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Scene Dock: Journal of Theatre Design and Technology addresses the artistry and the science of theatre design and technology. It is committed to highlighting and recording issues on tactile components of theatre practice and scholarship for the theatre industry. The journal aims to provide truly in-depth technical information on matters of theatrical design and technology as they affect performance design and practice with their cultural/traditional ambience. It is a platform for design artists and scholars to expand their creative tools and to extend the grammar of theatre design and technology. Essays for publication in the journal are therefore expected to give prominence to the technical content of their submissions but not unmindful of their functional aestheticism. A healthy range of research areas to address are theatre Design and Installations, Scenography, Lighting Design, Sound Design, Props Making, Scenic Technology, Wardrobe Technology, Scenic Carpentry, Make-Up Artistry, Technical Directing, Stage Management, Back House Management, Historic Designs costumes, set, props, etc., Model Boxes, Posters, Memorabilia, Scripts, Masks, theatrical Equipment, Scene Dock, Sculptural and Fabrication Elements in Design, Product Launch Design, Costume Parade, Carnival Float Design and Construction, Carnival Animation, Performance Space Design, Fireworks, Film Technology, Choreography, Music Directing, Technical Criticism, the Interface of Art and Science in theatre production, Puppetry, Works of Designers, and other technically and technologically inclined issues. The journal shall also publish well-presented technical portfolios of productions; information on technological inventions/breakthroughs and design techniques.

We also welcome interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary contributions that balance the scope of technical insight and other disciplinary boundaries as a locus of attention. *Scene Dock: Journal of Theatre Design and Technology* is a publication of the **Society of Nigeria Theatre Artists** (SONTA); it is published once a year.

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STAGING THE PERFORMANCE USING MAKE-UP, LIGHT AND COSTUME IN POND OF LEECHES

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Abstract

Performance by nature is inherent to man. This is due to the fact that man's life could be defined as a "performance" because of the daily activities that makes up his entire existence. These activities could be religious, social, political, entertainment etc. Stories from these happenings are enacted usually entertain, educate and inform under the theatrical genres of satire, comedy or tragedy. These stories are told in the theatrical performance with the aid of make-up, light and costumes etc. which help to enhance the outwards appearance as well as giving an in-depth meaning and contributing to guide the audience in having a holistic meaning of the performance. For this paper, descriptive analysis is used and data are obtained from relevant articles, published works, books and internet sources. Findings in this paper are that, the technical elements of make-up, light and costume helps to give a stage performance its meaning and believability. They also aid the artist, the act and performance to achieve the aim of serving to pass messages effectively to the audience. The paper concludes that, a creative understanding and combination between the technical team in a performance brings out a better result. The understanding of the story by the technical team in conjunction with the artistic director will helps to bring about a good production. It is therefore

recommended that, make-up, light and costume be giving proper attention in application and the in learning to give good result. Theatre practitioners should insist on the right thing and not cut corners in production.

Keywords: Performance, Make-Up, Light, Costume, Pond of Leeches

Introduction

In a theatrical performance, the combination of make-up, costume and light are used collectively to give the performance the needed result. They help to add to the total outlook, the translation and transformation of the performance. The make-up, light and costume are used to interpret the overall message of the play write and the director for easy understanding of the audience believability. The blend of these elements put the actor in to character for the act and assist to effectively communicate the story to the audience. It is an obvious fact that the main purpose of using costume, make-up and light a performance is give a clear picture about the characters been played and for better understanding the story been enacted on stage.

Etherton states that the use of make-up is the “means by which an actor emphasizes or changes his or her facial feature in order to look more like the audience concept of the character which he or she is playing” (14). This adds to enhance reality of a performance and the actor. Make-up has been a needed element of the theatre that has been used to help translate the message.

The Essence of Make-Up

The make-up of an actor can help the audience to know the state of health, tribal affiliation, age, transform a person to another person or character entirely. There are different types of make-up used in theatrical performances. These include:

- i. Straight- this includes the application of basic powder or foundation to retain the original look of the actor without

having to change his physical resemblance or outlook.

- ii. Paint- this the application of colours of different types to the actor to transform him in to character.
- iii. Solid- this is the type of make-up that is applied to give a three dimensional effect on the character to bring out certain features on the character.
- iv. Special effect- this is when an actor is totally transformed to another character usually with the combination of all the different techniques of make-up.

The Essence of Light in Performance

The fact the light has been present since the inception of man and has guided man to see clearly is evident in the Bible (Genesis 1: 3) when “God say let there be light” and Allah in (Qur'an 71:15-16) “made the sun as a (Glorious) Lamp”. Lighting has since gone beyond something that makes vision possible as it adds to its functions in the theatre in creating mood, time, local and setting for a performance.

In a production, the collaboration with light and other elements of the theatre like costume, make-up, sound and special effects in a theatrical performance, helps lighting to give a clear visibility to stage picture which assist to affect the dramatic impact and how the audience perceives the performance. The basic elements of lighting which makes a good lighting effective in a performance which are: intensity, colour, direction and movement; are appropriately used by the light director in conjunction with the artistic director to bring an overall picture.

