed us how she first created this scale model of a shed with interactive features; such as its ability to transform into different areas for different scenes of the play, later showing us the finished final show piece within the stage and how the impact of a scale model is pivotal to work out the objects purpose and intentions.

We were given scale drawings to work from that depicted the size we would have to construct each portion of the shed. I began by cutting the three faces out of card before cutting the finer details such as windows and doors. After that I cut thin strips of card and using pritt stick I stuck then onto each face to give the illusion of wooden slats. I cut the strips for the door vertical as opposed to horizontal then attached the door by gluing a strip of masking tape so that it is able to open and close. I then glued the faces together onto the base. The last thing I did was construct the roof; I first cut down a piece of card to the size I wanted before glueing sandpaper to give it texture and sticking it on using pva glue. The shed, with all things we have constructed thus far was in a 25 scale, which I believe is a good and comfortable scale to be working in when it comes to constructing sets for theatre.





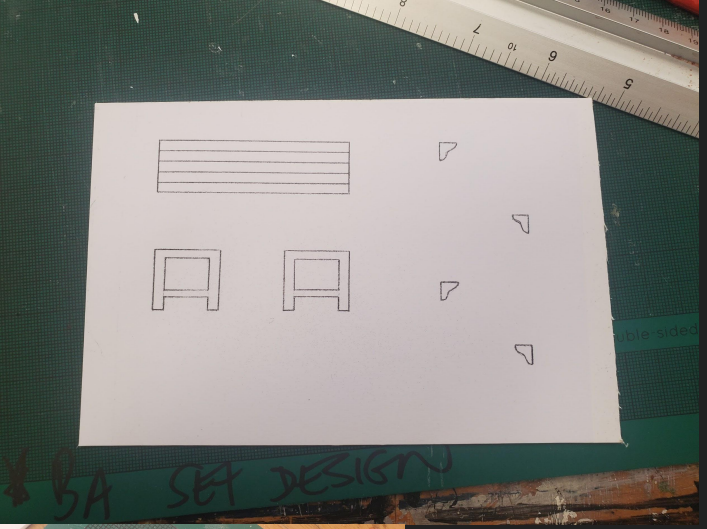


Constructing the base

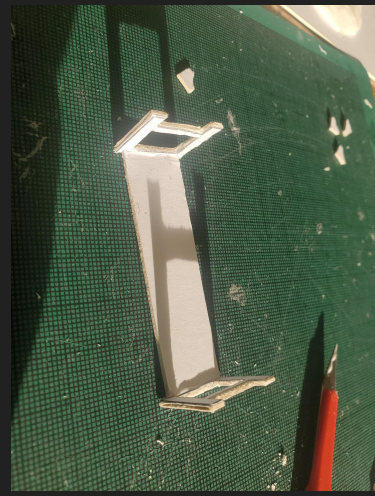
As part of the task we had to construct the environment of the garden; I used thick foam board to cut out a stand for the shed to sit on before gluing it onto a board. I used some scrap card to create tiles in the corner then used shredded cork and dyed wood chip -commonly used in modelmaking- to create the illusion of grass and mud. The first layer I made using these scatter materials turned out to be rather patchy and unsavoury to look at so after painting the base to give it a little more depth I redid the wood chip and cork to give it extra detailing. Overall the collective model of the stage, shed and bench wasn't overly big, but contained enough space and detail to be able to perform a good piece of theatre. I also later constructed a fence using lollipop sticks stuck together which I then painted, and a brick wall from foam that I scored with a blunt tool to give the illusion of brickwork.

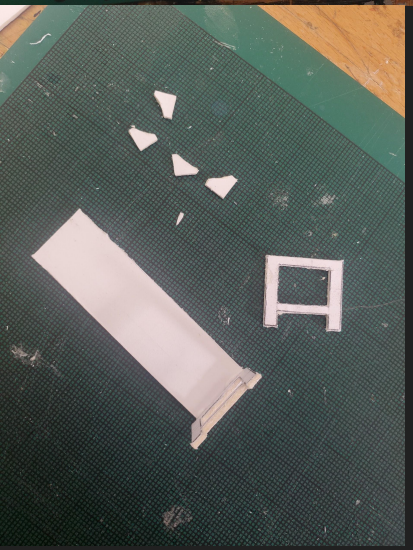




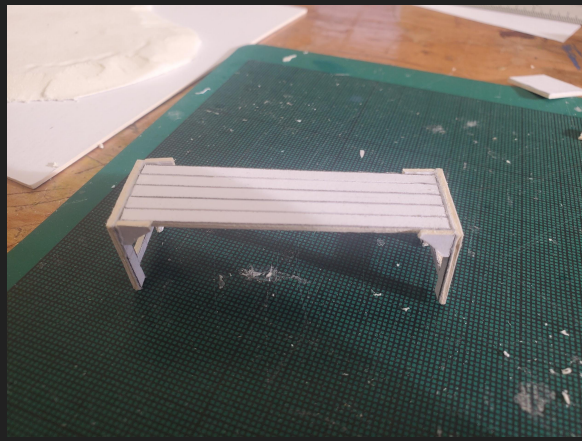


Constructing the bench

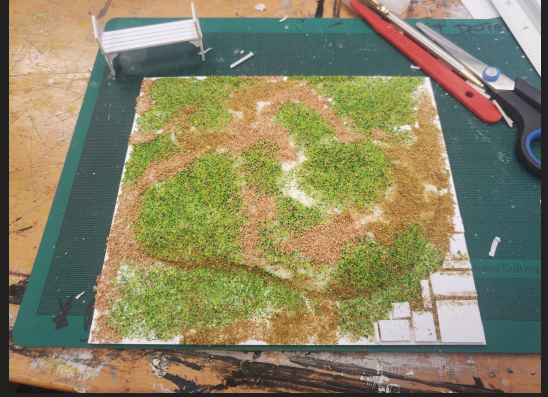




Another challenge we were faced with was constructing a bench to go alongside the shed; we were given a technical drawing to dissect then glued them together with pva. I also created handles for my bench just to make it a little more interesting, I also scored into the seat of the bench with my craft knife to give the illusion of wood. I did really enjoy constructing this bench but overall I preferred the construction of the shed itself. I painted this bench with dark browns and dry brushed it with a pale brown to give it the illusion of wood texture.














SET DESIGN



How to create effective moodboards

Nora Helmer







'A long variegated shawl.'
'She is in an Italian costume with a large black shawl around her.'





1880s Italian fashion was characterized by a slender, angular silhouette, especially for women, with heavy decoration like ruffles, pleats, and lace.



Typical wealthy woman in the year 1879, dress inspired by late 19th century fashion.









Green typically represents wealth, however, is not as expensive of a material as purple or red. Additionally it can represent envy, luck, and inexperience. I would adorn her dress with lace and intricate detailing but constructed from cheaper materials such as silk organsa cotton, white linen, white lace and green silk.











Look back in anger

'The scene is a fairly large attic room, at the top of a large Victorian house. The ceiling slopes does quite sharply from L to R. Down R are two small low windows.'
'Light comes through it from a skylight beyond.'

