Introduction To STAGING

“If all the world’s a stage, then you deserve better lighting!”
STAGING TERMS
Raked Stage on Proscenium Arch with Backdrop

A Raked stage is built on a slope to allow the actors to be seen by the audience.
Parts of the Stage
“Unlike anything Broadway has ever seen!”

THE LION KING

Best Musical 1998 Tony Award Winner
The Auditorium

1 – Apron
2 – Blacks
3 – Cyclorama / Backcloth
4 – Wings
5 – Auditorium
6 – Stalls
7 – Dress Circle
8 – Balcony
Types of Staging

Proscenium Arch
Avenue
Theatre in the round
Thrust
Promenade
Proscenium Arch

- Audience views the action from one direction much like End On but the action is ‘enclosed’ by the arch around the stage.
- Fourth Wall
Advantages of Proscenium Arch Theatre Staging

- It is easy to place Set
- It is easy to place a backdrop or cyclorama
- It is less likely that actors will ‘mask’ each other
- Provides for spectacle
- Focuses audience’s attention most acutely
- Heightens aesthetic distance
- Scene changes are easier.
- Entrance and exits are easier to place

Disadvantages of Proscenium Arch Theatre Staging

- Intimacy with the audience is more difficult to achieve
- Can be seen as old fashioned
- Sightlines can be limited
Theatre in the Round

- Audience are seated all around the acting area. This can be in a circle or square formation.
Theatre in the Round
Theatre in the Round
Advantages of Theatre in the Round

- offers greater intimacy
- heightens audience’s sense of community
- demands economy in design and production
- Exciting for the audience to watch

Disadvantages of Theatre in the Round

- Plays requiring elaborate scenery suffer
- Difficult to place a back drop or cyclorama
- Actors will always have their back to some members of the audience
Thrust Staging

- Audience views the action from three directions
- Oldest type of staging in history
- Can use an ‘APRON’
The Theatre of The Sanctuary of Asklepios at Epidaurus, Greece - Photo: T. Hines 3/29/2004

The Epidaurians have a theatre within the sanctuary, in my opinion very well worth seeing. For while the Roman theatres are far superior to those anywhere else in their splendor, and the Arcadian theater at Megalopolis is unequalled for size, what architect could seriously rival Polycleitus in symmetry and beauty? For it was Polycleitus who built both this theater and the circular building. (Pausanias 113)
Thrust
Thrust

Apron
Advantages of Thrust Staging

- a compromise between the proscenium and theatre in the round stage
- some intimacy
- some spectacle experience for the audience
- Western theatre written for this space
- Can still use a backdrop or cyclorama
- Easier to place entrance and exits

Disadvantages of Thrust Staging

- a compromise between the proscenium and arena stage!
- Less intimacy with the audience
Promenade Staging

- Audience follow the actors and action
- There are more than one staging areas
Promenade
Promenade?
Advantages of Promenade Staging

• Breaks down audience-actor distance.
• Exciting, interesting, engaging
• Keeps audience aware
• Affects the audience’s experience as strongly as dialogue might
• Non-theatre buildings can be used, street theatre, multi focus environments, outdoors.

Disadvantages of Promenade Staging

• Challenging for the actors
• More than one set may be required which could be costly
• There is no ‘off stage’ area for the actors to use
• Audience is limited to those who are mobile
Avenue Staging

- Audience sits on two sides of the staging area facing each other
Avenue Staging

Inside the Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre

©Pamela Howard 2003
Advantages of Avenue Staging

- Audience can see each others reactions to the drama
- Actors can have an ‘off stage’ area
- Can use a backdrop or Cyclorama

Disadvantages of Avenue Staging

- Audience can see each others reactions to the drama
- Difficult for the actors not to mask each other or themselves
- Audience view will be limited
- Limited to what set pieces can be used as with theatre in the round
Identify these staging types, what is one advantage and one disadvantage of each?

What staging type is missing?