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Design and technical direction of The Barber of Seville

George W. Terhune

The University of Montana

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THE DESIGN AND TECHNICAL DIRECTION OF

THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

by

GEORGE W. TERHUNE

B.A. UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, 1965

Presented in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

1966

Approved by:

[Signatures]

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

Introduction

The School of Fine Arts of the University of Montana presented an 18th-Century Festival, May 9 - 29, 1966. This Festival was undertaken with the precept that, "the arts are not for a privileged few but for the many, that their place is not on the periphery of society but at its center, that they are not just a form of recreation but are of central importance to our well-being and happiness." ¹ In an effort to facilitate this precept, lectures, exhibits, demonstrations, and stage presentations were offered in the areas of art, dance, drama, music, history, literature, science, philosophy and theology.

The Department of Drama and the Department of Music of the University of Montana produced Mozart's opera, The Magic Flute. The Department of Drama also presented as a student production,² Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais', The Barber of Seville. This thesis is concerned with the second production, The Barber of Seville.

Statement of the Problem

This study is concerned with the scenic design, property design, lighting design, and technical direction for a production of Beaumarchais'.

¹This statement by the Festival Committee, was taken from the program of the Montana Fine Arts Festival.

²All aspects of the production were planned and executed by students under the supervision of the Drama faculty of the University of Montana.
The Barber of Seville, presented May 25 - 29, 1966, as part of the 18th-Century Festival held at the University of Montana under the sponsorship of the School of Fine Arts. This writer and Joe Ferrell, graduate students in Drama, were chosen by the faculty of the Department of Drama to design and direct the production in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts.  

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to the design of the scenery, properties, lighting, and technical direction of this production of The Barber of Seville. The study does not include the design of the costumes or makeup and it will not deal with any aspects of these problems except as they may be affected by the writer's role as technical director.

Definitions of Terms Used

**Designer.** The designer is the individual who takes the demands of a given script, the limitations of a given stage, the interpretation of a given director, and within this framework, makes a visual statement about the play which is in harmony with the total concept of a given production.

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Director. "He is the creative and interpretive artist who coordinates and directs the story of human conflict for the audience... He must select the play, interpret the script, conduct the tryouts, cast the production." ⁴

Dress Rehearsal. "The dress rehearsal period is intended for one purpose: synchronizing and polishing all elements into a production with unity." ⁵

Educational Theater. Educational theater refers to the producing organization, an educational institution, of which the aims are to produce high quality theater as a part of student training programs, without concern for making a profit. Students of theater learn by actively participating in all aspects of the productions under the direct supervision of their professors who are experts in their respective fields of the theatrical medium.

Lighting. For the purpose of this study, lighting shall refer to controlling light in terms of its color, intensity, and distribution in such a way that it becomes an expressive element within the total stage picture.

Properties. "Visual, decorative stage properties can be divided into three main divisions: SET properties, TRIM properties, and HAND


properties...Set properties, frequently called scene props, include all furniture and rugs...as well as the decorative objects which may rest on the various pieces of furniture...Trim properties are related to the walls of the stage interior or to certain decorative refinements of a large exterior unit...hand properties are primarily utensils for the actors, they must at the same time belong visually to the stage picture."6

**Proscenium Theater.** This is the conventional type theater in which the audience is set apart from the actors by a wall with a large opening. "The opening through which the spectator views the stage is termed the Proscenium Opening."7

**Scenery.** "In the organic design of play presentation, scenery should function as the helpful environment of theatrical action...it is the duty of scenery, through the use of suggestive and significant surrounding forms, to aid the actor in translating the spirit of the author's vision in the most effective manner possible."8

**Semi-Arena Theater.** Due to the uniqueness of the "Masquer Theater" there exists no authoritative definition for this type of theater. The term "semi-arena theater" and "Masquer Theater" shall be considered synonymous and taken to mean a theater where the stage is viewed from two sides by the audience. The other two sides of the stage are walls which

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8 Ibid., p. 7.


Rehearsal personnel. The rehearsal personnel are
rehearsal assistants. Together in visual harmony
look into property. All scenes carry out their tasks properly.

which time, he must be sure that all rehearsal elements of the production
most important functions is to conduct the "technical rehearsal" at
performed to assist in accomplishing these various tasks. One of the

making death and sound death. In addition, he must

familiarize and adjust at the beginning of the rehearsal.
the organization and coordination of all necessary coordination and

study. The rehearsal director is the individual who is responsible for
the director's, the following directions is offered for the purpose of this

new one and due to much development in the field about the nature of

Rehearsal director. The job of rehearsal director is a critically

application.

with necessary to trained somewhat approximately and with knowledge
a style of rehearsal, or a method of staging. Whenever there he chooses
seen such interpretation means a period, a dominating moment. In order to provide suitable themes for dramatic emphasis, the director
conventionized style of deception in some immediate manner.

method of expression which emphasizes a

Stylistically, expression is the same given to a specific type of

become scenic background.
or actors."¹⁰ This rehearsal is devoted to familiarizing the various
crews with their cues and responsibilities for the production.

