

Staging: Costumes and Make-up – Costume Design

Costumes Help Tell the Story

The party invitation said formal. Traditionally, one would expect the women to arrive in gowns and the men to arrive in tuxedos. Now the variations of each might be different, but the classification would be the common interpretation.

The same idea extends to stage productions, the costumes (style of dress) is dictated by the invitation described in the script by the author.

As with all shows, the costumes can make or break the idea to be communicated. If the character doesn't look the part, the audience cannot connect with the character



Cinderella & Family – Cinderella Reprise - 2014

to the dialog. The whole experience of the play is lost. That is why, so much time is put into making the costume look authentic to the play.

Another factor in making the costume is how the actor portrays the character. If the actor is more physical on stage with the character, the costume must allow for that type of movement. If the actor is more prim and proper, likewise, the costume must relay that image and sense to the audience.

Costumes for plays that are well known must have costuming that the audience 'expects' to see on stage. Sherlock Holmes should have a pipe, a cape, and a deerstalker hat; Mary Poppins a hat with cherries, an umbrella, and a magical bag; Tevya (*Fiddler on the Roof*) a pull-cart, and Rafiki (*The Lion King*) a staff.

Throughout this writing are some examples of our Costume and Makeup design ideas from several of our shows – *Cinderella Reprise*, *Broadway's Guys and Dolls Jr.*, *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Disney's Little Mermaid Jr.*, *Disney's Aladdin Jr.*, and *headwear from Disney's The Lion King Jr.*



The Importance of Being Earnest - 2003

Costuming and make-up tips, trick, and techniques. It is great fun to learn about how other groups do things. It seems that the same plays are performed all over the US and around the world and are known for their costuming and make-up. So “Why re-invent the wheel?” when you can glean inspiration.



Guys and Dolls Jr. - Hot Box Dancers - 2010

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The costuming for *Disney's Little Mermaid Jr.*, was very extensive as there were so many scene changes and so many unique and fun characters.

It is shown in this collage of photos how unique and detailed the costumes were. The costuming was made by parents and volunteers involved in the production. Without them, the look and feel of being 'under the sea' would not have happened.

- ❖ Ursula and her Tentacles had to be crafted to fit together and then pull apart for the dance scene.
- ❖ Jelly fish hats were made using common parts found in different places – the shell for the hat was the plastic cover for a food tray, the tentacle streamers were made from ribbons and bows,
- ❖ Sebastian's costume had added legs with a ball cap with Styrofoam feelers,
- ❖ Scuttle's wings of torn fabric tied to a vest; a ball cap with beak and torn fabric
- ❖ Undersea Dancers wore blue leotards draped in flowing chiffon to create added movement under the sea,
- ❖ Each sister was costumed in velour skirts with tulle accent skirting.

And so many more. As you can see, Imagination for Costumes became the order of the day.

In *New Artists Productions* we periodically have a workshop about make-up. These are often times conducted by retired professionals in our area, beauticians, Moms who have studied theater in college, etc. Or, the demonstration might be done by a make-up artist associated with a particular show - usually a talented parent. The project team will always find that "There are always resources for what we need, when we need them."

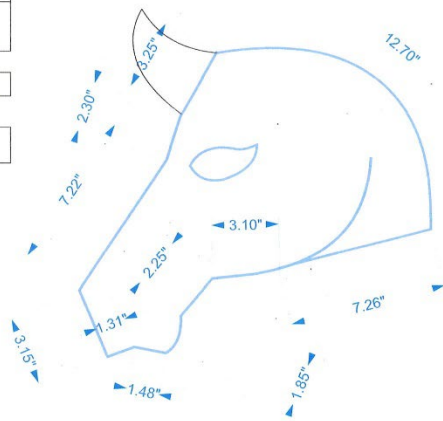
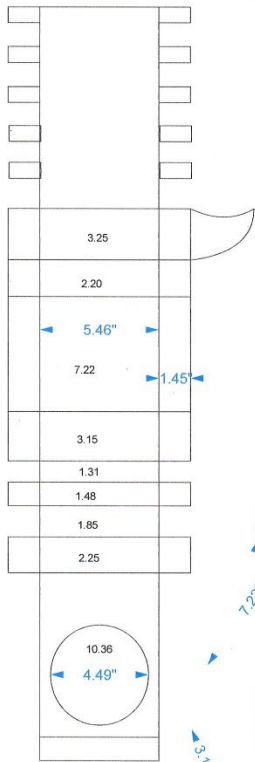
Disney's Aladdin Jr. - 2006



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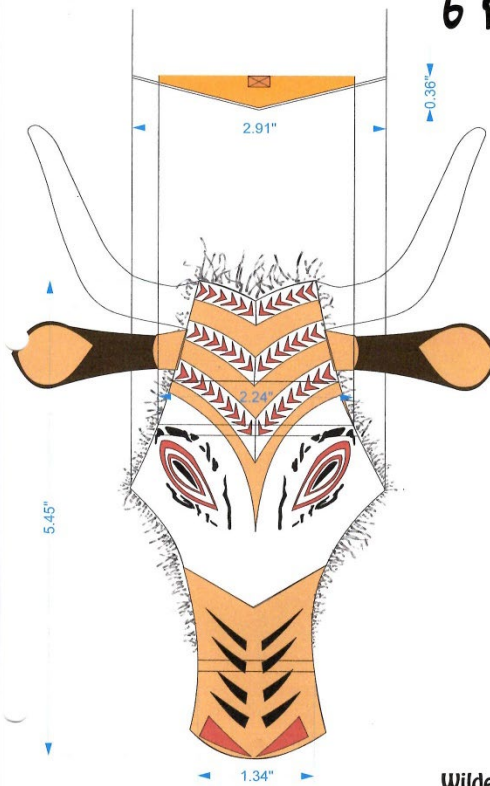
Disney's Lion King Jr. - 2018



Zebra Head (folded cardboard)



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6 REQUIRED



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