# THE WATERMILL THEATRE

## Set Design

# CREATE YOUR OWN DESIGNS



## Give it a go!

You don't have to be good at drawing to be a designer - it's all about your ideas.

So, don't be afraid to just put pen to paper and just give it a go!

## Top Tips

Our brilliant designer Katie Lias shares her top tips below!

## Can you recognise the set?

These are all pictures of previous Watermill shows. Can you remember the productions?



## Share

Send us your creations for us all to enjoy!

Email your designs to outreach@watermill.org.uk

#AtHomeWithTheWatermill

# Set and Costume Design Projects

The starting point for any design project is to collate ideas – don't let anything limit your ideas at this stage!

Jot down anything that comes to mind as you read the play, whether in the form of notes or quick sketches. Don't let yourself get bogged down or scared by the final product: it's a process and a collaborative journey that will evolve over time and through discussions with the director.

Here are some projects to get you started:

1. Create a mood board representing the themes, emotions or locations in your chosen play. Use magazines to collage together ideas; print out images from Google; add splashes of colour with paints or felt tips.

   Example:

# Set and Costume Design Projects

**2.** Create a similar mood board for each character in the play. Who do they look like? What colours might they wear and what does this say about their personality? What brands would they wear? What style of clothing?

Example:

# THE WATERMILL THEATRE
## Outreach

# Set and Costume Design Projects

**3.** Create 5 rough sketches of your initial ideas for how the set design might look. Spend 1 minute on each new idea. You don't have to be able to draw beautifully to do this: it's about getting those ideas out and using them as a starting point for discussion.

**4.** What do we KNOW about the play and the characters? Write down everything that we learn about the location and characters through both the dialogue and stage directions. What does one character say about another character? Is it a fact about them or is it their opinion?

**5.** Create a celebrity cast for your chosen play. Which famous person would you ideally like to play each part? This can be a great way to spark conversation with the director in terms of what you imagine each character to be / look / sound like.

# Starting to Realise the Design

After having collected and researched some initial images and designs, the designer will start to create shapes in a 'white card model'. This is a 1:25 scale version of the theatre and the set within it. This literally means that it is exactly 25 times smaller than the real set and acts as visual reference which allows the designer to try out various ideas and to discuss these with the director. Eventually, a fully finished colour model will be created, which will then be shown to the cast, set builders, scenic painters, stage management and production teams.

*Find a shoe box or other small box that will represent your theatre.*

*What objects might you be able to find around the house and garden that could stand in for various items of furniture, pieces of set or props? How quickly can these be created so that you can swiftly and easily explore a range of ideas?*

## Ideas:

- A cotton spool could stand in for a table
- Concertina some paper to create stairs
- A conker with pins stuck in the bottom could create a little table with legs
- Do you have any scraps of wallpaper or wrapping paper that could represent wallpaper or a back cloth?
- Print out different patterns and textures or find these in magazines
- Think about different levels within your design
- How might you change elements of the set for each scene? Can items move or fly in and out?
- Where would you like your audience to sit? Is your set in the round (audience sitting all around the outside with the stage in the middle); in a thrust configuration (audience on three sides); or end on (audience all in front of the stage, looking straight at it)? How does this affect what items of set you are able to incorporate?