Special Problems

The production was given in the "Masquer Theater" of the University
of Montana, which is an intimate semi-arena type theater (seating
capacity - 99). Due to the unique quality of this particular theater,
conventional theatrical vocabulary becomes somewhat inadequate and must
be redefined for the purpose of this study. The problem presents itself
most noticeably in the area of stage directions. For this reason, a
general ground plan of the theater has been included (Drawing #1), and
specific area designations are contained therein.

Because of the theater's individuality, its advantages and
limitations must be more fully explained. Some of the unique advantages
are:

1. an intimacy which allows a high degree of rapport between
   the audience and the actor,
2. the distance from the actor to the audience is so short that
   subtleties can be used, which in a large proscenium theater
   would not carry "past the orchestra",
3. for this same reason, subtlety and suggestion can be used
   effectively in terms of scenery and lighting techniques.

¹⁰Gillette, op. cit., p. 276.
Along with the advantages, there are limitations which influence the directorial and the scene design approach. The most troublesome problem is the fact that one is forced to direct and design each production for two audiences. The temptation is to stage the play as if it were a proscenium theater with the proscenium opening located between the two audiences. This is a dangerous pitfall because if productions are handled in this way, both audiences are slighted.

Another limitation, especially hampering to the scene designer, is that there are no large openings to the backstage area. This means that scenic units must be very small if they are to be shifted for part of the show. Also, large scenic units must be integrated into the design so they can be used to represent a number of items during various scenes within the play.

Importance of the Study

This writer's intention is to provide useful research material for directors, designers, and producing organizations about to undertake a production of *The Barber of Seville*, or any of Beaumarchais' works.

Also, in the academic surroundings of educational theater, there is often a confusion on the part of the beginning student as to how the design and technical aspects of a production are created and what each person's function is within the framework of the production staff. It is hoped that this study will answer some of these questions by offering a detailed account and analysis of the various processes involved in creating a production which, in the eyes of this writer, was successful.
CHAPTER II

AN ANALYSIS OF THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

Beaumarchais

Beaumarchais, besides being a playwright, was a financier, diplomat, watchmaker, politician, music teacher, and businessman. He was a controversial public figure—defending this cause, denouncing that cause—in favor one day and out the next, but always he was a man of action. \(^{11}\)

In 1764, he went to Spain to defend the honor of his sister who had been shamed by a grandee. \(^{12}\) While he was there, he made new business arrangements and partnerships and learned much about the character of the Spanish people. \(^{13}\) This exposure to local customs and music was to prove valuable in that it provided the color for *The Barber of Seville*, which he set in Seville, Spain. \(^{14}\)

Beaumarchais first wrote the play as a comic opera, but attempts to have it produced proved futile. It was then rewritten as a five act play and in 1775, produced by the Comédie-Française. It was not well received so he rewrote portions and cut it to four acts. Two days later


\(^{14}\) *Ibid.*

8
it was presented again, this time with huge success and it has remained part of the repertoire of Comédie-Française to this day.\footnote{Ibid., p. 19.}

Plot

Beaumarchais uses an old plot which dates back at least to Molière's, \textit{École des Femmes}. The old man, Bartholo, attempts to win the love of his young ward, Rosine, by keeping her isolated. She does not care for the old man and falls in love with Lindor, the rich Count Almaviva in disguise. Almaviva has previously seen Rosine when she was in Madrid with Bartholo and he comes to Seville to win her favor. Bartholo receives word of the Count's passion for his ward and enlists the aid of Don Bazile, Rosine's music teacher, to speed up the marriage plans and act as private detective against Almaviva. Meanwhile, the Count meets his former servant Figaro, who is currently employed by Bartholo. The Barber, Figaro, immediately recognizes the opportunity for intrigue and joins Almaviva in his attempts to rescue Rosine from the old man. Figaro plots a series of disguises to get the Count into Rosine's quarters where they can plan an escape and the final disguise is partially successful. The play ends with Almaviva and Rosine being married by the Judge who has been solicited by Bazile to marry Rosine and Bartholo.