A good stage light must be able to effectively impact the mood, have good programmed or planned focus and various forms of visibility in tone with the settings and genre of the performance. Light is one of the “most active and vital components that make up a stage composition” (Wolf and Block 28). Good light and lighting systems helps the narrative of a performance and situate the story as well as presenting a good stage picture.

In the ancient Greeks, plays were performed in open-air theatres during the daytime in order to take advantage of the natural light from the sun. The need to improve upon this became paramount as theatre had to move indoors because of natural conditions such rain, wind, snow, etc. which led to the introduction of oil lamps in the 15th century and the later introduction in the 18th century of gas lighting and Modern Lighting with the development of the incandescent lamp late into the 19th century.

This was further collaborated that:

Fires were found to be inefficient sources of light, and the idea of using a concentrated fuel for lighting purposes resulted in the candle and the oil lamp. The arrival of gas lighting in the 19th Century brought entirely new concepts to lighting... The mechanism is similar to, but not the same as, that of the fluorescent lamp. (Simpson13)

Apart from creating of visibility in the theatre, light is also used for creation of mood, time, genre, local, special effects, etc. and making the story and the performance more believable for the audience.

The Essence of Costume in Performance

Costume in performance is the outfit worn by the actors in form of clothing, hairstyles or accessories to transform the actors to the character. The costume helps to depict the culture, period, occupation, status etc. of the character. It also used to lay emphasis or change the sex of a character in performance.

Costumes are used in theatrical performance in way that the audience can understand the character and relate the appearance to the role the character is playing. In production, efforts are made by the artistic director and the costumier to as much as possible bring to reality the character through a costume that can effectively define the character and transform the actor while assisting him to play his role effectively.

Costume can basically be grouped in to

- a. ancient
- b. modern
- c. contemporary
- d. special

Costume primarily gives the actor a direct identity; helping to give the audience the type of person the character is. It could be his occupation, religion, nationality, financial status, position, state of health etc. which allows the audience to know the type of person that is on stage before any introduction.

The mood and genre of a production can also be determined by the costume worn. In comic performances, extremely bright colours (in the tertiary group of colours on the colour wheel) such as lemon green, lilac, orange etc are used, while in satiric productions, not so bright colours like blue, green, purple, etc and in tragic genre production dull colours such as black, navy-blue, red, dark-brown etc. are majorly used.

The Use and Effect of Make-up, Light and Costume in Pond of Leeches

It is difficult to have an exact replica of a performance because each performance has its own challenges and production style in which the technical team use. The creativity of the technical team is at test each time there is a production. To give their best, there must be a good understanding of the play script and the sociology of the play in addition to a good research in to the history and background of the production. This will give the production team bases to allow them effectively carry out their job and general activities in the production.

As part of the role of the make-up artist for a good production is that he must know the characters, age range, the nationalities, cultures, tribe and all necessary details as the case may. The play must be well understood by the make-up artist to execute a good make-up that will

suite the production.

The light technician on the other hand has to know the various movements and action to produce lighting that will go along with the blocking of the director and the costumed outfit of the various actors in order to give a beautiful well blended clear picture for the audience to understand. The light technician must rig the lanterns and have his light plot to know how to carry out his action that will suit the production.

The costumier on his part and every other member of the production team must have full knowledge of the production and the history. He must know the time of the production and have the costume made to fit the time. He must make his actors feel comfortable in their costumes. The genre of the production largely determines the colour tone the costumier uses for a performance.

The right combination of all the above gives any production needed the patency that defines the production for the audience to understand. They technical element of make-up, light and costume are tested on the actors on the dress and technical night before the proper performance and final adjustment and corrections are made. For efficient result, genre, time, local, setting, among other relevant component needed for the production must be understood and apply appropriately.

Synopsis of the play

Pond of Leeches is a play written by Stephen Kekeghe which unfolds the decadence in contemporary rich oil belt of the Niger-Delta and Nigeria as a whole; reflecting the sociological and political engagement of greed in leaders of post-independence Nigeria. The play has its setting in Okugbe Community. 'Okugbe' according to the playwright is an Urhobo lexeme, meaning "putting together", an allegorical imagination of Nigeria with its complex multilingual and multi-cultural contradictions.

In these communities are various oil wells with Egbo quarters been the most productive. This makes the people of these communities to abandon all other means of livelihood to struggle for the right for equal opportunity of the resources been greedily control by Chairman and his corrupt chiefs. As Chairman and his league of chiefs frustrate, humiliate, maltreat the people of Egbo quarters they come together with Ovwata leading them to fight and win their freedom from corrupt regime of the Chairman of Okugbe community and his chiefs.