'Standing L, below the food cupboard, is Alison. She is learning over an ironing board, beside her is a pile of clothes.'

I would have the key colour combination be warm oranges and teal to create a divided but complementary atmosphere; they seem disjointed ans out of place but somehow matcher to create a garish tone through contrast of warmth and coldness.

I would achieve the theme through creative lighting with gels and warm floods.































Appropriate furniture of trendy 1950s interior design; greens and oranges and curved stylish countertops.

Moodboard analysis

We were instructed to pick one location and one character previously explored in our lectures with James. I chose Nora Helmer and the flat from look back in anger. The main reasons I chose these was simply because I had already drawn sketches based on researched historical influences and colour schemes. For Nora I looked deeper into how I would want to present her character throughs my production moodboard; looking into the fashion interests of woman for that time period, taking into account her financial standing I looked at materials she might use and hairstyles she might have based upon her class and the stage directions in the script.

On the other hand, with the set for look back in anger I focused primarily on colour. I am a huge fan of the colour combinations of teal and orange and I thought this would work well for the set of this performance as it van represent the divided harmony between the characters. I also looked into the internal design of kitchen from the 1950s and period-accurate pieces of furniture such as the ironing board and chair. Overall I really enjoyed this task and felt that I produced successful moodboard thats pleasing to the eye, I really enjoyed experimenting with positions and sizes to display priority among the photos; for example i put my sketches in large images in the centre to display that they are more relevant than the other photos within the mood board.















The original re-enactors market

Torm is a large festival that takes place twice a year in coventry, vendors will sell recreated props following the methods that were mastered from different centuries and cultures of the common era; 0CE all the way to the 21st century. I took a special interest to the medieval weaponry- swords, longbows, wasters, spears, ect that have been crafted specifically for reenactment purposes. Additionally there were weapons made for display purposes as opposed to reenactment purposes; shap metal swords, bows and guns, made using the same methodology as the period they were used.

I found this was a very interesting and fantastic experience in which my knowledge and appreciation for medieval style props and costumes was expanded. I especially found interest in the metal jewelry stalls; copper rings, old necklaces and specifically victorian style fob watches caught my eye for their stunning beauty and detailing.

The seven steps of design

Step 1- commitremnet
Step 2- analysis:
- First read through - general understanding
- Second read through - moments that stimulate imagination - note everything
- Third read through - mechanical information - scene changes

Step 3- research:
- Social and cultural history
- Conceptual - don't look at other versions first
- Understand the world and culture that the show is affected by
- atmosphere

Step 4- incubation
- allow time for your ideas to grow
- Take a break and give yourself time to rest

Step 5- selection
- Take all ideas and make the best choice for the production

Step 6- implementation
- Create the stuff

Step 7- evaluation
- Personal or company level
- Take the criticism

1. What is the plot?
2. What is the theme?
3. What is the logic?
4. What is the exposition?
5. What is the complication?
6. What creates the tension?
7. What is the main action?
8. What is the main question
9. What is the cause of action?
10. What is the resulting action?
11. What is the conclusion?
12. Who is the protagonist?
13. Who is the antagonist?
14. Who is the most interesting character?
15. Where does the story take place?

Implementing the seven steps of design - since this lesson I've been attempting to use the seven steps, for example in our group work for 'Robot boy' within our planning we specifically set time aside to implement each element of the seven steps.

Designers

'The stage is a fictional universe, a neutral space for imagined places'

Adolf Appia 1862-1927
- Swiss architect and ser designer
- Rejected 2D sets
- Focused on colour and lighting

Edward Gordon Craig 1862-1966
- Actor, director and designer
- Did away with traditional footlights
- Rigged lights
- 3 dimensions on stage

Caspar Neher 1897-1962
- Links to Brecht
- Drama and opera
- Abstract approach to work
- Playground elements

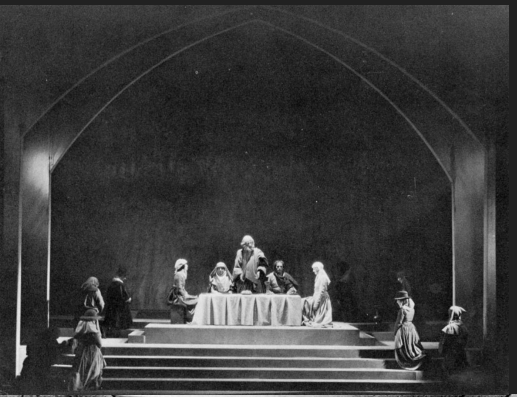
Josef svoboda 1920-2002
- Designer and director
- Modern/abstract
- Key lighting

Meyerhold 1874-1940
- Russian and soviet theatre director and actor and theatrical producer
- Shape, texture, levels, colour and light

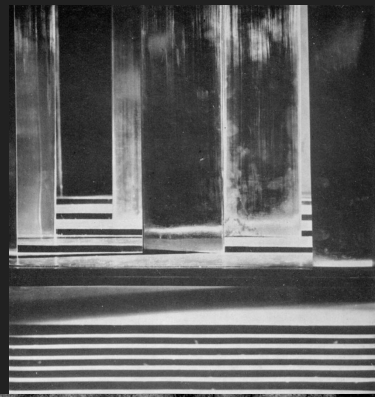
Julie Teymor 1952- present
- Playwright, puppeteer and edesigner
- Lighting

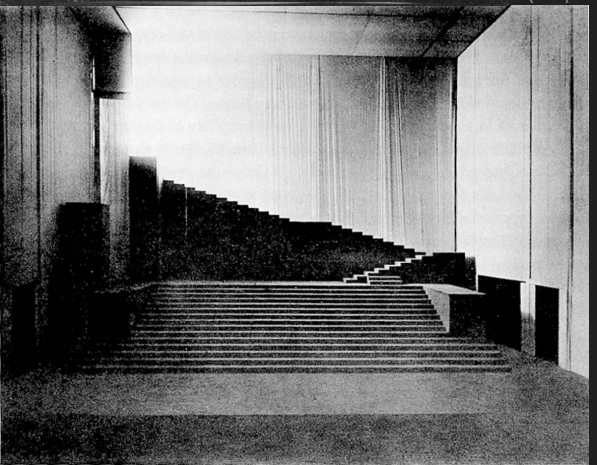
George Tsypin 1954-present
- Festivals
- Abstract
- Light
- perspective