Theme

The main theme, "Young love will triumph," is not new either. Other themes are also present but are social comments and topical in nature. Even without a knowledge of the period, which is needed to
appreciate these topical themes, the play will stand on its own and be enjoyable to the modern audience. 16

The Comic Style

The work wins acclaim largely because Beaumarchais takes a fresh approach to comedy. "He does not, like Molière, x-ray the depths of his people's minds in the light of a number of carefully chosen situations. 17 Instead, he gives the audience a certain body of information about the characters and asks that it accept this information on faith. In this manner, he is able to concentrate on the elements of drama which are of interest to him—situation and action. This statement receives support from Beaumarchais himself who writes, "When my subject seizes me, I evoke all my characters and I situate them. What they are going to say I've not the least idea; it is what they will do that concerns me." 18

Action and situation are the key words in The Barber of Seville. It is a situation comedy that moves at breakneck speed. There are no long or involved, intellectual duels. The playwright uses short sentences and quick wit. Each episode is short but packed with action. An example of this style is the ejection scene in Act III, where Bartholo, the Count, Rosine, and Figaro send Bazile back to bed.

16 Ibid., p. 27.
18 Ibid.
Characterization

Figaro, like his creator, is a man of action, urged by his personality to make things happen. For example, when he discovers that Almaviva is on a mission of love, he immediately takes command of the entire plot, not even waiting for an invitation from the Count. Figaro's enthusiasm and spontaneity set the pace for the action and give the entire piece a commedia dell' arte 19 flavor.

Figaro is the prime mover in The Barber of Seville, and his zest for life, adventure, and intrigue set the tone of the drama. While he is the only fully rounded human being 20 present in the play, his original depth allows the other characters to become somewhat individual. This is illustrated especially in Bartholo. Without Figaro's adroitness and wit, he would not be provoked to a resourcefulness strange to him. He would be an ordinary comic fool simply overrun by Figaro, Almaviva and Rosine. Instead, he is a "...shrewd, damnably suspicious cynic,..." 21 unique because Figaro's craft forces a certain creativity out of the old man which he would not need for other opponents.

Figaro's inventiveness and wit make the characters of Almaviva and Rosine come to life also. An example of this is present in Rosine's first scene with the Barber. Here she is devilish, charming and naive

19 Commedia dell' arte in the sense of the impromptu.

20 The other characters have very little depth and are generally related to "stock" character types of the commedia dell' arte generation.

21 Green, op. cit., p. 182.
as she tries to discover if his "relative" is in love with her. Without Figaro's playful approach, the scene would become sentimental and lose its comic spirit.

Conclusions

The Barber of Seville is a situation comedy carried to a farcical extreme. There is, however, a danger in approaching the play totally as farce. One must temper this view somewhat or the musical innuendo of Beaumarchais will be lost. It is this delightful, lyric quality that dominates and enhances the play, largely because the piece was conceived in operatic terms. For this reason, one must approach the play as though it were a musical score, always carefully keeping the piece in tune.\(^{22}\)

\(^{22}\text{Ibid., pp. 189-190.}\)
CHAPTER III

THE PRODUCTION: ORGANIZATION AND EXECUTION

Production Approach

In an attempt to reach a unified production approach\textsuperscript{23} between the director and the designers, a number of production conferences were held during the design process. In the early stages, there was an attempt to settle on a common interpretation for \textit{The Barber of Seville}, from which this particular production could grow. Many possibilities were considered and finally it was decided that the production staff would approach the play as farce with little or no emphasis on the topical references Beaumarchais uses as social comment. In conjunction with this, every attempt would be made to draw the audience into the action of the play and to involve it totally in the spirit of the play and the period. This decision was based on the fact that the play contains little material to provoke deep thought, but it has excellent comic potential because of the action implied by the situations within the play. In order to capitalize on the comic potential then, the audience must be made to feel as if it is in on the action and having as much fun as the characters themselves.

From the embryonic stages of the production planning also grew five requirements which the visual design must support.

1. The floor plan must be arranged in such a way as to provide the actors with ample space for extremely broad freedom

\textsuperscript{23}Production Approach - the particular interpretation that a given production staff decides to emphasize within a script.
of movement. This was felt to be essential because the show was being presented as farce and exaggerated movement and action are an essential part of the farce technique.

2. The stage proper must not be made to appear as a unit separate from the audience area, but must seem to be carried into the seating area in an effort to make the audience feel more closely related to the action on stage.

3. A Spanish feeling must be present in an attempt to set the locale of "Sunny Seville". This must be accomplished largely through color scheme, lighting, and the choice of decorative motif.

4. A delicate quality of motion must be achieved since the play demands so much action executed with a musical feeling. This quality would be destroyed if a heavy or rough line was allowed to dominate the design.

5. A general spirit of lightness or fun must influence every aspect of the visual design. This decision was based on the reasons mentioned above.

The director and designer decided that the demands of the script and the production could not be satisfied if a totally realistic setting was to be employed. This decision was made for the following reasons:

1. Due to the shifting problems in the "Masquer Theater", changes of realistic settings would be almost impossible.

2. Extensive changes of setting would tend to stop the action of the play and would fail to sustain the required continuity.
3. The limitations of time, staff and budget made a realistic setting impossible.

