

STAGING AND DESIGN IN OE

Three basic approaches from which a show is designed.

- *Geometric staging* involving the use of basic forms: circle, square, cone, and cylinder, both linear, curvilinear. Contrary to current ideas, geometric designs are of huge importance within any show. They can have impact on the strength of the staged effect, they invite clarity, and they offer contrast to the isolated moments that many are incorporating into their shows.
- *Freeform, Textured, Segmented staging* is an approach to design that provides contrast from the starkness of "line" or geometric drill, and opens up the stage for more dimensional moves. Freeform pathways must always be carefully designed; they are neither accidental nor random, and they require the individualized design of each performer's path of motion.
- *Theatrical staging* deals with entrances, exits, & interaction between sections or characters. Some have resorted to this choice without involving the other options, and have produced programs where the planned events seem to be unrelated.

Consider the following design points as you design a show:

- Balance is important in successful design. Design may be either symmetric (formally balanced) or asymmetric (informally balanced). Freeform still requires balance.
- Visual ideas should flow or evolve logically from one to another.
- Where you stage a picture or set is important to control the focus of the design.
- Contrast is an important feature to successful design. If you have done line, or geometric drill, you should have given thought to creating contrast through texture or segmentation. If you have been doing segmentation, texture, or theater, you should give some relief or contrast to the eye through geometric/line drill.
- The closer the space in any form, the stronger the intensity/dynamics of the move might be.
- The more open the space the lesser the intensity/dynamics might be.
- Single bounding line forms using all the performers in one big picture is an important opportunity to create a major impact or resolution to a musical/visual idea. This often is successful at the start or resolution of a big idea.
- The design should be clear, readable, and pleasing to the eye.
- Where you stage your sections will make a difference in how your visual effects/presentations will work. Be sure you did not block other segments and that they coordinate with one another.

- They should pace their show (plan effects)
- They should contour their show (create highs and lows)
- They should provide visual and musical interest through contrast

Remember the importance of staging, focus, continuity, coordination, layering, appeal, and effect.