Adolf Appia

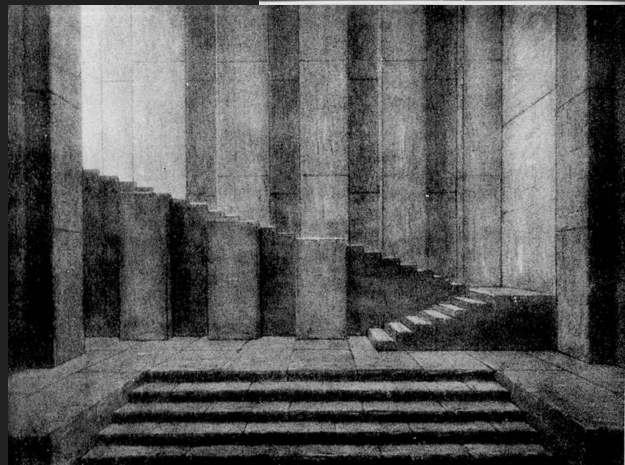


"Adolphe Appia, (1862-1928) was a Swiss architect, stage designer and theorist of stage lighting and décor. His theories and realized works transformed the practice of stage design and he had a great influence on the development of performing arts.
His sets and his drawings didn't look for pictorial realism, their intent was rather to create and underline a believable mood for each scene. Symbols and metaphors prevailed over literal descriptions, as in the representation of trees. The actors and the script were of equal importance than scenery: for Appia, the four basic scenic elements were: Painted Scenery (Vertical); Spatial Arrangement (Floor); the Actor; the Light.
"Inclusion of the Actor as a scenic element creates a completely new focus with resonance in modernism".
The practice of lighting was completely redefined: Appia distinguished between diffused light (allowing visible scenery) and concentrated light (modelling form), believed in the ability of light to be structural, fluid, plastic and "motivated", eliminated footlights and even created novel lighting positions.
His influence was vast and lasting, and was mainly due to his drawings, more than his actual productions."
(Adolphe Appia Drawings and Productions 2024)





I am a fan of how Appias work redefined staging design, especially at a time where tradition and keeping to the book was everything. I enjoy people who think outside the box, especially when it comes to breaking the mold for art; unlike other artists, Appia uses a more abstract styling to create the illusion of a stage design and was a new strategic experience for people of the time.
I personally like his use of stairs used to break up the stage and create diversity on a usually boring set, I am also a fan of his use of optical illusions; I love a bit of stage magic and tricking the audience through set illusions and perspective so his work does really interest me.

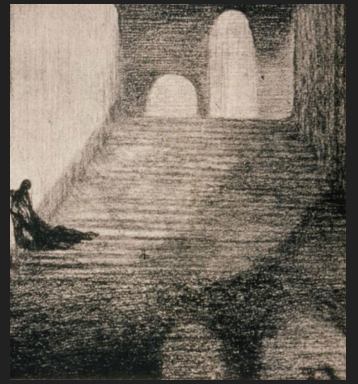


Edward Gordon Craig

"Appia emphasized the unification of vertical scenery, horizontal floors, moving actors, and lighting, while Craig advocated for a symbolic approach to theatre that transcended realism." *(Adolphe Appia and Edward Gordon Craig)*

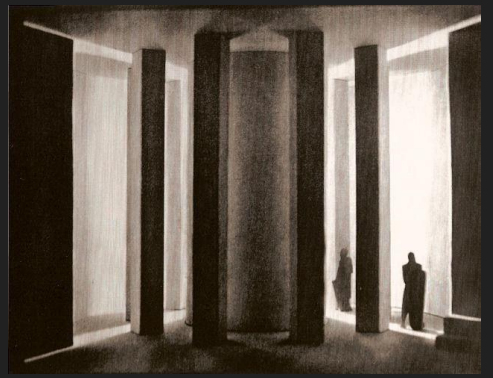


"Similar to Adolph Appia in his struggle against the reproduction of reality, Craig envisaged scenic environments designed to appeal to the emotion through visual suggestion, evocation and symbolist aesthetics. Without actually meeting until 1914, the two shared and promoted similar ideas on the use of light and stage space: Craig used to lit the stage from above, rather than adopting the traditional foot lighting. Colour and shadow played a strong role in his sets: "*Under the play of this light, the background becomes a deep shimmering blue, apparently almost translucent, upon which the green and purple make a harmony of great richness.*" (Craig in Bablet, 1981)." (Dennis Bablet 2025)





I can clearly see the influence Appia had on Craig and his works signature style, specifically the geometric structures; the pillars used in shakespeare macbeth in which he designed the set the use of pillar is very abnormal for plays of that time period and he again effectively breaks boundaries set by his predecessors in the set design industry. I am not as big a fan of his work than I am of Appias work because I feel Craigs work has an uncanny feeling to it; this isn't exactly helped by the black and white imagery but it gives his work a certain dignity and atmosphere. However, I do love his use of expressive and dramatic tone within his drawings to create this dark- deep feel to his drawings. You can really see the passion he felt in how work and how he created these incredible designs with effective shadow and light though craphite, charcoal and dark mediums.



Caspar Neher



Neher was famously an old school friend of Brecht and spent much of their formative years together, later Neher became a writer. However, after having entered the Munich Academy in 1919, he became a stage designer, establishing himself in the theatre and, from 1927, in opera. “He worked regularly with Brecht at the Kammerspiele in Munich, before the pair moved from Bavaria to Berlin in 1924. Bertolt Brecht called Caspar Neher (1897-1962) the "greatest stage designer of our times" (Gavin Plumley 2017)

I am a big fan of Nehers work, especially his work with colour and how his art style utilises colour theory. The work I found of his sketches, both for his costume design and stage designs are made on cream paper which creates a harmony between the tones and lighting and creates the illusion of warmer colours. I love using colour theory in my own work, and I’ve found that when choosing the background for what you are paining the sketches on is key for how the colours are presented, this changes the whole atmosphere of the piece, this is especially useful when creating set designs but i also love the way he does costume; his simple shading techniques are very effective gotr creating the illusion of texture.

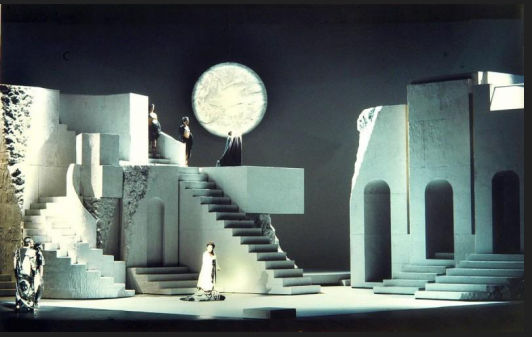




A lot of his work looks like it is designed from layering watercolour on paper, creatively building shadows and lighting effects with the colours he used; effectively using contrast to generate the idea of lighting, form and figure, and while his designs dont have explicitly clear objects, they have abstract explosions of shape and colour which create the illusion of understanding of depth and light; the viewer can clearly see the vision that he has within his work and the aesthetics he wanted to present.