As sketches were made, it became clear that a stylized setting exaggerating the line of the Rococo\(^{24}\) period would fit the foregoing demands best. This decision was based on research of the Rococo period. This Period was found to contain fun and excitement within its free and extravagant curves. The colors, rich but light, also blended well with the comic mood of the play. Also, as was mentioned in Chapter I, a need was felt to stay within the period of the 18th Century.

**Design Approach**

The play calls for three different settings: Act I is set on a street in Seville under the balcony of Doctor Bartholo's house; Act II is set in Rosine's quarters in Doctor Bartholo's house; Act III is set in the Doctor's study; and Act IV returns to Rosine's quarters. Because of the desire to make the setting as simple as possible with a minimum of shifting, it was decided to set Act III also in Rosine's quarters.

The dialogue made this possible with only one exception. This was Bartholo's line, "Rosine has shut herself in her room to sulk",\(^{25}\) which was changed to read, "Rosine has shut herself in to sulk." With this one small change, the logic of the entire scene was not disrupted and in

\(^{24}\)Rococo - a style of architecture, decoration and painting which developed from the Baroque period. Characteristics include elaborate and often delicate ornamentation based on foliage, shell and scroll motifs.

\(^{25}\)Bermel, op. cit., p. 190.
fact the suspicion of Bartholo was pointed up even more by having him
conduct his affairs from his ward's quarters.

Since the setting of Rosine's quarters (hereafter referred to as
Act II setting), was to be used for three of the four acts of the play,
it was decided to design this set first and then design the street setting
around the elements of the Act II setting that could not be shifted.

The demands of the script were considered first and the necessary
elements were: a closet entrance, an entrance from another part of the
house, a window, and an entrance from a hallway leading to the exterior.
There also needed to be a writing desk, chair, sofa, small decorative
table, and one other place to sit. In addition to these requirements,
the director requested that some portion of the stage be elevated to
allow for better picturization and increased movement possibilities.
The floor plan which seemed to meet these demands best is illustrated
in Drawing #2.

Next came the task of determining the demands of the first scene
and making them workable within the framework of the second setting. An
examination of the script showed that the only scenic unit necessary
was the balcony from which Rosine and Bartholo speak. It was decided
that the balcony should be placed at the "post" area. This meant that
Rosine and Bartholo would be in a weak position for the scene, but since
the scene belonged primarily to Figaro and Count Almaviva, the latter
pair should be in the strongest position to deliver their speeches to
the audience. The floor plan that was decided upon is illustrated in
Drawing #3.
Once the final floor plans were drawn and approved by the director, it was possible to begin designing the elements in terms of the restrictions set forth in the first section of this Chapter. The settings which seemed to meet the above mentioned requirements most successfully are shown in Appendix II.

**Execution of Setting**

Since the Act II setting was designed first, this discussion will first deal with Act II and then with Act I.

**Act II Setting.** A platform was built (Drawing #4) which would: (1) provide different levels of action to take place; (2) work visually to pull the setting out of the Up Center Corner area; (3) create and establish a dominant line of the Rococo.

Some of the platforms were taken from stock and the irregular pieces were built using standard platform construction techniques. Legs were added to the platforms so that the total height was six inches above the real stage floor. The individual pieces were then put in place on the stage floor and "dutchman" was applied. This part of the setting was built first to give the actors ample rehearsal time to adjust themselves to the movement patterns this additional level made possible.

A small center section of the platform was built as a separate unit and castors were added to the unit (Drawing #5). During Act I, this unit was moved to the post area and became part of the balcony unit (Drawing #6).

---

26. *Dutchman* - a strip of cloth used to cover cracks where two flats or platforms are joined.
The problem of the doorways was solved by building free standing units, (units which show no visual means of support except themselves), to represent the closet door (Drawing #7) and the door leading to another part of the house (Drawing #8). These units satisfied the design requirements because they were highly stylized, they kept the stage area open and allowed freedom of movement, they emphasized the lines of the Rococo, and they could be constructed without a great deal of expense. Each individual curve was cut from 3/4 inch plywood and they were assembled by using glue and two inch wood screws at the joints. Before joining, each piece was hand sanded so there were no rough edges to tear costumes or to injure the actors. These units were then attached to the platform. (See Drawing #2 for position of units.) Thin wires which were tied to the ceiling of the theater gave the units support at the top.

The window unit (Drawing #9) needed practical shutters of some sort and it was decided to make it represent wrought iron. Wrought iron was chosen because: (1) it was a very popular decorative material in Spain; (2) it offered an opportunity to use the line of the Rococo to its limits; (3) with it, the designer could create the happy moving feeling desired.

The shutter portion of the window was cut from pieces of 5/8 inch plywood. During the cutting process, small pieces of the wood chipped off. At first this was alarming, but later it was realized that this chipping was helpful in creating the wrought iron effect because it left the surface somewhat rough, thus approximating the surface of wrought iron. The pilaster supports for the shutters were built from one inch lumber (Drawing #9). The shutters were then hinged to the supporting
pilasters and the entire unit was attached to the stage floor. Wires to the ceiling were used to support the top.

