

Concept Statement Example

Analysis for scenic, costume, makeup, lighting and sound would all be similar.

Scenic Design: DC Shawger, Jr.

The Count of Monte Cristo

By Alexander Dumas

Adapted by Jeff Cassazza and David Zak

1. The Action of the Play

Edmond Dante's (alias the Count of Monte Cristo) has two goals--to reward those who were kind to him and his aging father and to punish those responsible for his imprisonment for a crime he did not commit. Through the action of the play, Monte Cristo ingeniously plans and carries out slow and painful punishment for those responsible for his having spent fourteen years barely subsisting in the horrible dungeon of the Chateau d'If.

2. Thematic Conclusion

- a. Vengeance, while perhaps a mortal emotion, is better placed in the care of divine intervention--as stated in the line: *"Tell the angel who will watch over your life to pray now and then for a man who, like Satan, believed himself for an instant to be equal to God, but who realizes in all humility that supreme power and wisdom are in the hands of God alone."*
- b. Only a man who has felt ultimate despair is capable of feeling ultimate bliss. In addition, for man to remain happy, he must do two things: wait and hope. (Note: this truly is a romantic notion as Dante's sails off into the sunset--literally.)

3. Production Objectives (from the Director)

- a. Using the genre Romanticism, to tell the story of one man (Edmond Dante's) with believable, well-rounded characterizations.
- b. To underline the theme--vengeance is inappropriate in the hands of man. It is an instrument intended for God alone.

4. Design Objects

- a. To support the play through careful interpretation of the genre Romanticism; to this end, to show that the story is not merely an adventure but one of intrigue and mystery.
- b. Emphasize romantic embodiments, such as: the return to nature; love of the past (especially the medieval); the concept of honor and nobility; an infatuation with the grotesque and unreal (hence the extensive use of light and shadow); and arduous sentimentality.
- c. To create the "world of the play" as a dark, brooding environment made up of a series of arches and levels.

5. Translation of the design objective into visual and graphic terms

- a. Line: Various, reflective of early romantic period. Emphasis on the graceful, elegant yet moody architectural curves found in the early 16th and 17th Centuries--especially Baroque, hint of even earlier medieval (13th Century) arches. Tall, overwhelming archways with emphasis on grand proportion, further suggestion of the power in refinement through simplification.
- b. Color: Dark, moody black to blue, with ochre and golden highlights. Emphasis upon the dark sense of mystery accenting light and shadow--with plenty of shadows cast from the massive archways, etc.
- c. Texture: Very earthy feel. Hint towards the idea of "return to nature".
- d. Ornamentation: Hint towards simplified late Medieval Gothic rather than Baroque.

6. Choice of Period, Style and Form

- a. Period: 19th Century Romanticism (much earlier influence from the mid-13th-15th Centuries).
- b. Style: Gothic-Romantic as developed from the late Medieval Gothic to Baroque periods. (Note: taking dramatic license here!).
- c. Form: Modified Shakespeare stage; single set, multilevel (linear form accented)