Josef svoboda

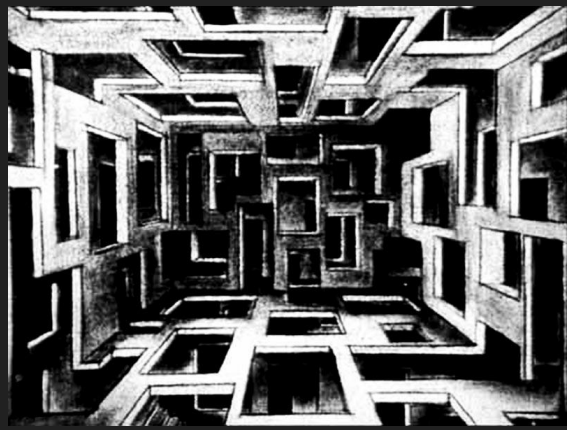




"Born in Cáslav, a small town 50 miles from Prague, Svoboda studied art history and then architecture, before designing his first production in 1943. Visionary designers like Edward Gordon Craig and Adolphe Appia were great influences; also a generation of Czech designers who shared Svoboda's architectural background. Playfulness characterised his first Prague productions, making Tales Of Hoffmann (1946) a surrealist riot: a heroine suspended in a sphere above the stage, her gown falling to the floor and drawn by a funeral wagon and rocking horse. Svoboda's stage design works very creatively outside the box, effectively utilising shadow as a key element within his staging designs; using it to depict different storylines or characters though the effective use of puppetry and creative thinking." (the guardian 2002)

I enjoy looking through and exploring Svoboda's work and I do think that in the time period he's from, his work is extremely innovative and unique; I love his use of shadow and colour representation.

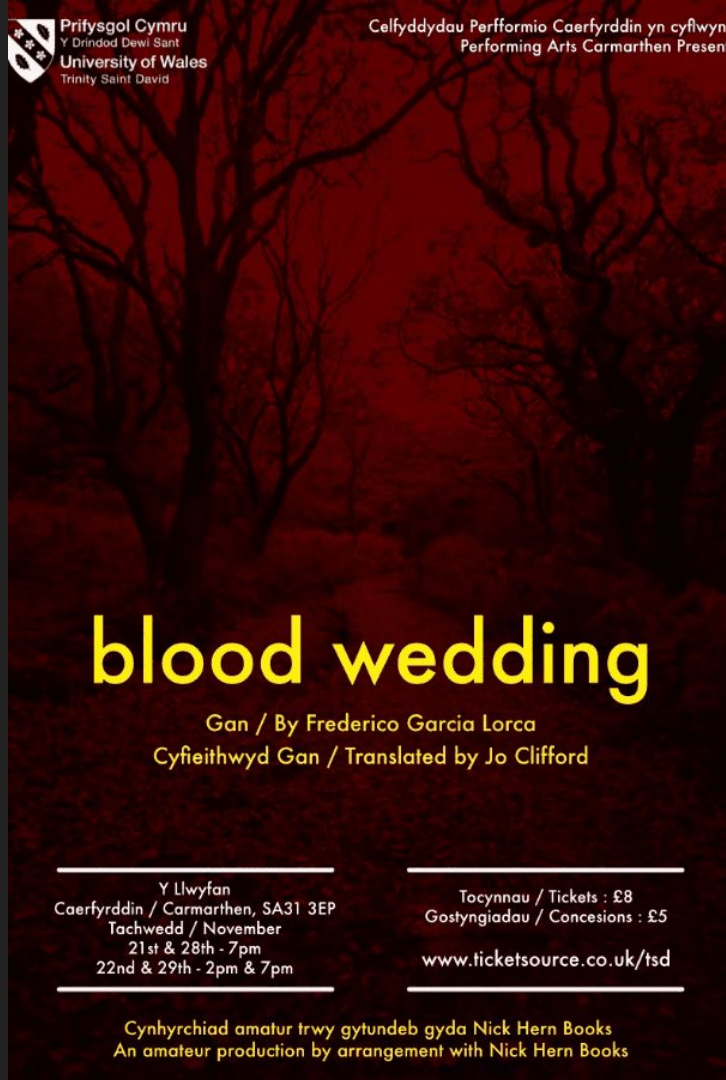




Blood wedding

I was lucky enough to take the opportunity to watch blood wedding, staring third year actors and set designers. The show was incredibly moving and provoking, taking creative liberties which enhanced our experience as the audience; interacting with us and acting between us. They focused on challenging our five senses with lights, sounds and touch; performing acts such as interacting with audience, intertwining among us, using lighting to create an unnerving atmostphone and sound to provoke our sense of environment.

I found the set design very interesting; while in the first and second act they had the audience positioned in the round on wedding tables within the stage, with the main table housing the technicians booth, the third act changed the stage all together; forcing the audience to stand within white plastic sheeting that bordered white fabric that emerged from tree stumps positioned around the paved floor of centre stage that was rimmed by woodchip. I personally loved this unique choice of staging because it forced the audience out of their comfort zone and provoked a strange emotion that you don't usually experience watching shows of this nature. The use of woodchip alloso ment that the stage had this 'muddy' feel to it without needing to use any mud; meaning when it came to resetting the sage or cleaning up it was much easier to do.



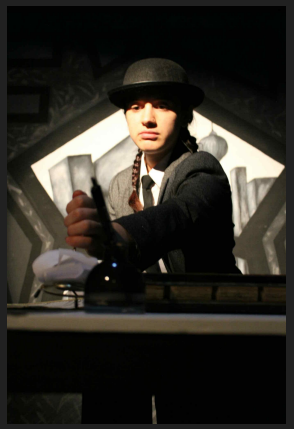






2nd years presentations

We got to watch the 2nd years presentation shows where they talked us through their creative process and construction for an extract of script they were given. They gave us in-depth analysis of their research and inspirations from their theme; german expressionism and how their ideas formed and adapted based upon this. In their extract, their character has just discovered that he is getting replaced by a number machine and the 2nd years were inspired by the climactic scene from inside out two and decided to turn their scene into an anxiety attack, as such, the set panel in the centre of their set would move and change, spinning around on a metal frame to give us the idea of the room spinning. I absolutely loved this idea and found it extremely innovative, especially with how they problems solved around the difficult elements of the set despite the issues they faced. I also love the way they decorated their set as I am a big fan of german expressionism as a movement and artform. My favourite part of this presentation was definitely the spinning flat but I also loved the table and its warped perspective.









War horse

“The horse puppets, especially Joey and Topthorn, are life-sized, measuring about 8 feet long and 10 feet tall. Each horse puppet used in the stage play is constructed in the same way, and are designed specifically to be lightweight, each weighing around 40-50 kg (88-110 lbs). The puppets are made primarily from cane, aluminium, leather, and mesh to achieve this balance. The original horse puppet now lives at the Young V&A museum in Bethnal Green, London.
Every detail of the puppets was carefully designed to replicate the movements and behaviour of real horses. The joints, heads, and tails are designed to move naturally. The puppeteers control small movements like the flick of an ear, the swish of a tail, or the rise and fall of the horse’s chest as it breathes, making the horses feel incredibly lifelike. Handspring company hired horse experts and later the actors were trained by movement coaches in order to perfectly capture this incredible illusion of a horse on stage.” (mused 2025)

Designed by the incredible handspring company, the puppets conducted for the stage play of war horse were expertly crafted to bring the character of Joey to life. I was lucky enough to watch this performance live in the Bristol Hippodrome and I was blown away by the artistry of this incredible play; the skill and expertise between the directors Tom Morris and Marianna Elliott created an absolutely stunning experience, combining both heartfelt storytelling and expert design features to create a relationship between both the audience and the characters on stage.