Although there was a visual link between the three pieces because of the extreme uniformity of line, it was felt that there should be some actual physical link between them. This was needed especially to create the feeling of a room for the Act II setting. A narrow band of drapery was sewn from cheesecloth, dyed deep red, and draped between the free standing units (Drawing #2). This, in effect, acted as a cornice and created a wall line.

The only problem remaining was to determine the type of background to use. Something was needed that was relatively light in color as well as feeling. This was achieved by the use of a Venetian drape (Drawing #10), hung from ceiling to floor on the stage left and right walls. Since so much material was needed, it was necessary to build the drape from cheesecloth. Strips were cut 27 feet long and dyed bright yellow with hot water dye. Next, a seam was sewn along each side of these strips and as the seam was being made, the material was gathered. The gathering produced tight folds and shortened the pieces to nine feet. The individual pieces were then sewn together along these side seams to produce three large panels of drapery.

*Act I Setting.* This setting used the arches (Drawings #7 and #8), the window unit (Drawing #9), the draperies, and the platform from the Act II setting. The director played these units as if they represented façades of various buildings around a courtyard.

The balcony problem was solved by having part of the platform (Drawing #6) move to the post area. Added to this, was a small platform
which raised the overall height of the balcony to one foot high. To help create the feeling of a balcony more completely, a railing was added to the platform unit (Drawing #11). This railing was designed to look like wrought iron and the same building techniques were used for it as for the window shutters. This railing was shifted behind the window unit for Act II.

**Execution of Properties**

The category of properties falls generally into two areas—set properties (in this case, furniture), and hand properties, (items used in stage business by the actors). The classification of hanging properties has already been covered as part of the setting and discussed as drapery items.

**Set Properties.** The set properties were, for the designer, the most interesting part of the setting. They offered a challenge because of the complexity of their construction and because materials used in their construction were scrap\(^{27}\) with the exception of the upholstery material.

Since such a unified curved line had been created in the setting, the properties needed to carry this line or they would not be in harmony with the setting. For this reason, furniture styles of the Rococo were used. It was necessary to build the furniture because furniture of this period was not available for rental or loan and if it had been,

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\(^{27}\) Scrap - lumber which has been salvaged following use in a previous production and therefore, is not charged to the budget of the current production.
the properties the farm upon the
director for special business. The properties that farm upon the
referred to in the directions and upon additional duties desired by the
state as the settler and settler. They were based on leaned
Hand Properties. The hand properties were described in the same
more time than were available.
least understood on the floor plan for any II (meaning 2)
these taken from look and bench from not I was need. location of these
was taken from look and bench from not I was need. the armchair
in addition, a large armchair and a bench were necessary. (meaning 17)
(Dean, 16) and a small decorative table (meaning 17) were needed.
not I. a sofa (meaning 19), a seaside table (meaning 15), a chaise
The set properties for not II were somewhat more important than for
(meaning 15 and 17) all the benches were lost uncovered.
(meaning 12) all the benches were lost uncovered.
From 2 x 4 inch pine lumber and the top were cut from 5/4 inch plywood
surface and sanded smooth. The superstructures of each piece was made
together and the legs were cut from this. The edges were covered
removed (meaning 12). The pieces of 5/4 inch plywood were harvested
were placed in the back of the where the back of the
positioned by the closest each and the window unit, and one bench that
The set properties for not I were two benches which were
on almost every piece.
the farm at damre was too great since the meters walked, jumped or fell.
designer, director, and crews worked can be found in Appendix II.

The only two properties which posed special problems were Figaro's guitar and the parchment paper used for the numerous letters and documents. The guitar was built because it was impossible to find a Spanish guitar that did not look modern. A broken guitar was found and the neck, head, and tuning keys were used. The instrument body was built by cutting a plywood frame and wrapping upson board around the edges. The body was then covered with muslin. The old neck and head assembly was attached and the entire instrument was painted.

The parchment was made by first mixing a solution of food coloring and water which was tan in color. This solution was then applied to sheets of fine grade onionskin paper with a brush. These sheets were then pressed with a hot iron which removed the water, thus leaving the brownish coloring. The hot iron also caused the paper to wrinkle which is also characteristic of parchment.

**Execution of Painting**

The arches, window unit, and balcony rail were painted flat black with gold Rococo designs painted over the black. This color scheme was chosen in an attempt to make the units stand out from the bright yellow background and also to make them appear to be more rich and elaborate than they actually were.

The furniture was painted dark brown (burnt umber with black added), again to contrast with the light colored background. After the paint was applied, each piece was hand sanded lightly to remove some of the paint and leave the natural grain of the wood visible. Then Rococo
designs were painted on with gold. After this was dry, several coats of shellac were applied to give the appearance of rich finished wood. Following the painting, each piece was upholstered with a yellow-gold brocade fabric which would tie the pieces into the rest of the color scheme.

