

Rationale – 91516

Set Design – This is in the round design with a cyclorama around the whole theatre. This will be used to shine lights on to make the audience feel they are totally involved in Willy's life.

My set comprises of three 2metre by 1metre hydraulic platforms that can be moved independently to represent the different rooms and furniture within them i.e. block one and three could be raised to represent the single beds in 'the boys' room, blocks two and three could represent Willy and Linda's double bed, block one and two could represent the double bed in the hotel and block two could be raised to create the kitchen table. Block one could be raised higher than the table to make a bar for the restaurant theme. ①

At the end of Act two when Willy and Biff are fighting they will be raised and Linda and Happy will be below looking up. This will cast shadows over them as they are overwhelmed and confused by the row between Biff and Willy. It also confines them (Willy & Biff) in a small and unstable place.

At the end, for the requiem the actors will stand in the aisles with Linda in the central aisle, as she does her monologue the block two which will be raised half a metre will slow sink to represent the coffin being lowered into the grave.

Why?

I've chosen this design which is simplistic/minimalist and representational rather than realistic. This follows Craig's ideas based on non-realism and the set being able to represent different emotions and feelings. I have chosen a white stage to reflect lighting and to be able to change into the different scenes.

As the audience enters I want them to feel they can walk across the set that there is nothing permanent about the house, so they are part of the whole performance. The audience and actors will enter through the same 'doorway'. Once they are in the space the actors can enter and exit through different aisles but they will remain within the cyclorama until the end of the play.

The cyclorama allows me to provide shadows and overwhelming sense of being totally surrounded and consumed by the City during the present scenes as it will be unlit. In the past there is a sense of colour and light as Willy and Linda moved in when there was nothing around them.

I want to use mirrors in the aisles – as transitions between Willy's past and present. ②

This will not be used for all of the transitions but in-particular the ones with the mistress.

Furniture will be minimal with the exception of one chair that can be used on the hydraulic blocks and on the outside for seating in the garden.

There are no walls as Miller in his opening to the play says the house should be built so the walls can be walked through on the past sections. My set allows the actors to use all entrances and exits and for it to change in front of the audience, again fighting realism. Craig also believed you should be able to see the workings of the theatre to ensure representation rather than reality.

Lighting colours will be:

Present - In the kitchen hanging light in centre of stage lowered from above, no lighting on the cyclorama to make the audience feel more closed in like the city towering over the house. Rooms of the house will be white light (florescence) in the present. Harsh -to show Willy's reality

Past the lighting will be yellower with a sense of warmth. Softer to portray how Willy's view of the past is edged in softness/fantasy. The cyclorama will be down lit with white to make the stage feel more open, with more space without the city towering over the house.

Mistress scene- using reds and pinks for passion and betrayal.

When out in the garden (past) greens and yellows using gobos and blue on the cyclorama to depict sky

Around the outside of the circular stage there will be headlight style lighting on the floor. This will be used at the beginning and ending of the play (before the requiem) to represent Willy driving home and then crashing. These lights will light upwards and face into the audience representing headlights coming towards you.

There are five seating blocks allowing 5 aisles to represent the 4 key characters who seem to only ever interact with one other, ie Bernard, Charlie, Mistress, Howard. Ben is the exception to this as he comes in whilst Willy is talking to others. Ben would be able to sit in the audience as a continual vision.

I would like to end the piece with a single spot light on the flowers for the funeral, centre stage as this is the last we will see of Willy, alone.

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The costumes would be monochromatic, another Craigian technique. This allows lighting to change the colour of white/grey costumes to reflect the emotions/feel of the piece. I feel Linda should wear white as she is the innocent party in all of this. Willy would be in a pale worn out grey to represent his age and worn-out feeling he has, Happy is a younger version of Willy so a more defined cleaner grey would work for him. Biff's whole life is overshadowed by Willy's lies so Black would define him. Ben would be dressed in a white suit to depict his ghostly nature.

I am aware I have chosen an unusual setting but Craig used buildings that weren't theatres to create 'epic' style settings. The raising and lowering of the hydraulic blocks would mean a space that could allow for this. I feel this should be more like a piece of art as well as a performance which again links with Craig's idea of a master artist designing and creating theatre.