The way the puppets are expertly maneuvered creates a beautiful illusion of a real animal dancing over the stage and interacting with each character with such character.
“The puppet itself has been split into three major roles; the head, the heart and the hind and each role has an emotional indicator to reflect the horse's mood- the ears, chest and tail, with their own articulate movement to display how it interacts with the world around it - giving it the effective movement of a real horse. Each puppeteer has been directed by a movement director who instructs the expert operation to ensure the horse mimics the natural movement of a living breathing horse.” (Gilly Branson 2024)

As well as the incredible construction of the horse puppets, I also loved the set design; with a large fabric draped over the back of the stage with a ripped texture to give the illusion of a scrap of paper. This was often used to project old sketches and peoples upon, written and draw by soldiers during the war to reflect the individuals that lost their lives during the war.







Wake the tiger

“Wake the tigers out-of-this-world experience is self-guided, walk through a labyrinth an exploration which begins in an abandoned paint factory before journeying into the Dream Factory and finally transcending into the OUTERverse.” (Wake The Tiger Amazement Park, n.d.)
I am a huge fan of wake the tiger and I am interested in possibly even working there when I graduate university. Wake the tiger is the world's first ‘amusement park’ and is the uk’s biggest immersive experience, taking place in a large warehouse, visitors are encouraged to interact with the set as the follow the storyline through multiple stories of fantasy packed labyrinths of fascination. Each room has a unique fantasy feel, taking inspiration from the world around them and reusing old broken items from the ‘real world’, wake the tiger seeks to “ensure a sustainable future. Whether you're young or old at heart, wake the tiger offers an unforgettable experience that will amaze and inspire.” (Wake The Tiger Amazement Park, n.d.)



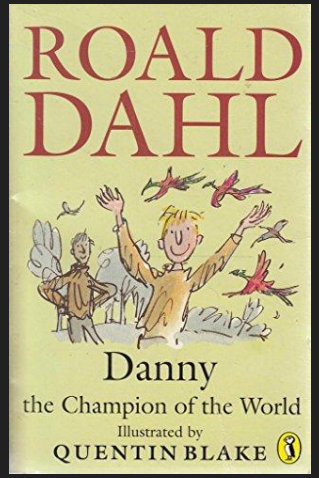




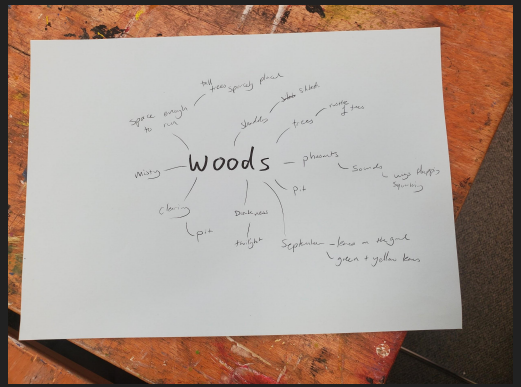
Wake the tiger uses set, lighting and sound in conjunction, just like a theatre performance, however, unlike a theatre performance, Wake the tiger steps back and allows the viewer to determine the story as if they are walking through their own self guided fantasy where they are the main character.



Table read; Danny the champion of the world



As a class we learnt how to professionally do a table read; we each took on a character and went about analysing each page, highlighting each important line or stage direction that gives us any idea of how the set is presented and any props involved. We also used this method to study lighting, sound and any design elements that could be of any importance. From this analysis we began to form ideas of what each scene looked like, sounded like and how much lighting was involved. We created mindmaps inspired by this of each set, pulling out key quotes of stage direction or dialogue that we could implement if and when designing this scene. This gave us a very good idea of how each scene would come together and overall how each different scene would look on stage. This skill proved to come in very helpful later; helping with group projects and presentations in which we design set, costume or anything of importance within the design of a production. One key example of how we implemented this skill was during the first readthrough of robot boy; we read this play together and analysed it as a group, pulling out key ideas and images that came up and building upon them to form ideas that then became our final outcomes.











Dystopian media

I recently explored an abandoned school and it got me thinking about famous designers who focus on abandoned/dystopian sets. I am a huge fan of the dystopian genre and find it is a subject I would like to look into further so I went digging for people who stood out to me and found Howard Cummings who designed the TV show Fallout; based on a video game about an apocalyptic world in which the world is divided amongst the wreckage of the world society behind. I also was interested by John Paino's work on The Last of Us; very similar to Fallout, The last of Us is also a post-apocalyptic show based upon a video game, however, the type of apocalypses they experience are vastly different. While the dystopian future depicted in fallout is entirely the fault of humanity, the apocalypse displayed in the last of us is caused by a species of fungus that has evolved beyond comprehension. I am a massive fan of fungi, so I really enjoyed this premise - even if it was entirely scientifically inaccurate and the fungi were incorrectly depicted.



Howard Cummings work on Fallout

Howard Cummings has lots of experience working on dystopian films; not only was he the executive designer for the Fallout tv show, but he also worked on ‘I am legend’ and ;Westworld’ which are two dystopian films with incredible design and beautiful dystopian elements. However, cummings stated in an interview that “I didn't really know what I was getting into in the beginning,” also mentioning that “I am not a gamer”. Despite this I firmly believe that he did an incredible job in the role for fallout and I absolutely adored the scenography and design elements of this show.







The video game fallout, which the series is based of, is set as a 1950s post-apocalyptic world in which radiation is the key source of trouble for the characters involved.
I absolutely loved this series and the filming style, it reminded me of Wes Anderson's style with its almost animated frames and sets. The inspirations and work put into these sets to capture the idea of a post apocalyptic world from the 1950s style of furniture, fashion and mentalities.









John Paino's work on The last of us

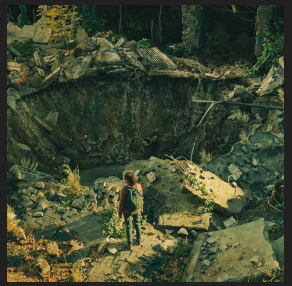
John Paino has some incredible experience working for big hit films such as the Dallas Buyers club and Kill the Messenger. Hsi skills when it comes to production design are something to beyond and I am a huge fan of his work. "Though it is based on the 2013 video game by game developer Naughty Dog, the TV series has been lauded for its realism, much of which is down to its detailed production design. Paino, who had played the game "a little bit", wanted the sets to look like they had been utilised and adapted by people in difficult circumstances."Because the game is about people, I looked at a lot of references for tenements, council housing, people in slums, people who were forced to live in camps in Gaza – how do people make do in these places?" he told Dezeen." (Cajsa Carlson)





The Last of Us is a tv show based on a game in which a fungus evolves and takes over human minds, similar to the zombie ant fungus, and causes a zombie apocalypse. The show itself takes place in the post apocalyptic earth.

Watching The Last of Us I was blown away by the details constructed within the stunning set; it's clear that Paino has a clear cut understanding of colour theory and the unity between set and lighting to create atmosphere. The models he created for the fungi encased human carcases are absolutely incredible with tedious amounts of detail encased within their designs.