The stage floor, a major portion of the design in arena type theater, was painted to represent marble blocks. The colors chosen were in the green range. This decision was made in an effort to give the setting a larger variety of color and gaiety. Marble was used because it was a popular material in the Baroque and Rococo periods and there is a great deal of movement and action in the color swirls, characteristic of marble.

Before the painting began, the entire stage floor was divided into blocks, two feet square. These lines were drawn with light green chalk which would fade into the paint and not be seen after painting. Next, the blocks were painted with a base color of medium green. While this paint was still wet, dark green and white were applied separately with rolled up paper toweling. Paper toweling was rolled across the surface to represent the swirling grain of marble. By applying the paint when the base color was wet, the paint ran together and blended, thus producing many variations in color and a completely free line, also characteristic of marble. After this paint was dry, floor wax was applied with paint rollers. (If brushes had been used, the paint would have smeared and would have shown brush lines since water soluble casein paint had been used.) The wax added depth to the painting and also
produced the shiny surface of marble.

The floor of the balcony unit and the top of the bench used in Act I were painted to represent rose colored marble. This color was chosen in an attempt to add variety to the setting and break up the large stage floor with islands of color. The same technique described above was used to achieve this marble effect.

Music and Sound

Recorded music or sound effects were not used in this production. This decision was based on the following reasons:

1. Songs are written into the script and since the actors sing them, an instrument is needed to provide accompaniment.

2. Because live music was needed for part of the production, it was felt that the use of recorded sound might tend to become distracting by calling attention to itself.

3. Beaumarchais' songs in this play seem to spring very naturally from the dialogue preceding the songs. Figaro's song in Act I and Bartholo's tune in Act III exemplify this impromptu quality. Recorded sound, if used, might tend to be in opposition to this feeling.

A guitar was chosen as the accompanying instrument since it is so characteristically Spanish and the sound of guitar music could support the impromptu quality mentioned above. In addition to providing accompaniment for the singers, the guitar was used to provide mood music at the beginning and end of the play and also for transitional music between acts.
Lighting

The "Masquer Theater", because of its unique design, poses some interesting problems to the lighting designer. The audience views the stage from two sides which means that the production must be lighted for two separate audiences (See Drawing #1). Another problem with lighting in the "Masquer Theater" is that the ceiling is only ten feet high and as a result, the lighting tends to be "flat". The areas at the sides of the stage are difficult to light well without having light "spill" onto the audience.

The role of lighting in the overall concept of the visual design was not a complex one. Its main function was to provide adequate illumination so the actors were always well lighted and the stage appeared bright and cheerful. This decision was made because the play is a comedy and bright light tends to connote happiness while dim light tends to suggest sadness. In addition, it was necessary to keep the lighting simple and subtle because quick changes in intensity or color tend to distract an audience when actually, it should remain alert in order to keep pace with Beaumarchais' witty dialogue.

In order to satisfy the requirements of design, the stage was first divided into eight specific areas, shown on Drawing #18, by ovals. Then two fresnels were hung and focused on each area. One instrument

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29. Fresnel - the name given to a small, lightweight lighting instrument which has a fresnel lens. The lens contains concentric rings which produce light with a soft, diffused quality.
lighted the area from the west side and one from the south side to provide illumination for each audience. Also, the areas that were of key importance, (the center area, up center arch, post area), were each given an additional instrument which allowed them to be brighter than the rest of the stage and to have focus. It was also decided that the sofa and writing desk should, at times, have extra illumination in order to give them focus during the scenes that were played near these pieces. For this purpose, an additional fresnel was hung and focused on these areas. A special area of three fresnels was also hung to focus on the Act I bench which was used when the guitarist was on stage. Each of these areas was given a separate dimmer.

The general feeling of the play was one of gaiety so bright pastel colors were used. They were Brigham gelatine\textsuperscript{30} colors, pink (4) and amber (55). These colors were chosen because they enhanced the makeup, costumes, and scenery. The gelatine\textsuperscript{31} #4 was placed in the instruments in a random pattern so the lighting would look similar to both audiences. Exceptions to this general color scheme were the guitar area and the desk and sofa special areas. They were gelled with Light Blue Lavender (17). This color was used because it added a neutral to warm color without drastically changing the color of costume, makeup or scenery.

A light plot was drawn to show the type of instrument, the placement

\textsuperscript{30}Brigham Gelatine - the name of a specific gelatine manufacturing company. The manufacturer's name is significant because each manufacturer of gelatine uses a different color numbering system.

\textsuperscript{31}Gelatine - a color medium placed in front of the lens of a lighting instrument which colors the light.
of each instrument, and the gelatine color used (Drawing #18). Using
this as a guide, the instruments were positioned and gelatine was added
to them.