Fig.1. Chairman-The leader of Okugbe Community and his chiefs in their make-up and costume before the performance.
(photograph taken on 15/06/2017 at 3:14pm by the researcher)

Make-Up: The creation of bears on the character by the make-up artist is to transform the actors in to more mature men to depict the age of the characters they are playing. It also contributed massively to the definition of the various characters. The make-up among others, also assist the audience to determine the age range of the chiefs. In addition, the militants all had their faces partially painted to conceal their identity; a characteristic typical of rebels or criminals who do not want their real identity revealed.



Fig.2 Chairman's Boys (photograph taken on 15/06/2017 at 4:34pm by the researcher)

Light in Performance

Intrinsic in the picture above, we see how the three basic aspects of background, point and fill lighting are used to achieve the desired effect to aid in telling the story on stage. The combination of this lights helps to give a clear visibility of the actors on stage from all the side. It also help to establish them giving them a three dimensional viewing. This type of lighting helps the audience have concentration on the characters on stage without been distracted because of the even distributed of light on the characters on stage.

These lighting effects are achieved with the aid of different lanterns in used in the theatre such as:

Ellipsoidal, Fresnel, Spotlight, Parabolic Aluminized Reflector. (PAR) is self-contained; the lamp, parabolic reflector, and lens are combined in one unit and the instrument (which is used to produce) Very Narrow Spot (VNSP), Narrow Spot (NSP), Medium Flood (MFL), Wide

Flood (WFL), Scoops and other Specialized floodlights combining two or more compartments... usually used to light cycloramas and other backdrops. (Salzberg and Kupferman 13)

All the above mentioned lanterns where combined and used in the production to bring to life action and activities of the performance on stage



Fig.3 Chairman and Owa confront each other (photograph taken on 15/06/2017 at 4:46pm by the researcher)

Costume in Performance

The costume has been applied to help the assist in the understanding to the audience of the characters. In this scene as we can visibly see the chief with his staff the other accessories to complement his costume. The man at the middle is obviously a clergy from his costume. The man in the white singlet is seen as a common member of the community and the three (rebellious youth) characters standing above them with their costume tells the story of the people, characters and the happening. In this picture costume has been effectively used to convey the message in the performance. The chief is dressed in the usual Urhobo outfit that is typical of the South-South region. The creative brilliance of the



Fig.4 Bishop Ukemu and Chief Shenye (photograph taken on 15/06/2017 at 4:52pm by the researcher)

costumier is resourcefully applied in the styles, texture, colours and combination of the outfit on the characters in the scene.

In this scene Chairman is seen with a fellow chief. There is good use of costume and colour harmony with the background. This effectively gave the performance a good balance of colours and set.

Conclusion

When make-up, light and costume are effectively combined, it brings an understanding and the "analysis of the interaction between actual viewers and the visions presented to them in the theatre because it allows for an understanding of this interaction as a dynamic process of address and response in which the address presented by the theatre mediates in an event that for its actually 'taking place' depends just as much on the response". (Bleeker 10)

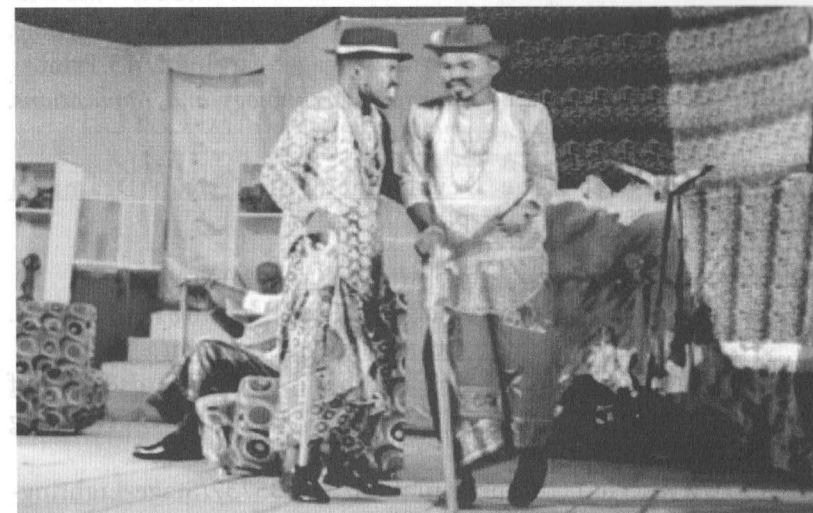


Fig.5 Chairman and Chief Shenye (photograph taken on 15/06/2017 at 4:58pm by the researcher)

In a theatre performance no aspect can stand alone; be it the actors, director, technical, etc. All the element most come together to simulate reality in other to have a good production. The combination creates artistic communication that adds beauty to the performance. A theatrical performance is a collaboration of what makes a theatre no matter the type of "theatre" been practiced or experimented. A performance is a collaboration by definition for the consumption of the audience. These collaborations help to tell a better story and give a better picture.

As costume, make-up and light are vital to the theatre, it is therefore recommended that they are giving proper attention in application and the learning so they will not be lazily or shabbily used or learned. Practitioners should insist on the right thing and not cut corners in production as the result of a production depends on the how well these elements are effectively harnessed and applied.

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