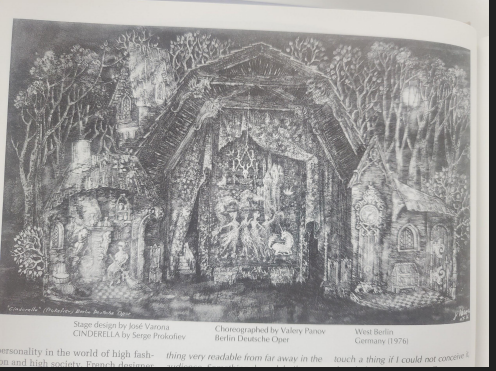


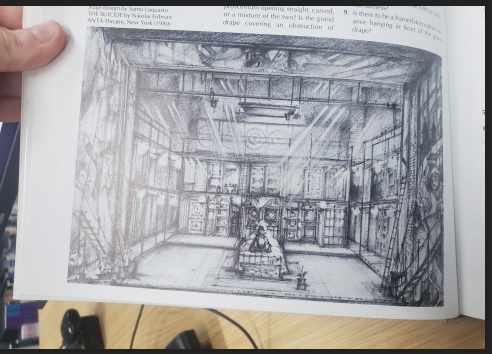


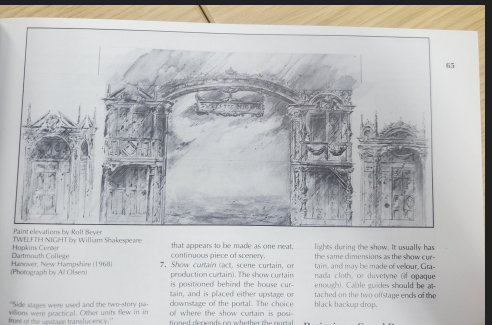




Lynn Pecktal, Designing and Drawing for Theatre

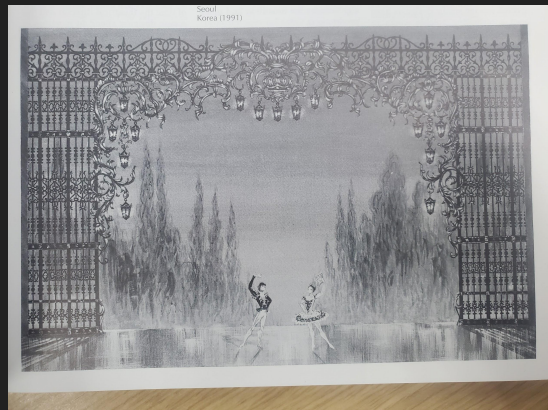






I studied this beautiful book, written by Lynn Pecktal that contains hundreds of incredible designs from artists and stage designers all over the world; she studies the many differences between theatre within a range of different cultures and theatrical styles. I was very drawn to the black and white sketches from designers such as the set design of cinderella by Jose Varona in west germany, 1976, depicted in the top image on the left. This design is astonishingly detailed and absolutely stunning; the amount of love and passion put into its design is plainly obvious. I adore sets with soul - where you can tell the creators and designers put in hundred of hours of tedious loving work. Even though these sketches are only in black and white, their stunning beauty shines through within the depths and tones presented in each individual artists techniques and drawing styles. The sketch in the centre left is of the play The Suicide by designer Santo Loquasto and this one stands out to me because of the unique drawing style; Loquasto is effectley able to create an incredible image with the illusion of light and shadow casting down over the set. The way the forms in the background are accentuated in line art makes them stand out beautifully creating a scene in which the more you look, the more you see.





Brief history of scenography: the spaces

Ancient Greece
- Theatron- a place where the audience can sit, on ikria, wooden benches
- Orchestra- a central performance place

200 years later:
- Introduction of proscenium stage
- Orchestra- a central performance place
- Prokenion- a structure in front of the skene, and behind the orchestra, offering levels, entrances and exits

Romans 12 BC
- Erected on a slat site
- Theatron known as cavea
- Skene known as scaenn
- Cavea and scaenn are joined in single structure made of mass concrete
- Audience access by means of arched openings

Fall of the roman empire
- Dark ages
- Very little known about cultural activities

Japan
- Noh stage
- Open stage and remains the same for every different play
- Actors seen all the time, even when not performing

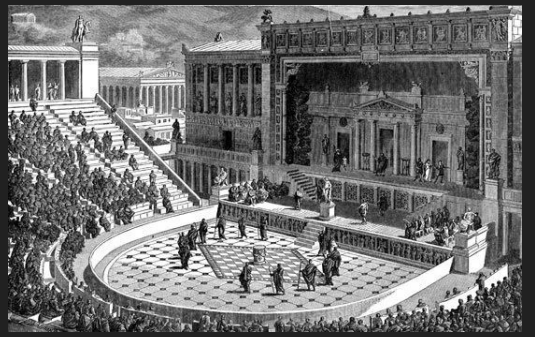
Renaissance spaces
- Audiences separated from the acts

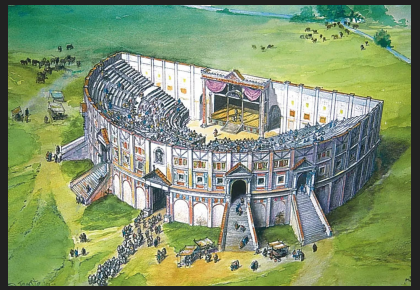
Italy
- Comedia del arte
- Improvised plats on the streets

England
- Elizabethan
- Courtyards and baiting yards
- James Burbage - first permanent theatre called 'the globe'
- Glove- pillars painted line marble -0 roman influence
- First globe - 1500s
- Puritans closed theatres in 1642

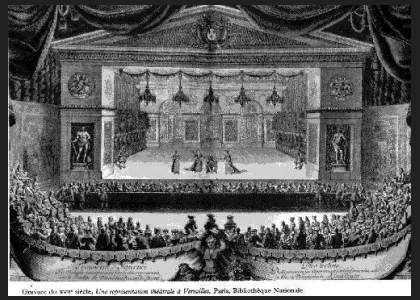
Italy
- Backdrops, perspective and moving scenes

Opera- 1937

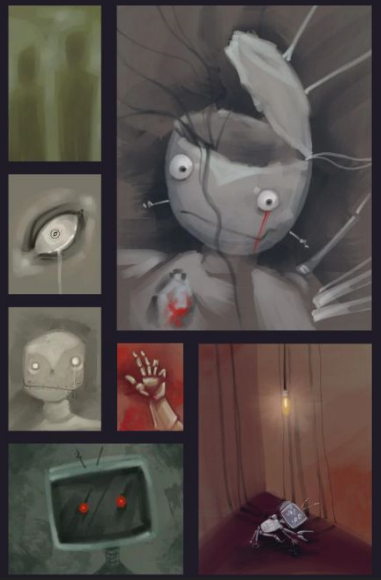












Group presentations

We were given the stimulus ‘Robot Boy’; a poem written by Tim Burton and published in a book of poetry in 1997, the play follows the happy Smith's family as they excitedly prepare for the birth of their new baby. However, only after the birth of their baby do they realize it is not quite human; instead what emerges is a mess of mtel and wire as their baby boy is a strange robot boy. The father; Mr Smith blames the doctor who later reveals that the baby is not his, something that Mr Smith is uncharacteristically pleased about. The robot boy then later grows up in a troubled home where he is never treated as a person and as a grown man he is often mistaken for a trash can.