Since the "Masquer Theater" is essentially an arena type, there
is nothing blocking the audience's view of the stage when they enter the
theater. For this reason, a lighting preset was used to enhance the
appearance of the setting. This preset was brought up 30 minutes before
the show began. In this production, the guitar player sat on the center
bench of the Act I setting and played Spanish music to set the mood for
the audience. This initial preset showed the guitarist well lighted in
Light Blue Lavender (#17), which was a generally warm tone. The rest
of the stage had less illumination. The areas by each free standing unit
and the balcony were on at a low reading in a warm yellow-amber light
(#55 and #4). This basic setup continued until the show began. At this
time, the house lights were faded out slowly and the stage lights were
brought up to a high intensity as the actors came on stage for a bow of
introduction. As the actors left the stage, the stage lights were slowly
taken down while the actors took their places for the beginning of Act I.

Upon a signal from the Count, the lights came up. All the areas
were well lighted but the down center area, the up center arch area and
the closet arch area were brighter than the rest of the stage. This was
done because most of the action took place in these areas. The predominant
color was very warm (#55 and #4). When Rosine and Bartholo entered,
the area of the balcony was taken up and remained the focus until they
exited. This area was gelled in #17 and #4 which produced a very warm
atmosphere and also flattered the colors in Rosine's costume. The light remained the same until the end of Act I when intensity levels were lowered for the scene shift.

Act II began when Rosine sat at her desk. The area around the desk was first brought up brighter, then the rest of the lights came up with the up center, center, and post areas. The general tone of the scene was warm and bright and the predominant color was pink with some amber. The lighting did not change until Figaro entered. During his scene with Rosine, the closet became slowly brighter until he went there to hide. The stage was evenly illuminated with the desk area and the closet area just a bit brighter. Upon Figaro's exit, the closet area was taken down so it was no brighter than the rest of the stage. During the Count's scene, Rosine went to the sofa to sit and the sofa special was brought up. The lighting remained the same until the end of the Act when the lighting returned to the preset used for the beginning of the show. The house lights then came up for intermission.

After intermission, the house lights went out slowly, the stage lights were taken down to very dim and Bartholo entered. When he sat at his desk, the lights came up very quickly and the stage was evenly illuminated with the highest intensity being in the desk and post area. When the Count and Bartholo were seated on the sofa, the sofa special was brought up. The lighting remained here until the end of Act III, when the stage lights dimmed sharply while some of the hand properties were removed and rearranged.

As Bartholo entered for Act IV, the stage lights were very dim to
approximate night. He carried a lantern that was not wired for light. Since the production was stylized, it was felt unnecessary. When he placed the lantern on the desk, stage light was brought up and remained up for the entire Act. The stage was bright and warm with special emphasis given to the center areas where most of the action took place. The lighting did not change until the end of the act when the lights dimmed as the characters went off stage. The lights came back up with all areas at full intensity for the curtain call. As the characters made their final exit, the stage light returned to the preset used for the beginning of the show as the house lights came up to full intensity. The lighting did not change until the audience had left the theater.

**Technical Direction**

Before work can begin on a production, the technical director must organize and schedule all phases of the technical aspects. Some of the initial duties include recruiting crews, deciding exactly what has to be built and what can be used from stock, and establishing deadlines for completion of the various aspects.

The technical director must also take into consideration the problem of financing the production. In this case, the production was financed out of the annual budget of the Department of Drama. Designs were submitted to the Faculty of the Department of Drama for approval before any expenses were made. The designs were approved with the instructions that every attempt must be made to keep expenditures as low as possible. For this reason, scrap or used materials were used whenever possible.
The problem of finding crews for this production was a difficult one since another production was built just prior to The Barber of Seville, and the students had worked long crews for that show also. Notices were put up on bulletin boards asking for assistance and some students were contacted personally and asked to help. Every opportunity was taken to create enthusiasm for the production. This approach proved fruitful and yielded some volunteers. Also, four members of the permanent technical staff of the Department of Drama were assigned to the production. These methods proved successful and enough students were recruited to provide a nucleus for the scenery, properties and lighting crews.

During this process, the design was evaluated to determine which portions must be constructed and which could be made up of units taken from stock. The plan was to build the drapery, free standing units, balcony unit, and some of the hand properties. Most of the platforms were taken from stock; the others were built. The furniture was to be borrowed or built by remodeling pieces in stock. This plan was later revised and the furniture had to be constructed because the necessary items were not available from other sources.

The basic schedule for the construction and painting period was:

1. build and assemble the platform unit on stage at least two weeks before opening night;

2. find furniture for rehearsal use—the real pieces would be added at the technical rehearsal six days before opening;

3. build the free standing units and have them on stage ten
days prior to opening;
4. paint the floor and hang the drapery three days prior to
   opening;
5. all finishing work on the setting must be completed one
day before opening.

