Two Objectives of a Set Design: Aesthetic & Practical

Aesthetic

- Create an Environment

- Establish Tone & Style
  Naturalism
  Realism
  Suggestive Realism
  Stylization
  Abstraction
  Formalism

- Establish Location and/or Period

- Complement the Director's Concept

- Create a Central Image or Metaphor

- Coordinate with Other Design Elements (Lighting, Costumes, Sound)

Practical

- Consider Type of Theatre
  Proscenium
  Thrust
  Arena
  Environmental
  Found Space

- Consider Requirement of Physical Layout in Terms of Space

- Consider Blocking Requirements (Movement/Dancing/Violence)

- Create a Clear Groundplan

- Create a Clear Traffic Pattern/Flow

- Choose Materials

- Choose Type of Set
  Unit
  Box
  Wing & Border
  Other

- Decide if there are Set Changes: Stationary/Moving Elements

Limitations for a Design

- Play

- Director

- Theatre/Facilities

- Budget

- Experience/Abilities of the Crew

Process

- Make a Commitment

- Explore the potential of the SPACE

- Consider the TEXT

- Do the RESEARCH

- React, Incubate, Percolate, Select your strongest ideas to form a CONCEPT

- Implement the DESIGN

- Add the PERFORMERS

- Show it to an AUDIENCE

Creating a Concept

Action/Documentation Metaphor
Developed by Mordecai Gorelik (1900-1975) American set designer, circa 1946
Influenced by Robert Edmund Jones, his mentor

- **Action**: Provide the elements needed by the director and the actor to stage the show

- **Documentation**: Locate the action of the play in a specific place and a specific time period

- **Metaphor**: def. a figure of speech in which a word that ordinarily designates one thing is used to designate another, thus making an implicit comparison.
Ex: "All the world's a stage . . ."(Shakespeare)
- Ex: In Moliere's The Miser, the scenic designer decides that the set, Harpagon's home is a metaphor for gold coin. This can suggest the color of the set (gold), shape (round), and texture (metallic)