After reading this poem we began by forming mind maps of ideas; linking the idea of this inhuman baby to perhaps a disabled or intersex child; taking into account the time frame in which this poem was written, being intersex was seen as a disability that needed immediate rectification. We also explored the idea of an NICU baby, specifically because of the line ‘a log extension cord plugged into the wall’. While my teammates did initial research on Tim Burton and his childhood, I looked into creating concept art based on the ideas that came to me when reading the poem. I mostly looked into colour and emotion; I was drawn to the line ‘just lay there and stared’ which gave me the idea of this dead-looking child with eyes that are full of emotion and an almost human-like pain.

Concept art



Collaborative work



I was put in a group of people with which I had not worked very often; Annabel, Eirys, and Trick I had worked with Trick previously for our presentations in a different module. I had a rough idea of everyone's strengths and weaknesses, but it wasn't until we had started a table read and began to dissect our ideas that I actually began to see how much skill my group had to offer. We quickly began analysing fascinating ideas about why this baby wasn't seen as human and discussed the idea of disabilities or a NICU baby. From these ideas we looked at contextual understandings; factoring in how the time the book was published (1997) and what the world was like at that time, especially for babies seen as disabled. From the initial table read, discussion and the beginning of our research phase we decided on a timetable of when we were all free to meet and work together outside of lessons.

I firmly believe that, as a team, we worked extremely well together, bouncing ideas off each other and supporting one another with our plans and ideas. After each step of the design or new idea we would communicate with one another and either change or work off the idea based on the feedback we received, but throughout the entire process we were very clear on our skill sets, what we could bring to the table and what we were interested in exploring further down the line. Each of us took one idea and created a project based upon that idea; Trick was very interested by paper puppets and so, with our help constructed a little paper robot boy. Eirys had the idea to find a baby doll and decorate it with wires and cogs so we went together to the climate shop - a sustainable charity shop - where we picked out a children's toy and decorations to go with it, and Annabel went on an excavation to the props cupboard where she found old metal ‘junk’ that she could string together into a robot boy. And later I presented an animation, which, with their help I refined and presented as part of our final presentation.

Gillys moodboard











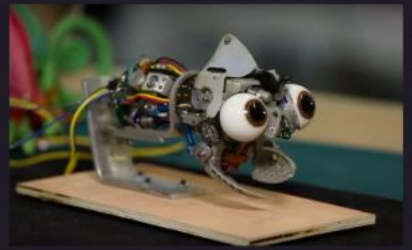


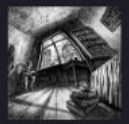












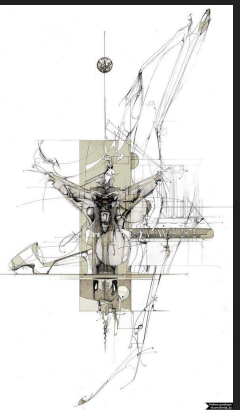

I looked at robotic/animatronic structures; highlighting the eyes. I also explored German expressionism, shadows and puppetry, and I found a series of artworks called Arcadia at the end of time that give a dynamic but robotic feel. All the images I sourced are minimalistic colour or black and white.

I've been really enjoying putting together my own moodboards and looking into Robot boy took me down some really interesting routes and I ended up finding lots of fascinating source material such as specific artists, art styles, projects and specifically a rather disturbing video of an animatronic baby that writhed silently, in eerily human like movements.

Research stage

Based upon our initial moodboards we began research within the fields we were interested in; my teammates Trick and Eirys looked into puppetry; specifically paper puppets and shadow puppets, Annabel looked into Tim Burton's childhood and growing up with aspergers and I decided to look into different art forms.

In my moodboards I learned about the artists Dan Slavinsky who creates stunning architectural sketches in a series called 'Arcadia at the end of time' I felt his work fits the ideas we wanted to present; despite being architectural sketches, his incredible artworks effectively capture the symbiotic relationship between order and chaos. I felt this work captures this naturally organic feel with this impression of an industrial, robotic response, connecting machines to the living breathing people that constructed them.
I also looked into Tim Noble and Sue Webster who experiment and work with scrap to construct shadows that effectively tell stories "They aggregate objects and debris into self-deprecating works that bridge two realities. At first glance, you see jumbled piles of trash, the familiar by-products of a throw-away society. However, upon deeper inspection you can piece together the stories they tell, of struggle, of family, relationships and their dynamics. And by shining a light on these "anti-monuments," the artists literally expose the people who are behind this mess." (Art Works For Change, 2017) I also looked into the art installation 'Can't help myself' by Sun Yuan & Peng Yu , resin art, Tim Burton's past experiences, previous constructions of robot boy, and many films such as frankenstein, Dracula, The iron giant, Robots, The Elephant man, and Wall-E. Additionally this lead me down the route of studying film and the switch between the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21th century as media went from being very anti government and rebellious to patriotic and loyal.









Animation

Later, based upon my concept sketches and the other research we wanted to explore I created an animation. I am not very experienced when it comes to animating, and I'm not very skilled when it comes to fluid movement but I really enjoy creating animations and I had a lot of fun creating this one. I wanted there to be s storyline within the animation that also somewhat reflected the research we touched upon and the ideas we had discussed as a group. The animation depicts couple in an embrace, for this section I was inspired by the shadow puppets we looked at and their simple figures used to display a story. The male figure then disappears into her pregnant belly, implying how when the baby comes, Mr Smith himself becomes quite babyish, denying responsibility and denying that it is his child. I then displayed a range of different frames depicting the robotic baby and its inhumanity. I gave these frames the illusion of movement by using the push tool on procreate to manipulate the wires and body, I then pulled out to see the full robot baby. For this frame I took inspiration from the original design of robot boy combined with my own concept sketches and drew a black mess around the body, which I was inspired by the art instillation ‘can't help myself’

The last of the key points of this animatic was how the baby transforms from a metal robot baby into a living breathing human baby; I wanted to crate this idea of a change of perspective, almost as if Mr and Mrs Smith were viewing this baby view a warped vision; they see it as inhuman simply because its disabled when in reality it is a true baby boy, they can just never see it as their own. For this I was inspired by the work of Tim Noble and Sue Webster and how they experiment with perspective to tell a story through creative means.



Finalising ideas

During a brainstorming session we were considering what format we wanted to present our ideas; I felt a regular presentation would be too boring and wanted to have a certain interactive element to our work, and I had the idea to make it a radio news section. This idea then developed to the idea of a freak show; having the robot boy as one of the people on exhibition which we all agreed was an idea we wanted to explore in more detail. We decided we still wanted to keep the radio idea so we worked it out that we would have a prerecorded voice over welcoming people into the show as they audience followed a self guided tour around the work we had created like an art exhibition.