The hand properties were to be finished at the time of the first
technical rehearsal and until that time, substitute or rehearsal proper-
ties were to be used. In addition to these, all lighting equipment was
to be hung and positioned seven days prior to opening night.

This schedule was met on time with the exception of the furniture
deadline. The decision to build these pieces came so late that they were
not completed until noon the day of opening.

The technical rehearsal was held six days before opening night.
In a broad sense, it was held to familiarize the actors with the technical
elements and to integrate these elements with the rest of the production.
In addition, there were three technical functions this rehearsal served.

1. All lighting cues and intensity levels were set. This
   process was shortened somewhat because a rehearsal of light
   cues was held first without the actors.
2. Actual hand properties were first introduced at this rehearsal
   and the actors had to familiarize themselves with these new
   items. In an effort to speed this process along, each
   actor was encouraged to look over his property items before
   the rehearsal. At this time, he was also notified of the
   exact backstage location of his properties.
3. Scenery shifting assignments were made at this rehearsal.

Although major scenery changes were not made, many set properties were changed (Drawings #1 and #2). The responsibility of executing scene shifting was given to the actors. Their specific assignments were made and the shifting was rehearsed several times.

Three days before opening, a dress rehearsal was held and the actors wore their costumes for the first time. During this rehearsal, the technical director was especially watchful to make sure that:

(1) the lighting colors did not negatively affect the costume colors;
(2) the scenery or property colors did not conflict with the costume colors;
(3) the scenery or properties did not hamper the movement of the actors in costume. The only noticeable problem was that some of the amber gelatine colors used were too deep. They were changed to a lighter color and the problem was eliminated.

After the show opened, the duties of the technical director were not finished. Every afternoon before a performance, the lighting equipment, setting, and properties were checked and repairs were made on items that had been damaged during the last performance.

After the run was finished, the technical director conducted the strike. All actors and crew members were required to assist in striking the setting, properties, and lighting equipment back to their storage areas. When this was completed, the entire theater, backstage

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32 Strike - a theatrical term meaning to remove an item from the stage. After the last performance, all properties, set pieces, and lighting equipment must be struck.
area and scene shop area were cleaned so that the facilities would be ready to begin working on the next production.
APPENDIX I

Design And Production Photographs

Act I Design
Act I Setting
Act II Setting
APPENDIX II

Property List

Act One: Bartholo - walking stick, handkerchief, ring of keys
Rosine - handkerchief, fan, "Useless Precaution" note
Figaro - pencil, paper, guitar
On Stage - Almaviva's disguise on up left bench

Act Two: Almaviva - pistol, sword, letter, fake orders
Bartholo - walking stick, handkerchief, ring of keys
Rosine - fan, embroidery frame, letter to Lindor
Bazile - purse
Puberty - crutch
On Stage - letter, purse, orders in desk

Act Three: Almaviva - purse, glasses, letter
Bartholo - walking stick, handkerchief, ring of keys
Rosine - fan, handkerchief
Figaro - basin, razor, scissors, mug, sheet, gold key
Bazile - overlarge money bag
On Stage - paper in desk

Act Four: Almaviva - purse
Bartholo - walking stick, handkerchief, ring of keys
Rosine - fan, handkerchief, letter
Policeman - pistol
Notary - two marriage contracts
THE DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA

presents

THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

or The Useless Precaution

by

Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais

Translated by Albert Bermel

JOE FERRELL, Director
AL TERHUNE, Designer
TEDDY ULMER, Costume Designer

May 25-29, 1966 Masquer Theater, 8:15 p.m.

CAST

Count Almaviva .................................................. Glenn Gauer
Dr. Bartholo ........................................................... Bill Dobson
Rosine ........................................................................ Michelle Nassif
Figaro ........................................................................... Jim Baker
Don Bazile ............................................................... Teddy Ulmer
Puberty ...................................................................... Mary Jane Williams
Lively ........................................................................ Linus Carleton
Notary ........................................................................ Jim Murphy
Alcade (Spanish magistrate) ....................................... Bruce Bambach

PRODUCTION STAFF

Scenery ................................................................. Signe Anderson, Jeanne Belangie,
Everett Collier, Glenn Gauer, Michele MacMillan, Tom Sternal, Don Thomson
Costumes .............................................................. Chris McGuire, Cheryl Myerhoffer
Properties .............................................................. Linus Carleton, Dyan Roper, Tom Sternal
Lighting ................................................................. Harry Trickey, Dianne Bjornson
Box Office ............................................................. Dianne Bjornson
Poster and Program Design .................................... Signe Anderson
Publicity ............................................................... Maribeth Dwyer, Joe Ferrell

NOTE

The Barber of Seville was first performed at the Comedie-Francaise February 23, 1775.
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