I got to work studying radio, freak shows and began writing out a script which we then recorded as a group and Eirys began editing our voices to create an eerie radio static effect on our voices to create this dark, unsettling atmosphere introducing the audience to the robot boy. As they worked on that, I studied the fonts and art used in the freak shows in the late 19th century and began sketching up a design for a sign we can have up on a screen as the audience walk in to our exhibition. My final sign is a moving gif to give the illusion of flashing lights and moving hand.



Final presentations







Overall for our final presentations we each had some sort of physical work to display; Trick made paper puppets, Eirys made a 3D sculpture of the robot boy, Annabel made a scale model constructed from metal scrap and I had my animation. Bouncing off the idea of a freak show, we presented this like an exhibition; attempting to display the robot boy as an exhotic oddity. We positioned the tables into a circular sop that the audience could freely walk around and admire what we had made as the large banner hung above them, welcoming them in. We also had a whiteboard that we decorated with out moodboards and appropriate elements of our research, strung together like a 'murder board' with wire, further detailed with cogs, wires and the robot boys claw hand that I drew emerging from the corner.

We had an audio playing as the audience walked around; it was a script that I had written that we had collectively all read out welcoming people into the freak show. I took elements and inspiration from the poem itself and added in my own embellishments to give it a showman feel, inspired by the radio broadcasts I had studied and what we had looked at for freak show 'edicate' and created this sort of eerie script based upon that. Eirys then recorded us all speaking the script collectively and mashed it together with sound editing software to create an amazing soundscape that played as people admired the exhibition. Overall I felt this element went very well had had the impact we were hoping for.

Later, we then moved the whiteboards aside to reveal seating for people as we guided them through our presentation, showing research, ideas, and execution. We all took on certain parts of research and had the slideshow more or less divided between us all. Although we were all a little nervous I think we all presented our ideas for this part of the module very well. The only thing i would like to improve for next time is maybe having one particular exhibition with a project we each contributed towards for one singular outcome. I also believe my animation could have been better with more time and more animation practice as i felt it was quite blocky and did not flow as well as I'd have liked it to.

Final impressions

I absolutely loved this module, I love model making but I have limited experience; I chose to study modelmaking as my final project for college last year but before that I hadn't had much experience, but learning all the new skills and materials that came along with the module I found really interesting and I will definitely be taking into the future with me. I also really loved the moodboards and compiling all my ideas together to create a vision I found is something I'm really interested in, and I loved the collaboration side but I feel that the are I need to work on most is working with others towards a collective outcome - I have a habit of getting myself down a rabbit hole of my own ideas and creating what I want to do as opposed to what everyone else is thinking. I also would have loved if we could have had the opportunity to access the workshop so that we could have used the skills learned in the construction module to build simple objects that we could have used for our final projects, for example the Robot Boy group work; I feel, inspired by the second years presentations, that we could have created a larger physical work to display with the skills learned from the workshop. However, I know this is just the first semester and we will have the opportunity to do this in the future and create something very exciting. I'm eager to combine the two ranges of skills that we have been taught for both modules.

From each task I really enjoyed the construction and decorating, really any of the creative side of the tasks. I didn't enjoy the historical side so much because I have never been very good at sitting down and listening to lectures; I much prefer learning by doing. Which is why I really loved putting in extra time and effort to make extra embellishments for my scale models. Additionally the other creative tasks such as the lyric-based moodboards we created and learning the key points to production design, from what we were taught in class I was eager to find my own research and analyze sets and designs that I am drawn to which could affect my future designs and creative choices within this course.

Overall I'm excited to take the skills I have learned here into the future of the course, applying the ideologies and creative ideas in many elements, as the skill of this module can be applied in many other modules, additionally I feel that the research I did for this module and what I found out about certain designers gives me inspiration for designing and constructing certain props, models and set elements in upcoming modules. Finally, while I enjoyed the construction of scale models, collection of moodboard ideas, and the table read skills we learnt I would like to try and learn to better appreciate the history behind the creative spaces within theatre history.

Bibliography

Abbott and Holder (2016). *Caspar Neher (1897-1962) | ABBOTT and HOLDER*. [online] Available at: https://www.abbottandholder.co.uk/caspar-neher/.

admin (2024). *Hollywood Flats vs. Broadway Flats: Key Differences in Set Design*. [online] Palco Specialties. Available at: https://palcospecialties.com/hollywood-flats-vs-broadway-flats-key-differences-and-when-to-use-each/.

Bablet, D. (2019). Edward Gordon Craig | British actor and director. In: *Encyclopædia Britannica*. [online] Available at: https://www.britannica.com/biography/Edward-Gordon-Craig.

David Neat. (2008) Model-making materials and methods

Dezeen. (2023). *John Paino designed The Last of Us as a world where 'civilisation is dead'*. [online] Available at: https://www.dezeen.com/2023/02/14/john-paino-the-last-of-us-set-design-civilisation-dead/.

Elon University (2005). *1890s – 1930s: Radio – Imagining the Internet*. [online] Elon University. Available at: https://www.elon.edu/u/imagining/time-capsule/150-years/back-1890-1930/.

HIC | an archive of architectures and other things. (2024). *Adolphe Appia > Drawings and Productions | HIC*. [online] Available at: https://hicarquitectura.com/2024/11/adolphe-appia-drawings-and-productions/.

Lynn Pecktal (1995) Designing and drawing for the theatre

Michael Warre. (1966) Designing and making stage scenery

Mused. (2025). *Mind-blowing facts about War Horse*. [online] Available at: https://www.vam.ac.uk/mused/art-design/mind-blowing-facts-about-war-horse/?srsltid=AfmBOopN4Ei-8LKDIKMzXRxBbhfuiKdhCfV03CVkWrOlUdtA66ZKlDnY [Accessed 13 Dec. 2025].

SLAVINSKY, D. (2019). *DAN SLAVINSKY*. [online] DAN SLAVINSKY. Available at: https://www.danslavinsky.com/ [Accessed 13 Dec. 2025].

Universal Edition. (2025). *Neher sceneries*. [online] Available at: https://www.universaledition.com/en/Works/Neher-sceneries/.

Wake The Tiger Amazement Park. (n.d.). *Wake The Tiger – The world's first Amazement Park – Bristol, UK*. [online] Available at: https://www.wakethetiger.com/.

Weng, X. (2016). *Can't Help Myself*. [online] The Guggenheim Museums and Foundation. Available at: https://www.guggenheim.org/artwork/34812.

www.abbottandholder.co.uk. (2016). *Caspar Neher (1897-1962) | ABBOTT and HOLDER*. [online] Available at: https://www.abbottandholder.co.uk/caspar-neher/.

the Guardian. (2002). *Obituary: Joseph Svoboda*. [online] Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/news/2002/apr/22/guardianobituaries.